20th Century Mystery Adventure Series for Young Women

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2019
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Note: The font is De Vinne, the typeface used for the 1930s Nancy Drew, Dana Girls, and Hardy Boys books. Designed by Theodore Low De Vinne around 1894, it was widely used in the first half of the twentieth century.
1. Nancy Drew: Dated or Daring?

This collection of mystery adventure series about and for young women provides a window into the social constructs of growing up as a girl in the mid-twentieth century. Generations were raised reading Nancy Drew, Cherry Ames, Vicki Barr, and other such series. Ruth Bader Ginsburg once remarked, “I liked Nancy Drew, yes. She was adventuresome, daring and her boyfriend was a much more passive type than she was.” Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Laura Bush, Nancy Pelosi, Gayle King, and Hillary Clinton also read the series as children and have praised Nancy as an inspiration. Clinton said, “I think like a lot of young girls of my time, you know, I read every Nancy Drew book… She just seemed like such a go-getter, and really smart and brave. She was, dare I say, a bit of a role model.” In these series, the strong, independent female protagonists like Nancy which modern audiences can identify with are accompanied by mid-century constructs which would make the same modern audience wince. Discussions of appearance and weight, and the absence of racial diversity firmly root these stories in the America of the 1930s-60s. Rather than dismiss these books as “out of date,” reading them can serve to acknowledge the damaging social constructs our parents and grandparents grew up with, while at the same time embracing the positivity and empowering messages also found in the text.

Nancy’s perfection and detective skills are often framed in a patriarchal context. Described in 1930 as “a pretty girl of sixteen,” by the 1959 revision she had become “an attractive girl of eighteen” and “an attractive titian blond.” Nancy’s age was raised to accommodate new driver’s license laws, but her outspoken, independent, and fearless qualities were also diminished with the revisions. In both versions of The Secret of the Old Clock, Nancy is praised by a police officer who says, “Not many girls would have used their wits the way you did.” Commended for an ability to “keep her head,” such praise is posited in opposition to what was expected of a young woman. In the original edition of The Secret of the Old Clock, Nancy’s father admires her “curly golden bob” declaring it to be “Not at all the sort of head which one expected to indulge in serious thoughts.” These qualities may have been portrayed as unique and unexpected, but Nancy was a positive role model for young women who were seeing a female figure breaking free of these limiting expectations in a way that received praise and admiration, not contempt or scorn. The admiration of Nancy by friends Bess and George follows the formula of Sherlock Holmes and Watson, of a superior detective and a loyal, adoring sidekick who marvels at the skills displayed before him. Unlike Sherlock, however, Nancy is always humble, and is quick to say, “I’m sure there are many other girls who could do the same.” For those who didn’t want to strive for Nancy’s perfection, her sidekicks and the protagonists of other series like Judy Bolton provided apt role models. George the tomboy and blundering Bess were foils to Nancy but also took active roles in solving the mysteries.

The heroines in these series are uniformly slim, and weight and physical appearance are often subject to comments. Sidekick Bess of the Nancy Drew series is a disturbing example, and a character whose description is often linked to weight, dieting, and food. In the 1965 revision of The Secret of Shadow Ranch, the first book in which Bess and her cousin George appear, Bess is described as “slightly plump” and George tells her “Eating is really a very fattening hobby, dear cousin.” Her struggles with sticking to a diet is often a source of comedy and commentary from the other girls, and even from herself. One series with a more modern, body positive outlook is Cherry Ames. In Cherry Ames: Chief Nurse Cherry gives advice to an older nurse who has been teased about her weight, saying, “Why Bessie,
every girl has her own kind of good looks… there’s no one standard for beauty. You happen to be tall and have a large frame to match your height. What’s wrong with that? It’s magnificent, in it’s own way… If you thought of yourself as nice-looking, you’d convince other people that you are.” This powerful sentiment still resonates today.

Cherry Ames provides many strong lessons, including those surrounding love and marriage. In *Student Nurse*, Cherry imagines herself to be in love with a doctor, but by the end of the book realizes “she was not really in love with Jim – or with anybody. She was in love with nursing.” Later in the series, she hesitates when Lex proposes to her. Ultimately, Lex leaves for another woman, and Cherry takes it in stride. Cherry was able to follow her true passion – her nursing career – while placing love interests at the side. Most of the girls encounter a variety of male interests over the books, while some like Nancy have a “steady” like Ned Nickerson. Only a few married, due in large part to concerns of decreased marketability. Romance could provide a fun diversion in many of the books, but it was never the sole focus. These books gave permission for girls to fall in love with a career, and while reassuring them that romance would not be inaccessable to such working women, it never placed undue importance on relationships with men. Relationships with family and friends formed the strongest ties.

Most of the books follow formulas which include cliff-hanger chapter endings, no ageing, and common plots. The formula is partly due to the Stratemeyer Syndicate, begun by writer Edward Stratemeyer in 1905 who crafted a system in which he hired ghostwriters to complete books while he retained editorial control and the rights to the books. Edward’s daughters Harriet Stratemeyer Adams and Edna Stratemeyer Squier continued the Syndicate after his death. Harriet began the Dana Girls series and revised the Nancy Drew books, as well as writing new stories to continue the series. These series books were derided as mass-produced cheap literature, and libraries were often reluctant to include them in their collections. This began to change by the 1960s, which is evident by the library editions that began to be published around this time.

My love for reading Nancy Drew sparked the initial accrual of books but a passion for the materiality of the editions, an interest in history and preservation, and family connections soon played equal roles in the desire to collect. I am currently studying art conservation, and have been interested in a career as a conservator since I was in middle school. My collection predates this specific interest, but I have always been excited about the material remnants of history and how we must work to save them. For one of my college application essays, I wrote about how my collections – including that of these books – define me. I see collecting as an important facet of preservation. Personal collections can play as much a role in the longevity of objects as collecting by institutions.

My family connection to these series lies in the life of my great-great-uncle Julian R Paul, who was an illustrator for a number of them. Born in 1921, my Uncle Julie served in WWII and was a sign painter when stationed in the States. He was deployed to Japan, and was to be part of the invasive forces. He made drawings and watercolor sketches of the men on the boats and the decimated land of Japan after the atomic bombs left their mark. I was lucky enough to meet him when I was younger, and to see these moving mementos of his past and our nation’s history. Uncle Julie studied art and illustration at Pratt Institute and the Art Student’s League, and was a freelance illustrator. My grandmother modeled for him during the time he created cover art for books such as those published by Grosset & Dunlap. Although he usually is not a credited artist for these books, I did find his name in a
copyright for *The Mystery of the Shattered Glass* by Bruce Campbell (pseudonym for Samuel Epstein), a Ken Holt mystery story published by Grosset & Dunlap in 1958. The anonymity of many authors and artists involved in the production of these book series is regrettable, but I hope to bring more names to light and uncover more of the hidden work of my uncle with further research.

These books may not be the heavy hitting novels of conflict, or the awe-inspiring tales of survivors of tragedy, nor are they meditations on multiculturalism or intersectionality. Not to say that the themes raised by these books are simplistic themselves. Indeed, issues of self-love, acceptance, and confidence are often tackled, and the female sleuths work through ethical dilemmas as they solve their mysteries. Still, this collection primarily offers an escape. In the pages of mysteries set so clearly in a time removed from our own, we may indulge in a break from these turbulent times. This is an escape that informs children of the world their grandparents inhabited, an escape that engages their minds as they solve a mystery alongside the characters in the story. These books can be gateways to a world of reading, as they were for me. What began as my love of Nancy Drew morphed over the years into an appetite for Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes, *Jane Eyre* and Jane Austen. These mystery adventure series provide a connection to our past, and will continue to inspire young people into the future.

2. Birth and Growth of a Collection

I have always been a collector. When I was very young, trips to the Metropolitan Museum of Art always included a hunt for lost admission buttons. The best room was the carpeted costume institute, where museumgoers couldn’t hear as the colorful, concave logos fell to the ground, and dark lights obscured the shiny treasures from all but the eyes of a child. As I got older, my collections continued to include found objects and ephemera that reminded me of museums visited, shows seen, and trips taken. Soon I started to build collections of purchased souvenirs, beginning with those ubiquitous pressed pennies that used to require all the strength I could muster to make the final turn of the handle until – presto! – out popped my shiny, curved, slightly warm memento. Most of my collections originated in random purchases and childlike impulses, over time evolving into more carefully considered, curated assemblages. Of all my collections, one alone has remained consistent throughout my life: books. To be more specific, it is my collection of 20th century mystery adventure series for young girls, as typified by Nancy Drew, that has been the preoccupation of much of my young adult, teenage, and childhood years.

As with most, the collection had begun before I made the conscious decision to collect. I began reading Nancy Drew in second grade; they were the first chapter books and the first mysteries I had ever read, and I immediately fell in love with this smart, adventurous girl and the exploits to be found within the pages of her yellow binding. The first Nancy Drews I read were hardcover: the shiny, lightweight editions one might buy in stores today. Eventually, I was given my mother and grandmother’s old Nancy Drews which had once belonged to my grandmother’s aunt. These were dusty, worn, and the most wonderful books I had ever seen. Faded blue cloth covers with a black silhouetted figure peering through a magnifying glass on the front, the faint musty smell of books left in the attic for a few too many years, and yellowed pages that demanded care and attention in turning. I had already fallen in love with the stories, but now I fell in love with the books. I began looking for more of these old editions to fill in the gaps in the series, and my shelves began to grow.
Luckily, I had ready access to a bountiful selection of antique malls and flea markets. My mother and grandmother have an antiques business and since I was a baby we have traveled to Texas and Tennessee on long road trips to participate in antique shows. Each summer, crammed into the backseat of a mini-van with my sister, grandmother, and the endless supply of toys, crafts, and books they had packed to entertain us, I would struggle determinedly against my motion sickness to pore over page after page of my precious Nancy Drews. When it became difficult to keep track of which books I already owned and which books I still needed, I decided I had to start keeping track. Many of the newer Nancy Drews provide a handy list of the entire series, and I took to ripping this out and marking which books I owned. Often the sheet would go astray, and a new page would be torn. I cringe now to think of all those destroyed pages!

While I began my serious collection solely with Nancy Drew, the similarly bound books that often shared her shelves soon began to catch my eye. Who was Cherry Ames? And what about the Dana Girls by the same author as the Nancy Drew series? I noticed that Grosset & Dunlap were the publishers for all these series, and began to purchase some alongside my Nancy Drews. A search in my grandmother’s attic uncovered more copies of Nancy Drew, my uncle’s Hardy Boys, my grandmother’s Bobbsey Twins, and even a few from the Connie Blair series. I had never seen the Connie Blair series for sale before, but I loved reading these stories of a girl so similar to Nancy in her penchant for mysteries, but a career girl as opposed to the free-floating Nancy. I discovered that Cherry Ames – nurse extraordinaire – likewise shared the “career girl” moniker, as did airline stewardess Vieki Barr. Cherry and Vicki quickly became my new favorites, and I pored over shelves and shelves to find them.

When I began collecting these additional series I also decided to focus on obtaining examples from different printing campaigns. Over the years I had noticed obvious differences between the glossy hardcovers of my generation, the matte picture covers read by my mother, the tweed bound editions often missing their dust covers owned by my grandmother, and the rare, earlier editions with smooth, colorful bindings. As my collection grew, I decided to begin purchasing multiples of each book; provided, of course, that they were different formats. It was at this point that my current system of documentation was born. In the middle of a small notebook given to me by a dear family friend, I wrote out lists of every book in each of the series I currently collected, noting their name and number. To list the numbers alone would be much easier, but as I learned not every copy displayed the number and so the titles would have to be recorded as well. I created a notation system to describe the editions I was purchasing: for Nancy, “.” = “new, shiny edition,” “c” = “paper, newer editions,” “b” = “blue, older,” “B” = “blue, older w/cover,” “o” = “oldest, blue w/orange writing,” etc. Over the years I have added further distinctions, such as a dot in the middle of “o” to indicate “oldest, blue w/orange writing w/wartime conditions.”

The method of purchasing these books is very important to me in that I refuse to shop online. Something about it feels like cheating. I could easily complete my collection by obtaining books in this manner, so why am I so obstinate? In addition to the exorbitant cost of completing the collection in such a short time span, I truly enjoy the search. I derive such a thrill from coming across a shelf of Nancy Drews, poring through them for those few books still missing, or finding a rare Judy Bolton or Dana Girls. I am content to grow this collection gradually and organically.

My collection has also expanded to include more series over the years, such as Judy Bolton and The Happy Hollisters as well as the British Shirley Flight Air Hostess series. I have found Judy Bolton
to be one of the more difficult series to uncover, and for many years I only had four books from the series. More recently, I have been lucky to stumble across some of her books! I read my mother’s copies of The Happy Hollisters when I was very young, but it is the latest series to be added to the collection. Until recently I limited myself to stories of teenagers or young women, but with the addition of The Happy Hollisters the collection has expanded to include those towards younger children. The Happy Hollisters fall under the “outlier” category. There are also many lesser known, older, foreign, and “boy” series that I have begun to slowly accumulate. My primary focus remains the American mid-twentieth century mystery series marketed towards girls, but these outliers are important counterbalances to the collection. In time, I hope to grow this area of the collection and explore the development of such series from the beginning of the 20th century – even reaching back to the 19th century – along with their international reach.

It is through generations of family members that I obtained my passion for reading, collecting, and Nancy Drew. Objects have the power to remind us of our personal histories and teach us about our collective past; none quite so much, I believe, as books. I collect to fulfill my own love of reading, to remember my family’s history, and to someday pass along these very joys to my children. I collect to preserve the past, and to share the joy of Nancy Drew, Vicki Barr, Cherry Ames, and all those other strong young men and women whose exploits have inspired generations of readers.

3. Annotated Bibliography

Author. Title. Publisher, year (ca. year printed). Descriptors indicating format/edition.

An adapted bibliographic style has been adopted to fully communicate the key characteristics of each book, particularly as relates to the year of printing. Descriptors such as dust jacket, binding, endpapers, illustrations, back cover, paper quality, etc. indicate which campaign of printing the book belongs to. For most series, a full list of books has been provided to highlight gaps in the collection. Additionally, because many were printed under pseudonyms or incorrectly attributed, the decision was made to list the attribution as it appears on the book. For information on the true author, see tables accompanying each list. Additional tables for each of the series provide concise overviews of the collection. Estimated year of printing is listed on the tables and in parentheses following the year of copyright. This date has been estimated according to format and by comparison to date of publication of books listed on back or dust jacket.

The series have been placed in an order most aligned with the growth of the collection, with the outliers listed at the end. The order is as follows: Nancy Drew, Connie Blair, Cherry Ames, Vicki Barr, Dana Girls, Judy Bolton, and additional series.
The Nancy Drew Mystery Stories

The Nancy Drew books, written under pseudonym Carolyn Keene, includes over three-hundred books spanning multiple permutations. Many authors have contributed to the series over the years, and those contributing to the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories are listed in Table 1.

The original Nancy Drew Mystery Stories series – with 25 chapters per book – was written between 1930 and 1956 and consists of thirty-four books. These were published by Grosset & Dunlap.

The Nancy Drew Mystery Stories continued with revised editions of the original books now altered to 20 chapters each and additional books 35-56 written between 1959 and 1979.

Simon & Schuster published the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories beginning with volume 57, and new books up to number 175 were written until 2003. From 1979 to 2003 these additional 119 books were published as paperbacks by Wanderer, Minstrel, and Aladdin Paperbacks.

The Nancy Drew Files spinoff was published from 1986 to 1997, with 124 new books. In 2004 Nancy Drew: Girl Detective replaced the Nancy Drew Mystery Series. This series ended in 2012 with a total of forty-seven books. The Nancy Drew Diaries was launched in 2013.

Books from these later series are included in the collection only if they were books owned by myself or my mother when we were young. The primary concern of the collection is with the original 56 books of the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories series published by Grosset & Dunlap and their various printings.
Part 2 of Nancy Drew Collection: 1947-1961
Part 3 of Nancy Drew Collection: 1962-1986
Part 4 of Nancy Drew Collection: 1986-present

Part 5 of Nancy Drew Collection: Facsimile, foreign, library, Aladdin paperback, and other miscellaneous editions
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**KEY**

- Dust Jacket
- Missing Dust Jacket
- Picture Cover
- Glossy Picture Cover

1980
1. **The Secret of the Old Clock, 1930**


This copy of the very first Nancy Drew was gifted to me by my father, who had purchased the book under the impression that it was a first edition. An examination of its pages soon alerted me to a later date of publication due to a list that included subsequent books in the series, but it remains one of the earliest books in the collection. It serves as a reminder to always second guess anything labeled “first edition.” I don’t seek out first editions, partly due to cost. Additionally, I am more concerned with completing the series before looking for such rare pieces. This speaks to the nature of this collection, which is not about rare books but rather seeks to create a comprehensive survey of 20th century series for girls.


1. **The Secret of the Old Clock, 1959**


2. **The Hidden Staircase, 1930**

2. **The Hidden Staircase, 1959**


3. **The Bungalow Mystery, 1930**


3. **The Bungalow Mystery, 1960**


4. **The Mystery at Lilac Inn, 1930**

Keene, Carolyn. *The Mystery at Lilac Inn*. Grosset & Dunlap, 1930 (ca. 1938). Dust jacket white spine, blue binding orange figure, orange silhouette endpapers, one glossy illustration.


4. **The Mystery at Lilac Inn, 1961**


5. **The Secret at Shadow Ranch, 1931**


5. **The Secret at Shadow Ranch, 1965**


6. **The Secret of Red Gate Farm, 1931**


6. **The Secret of Red Gate Farm, 1961**


7. **The Clue in the Diary, 1932**


7. **The Clue in the Diary, 1962**


8. **Nancy’s Mysterious Letter, 1932**


8. **Nancy’s Mysterious Letter, 1968**


9. **The Sign of the Twisted Candles, 1933**


This slightly battered copy of *The Sign of the Twisted Candles* is one I believe to be a first edition based on visual clues such as the binding, number of illustrations, and endpapers. If so, it is the only first edition in my collection of Nancy Drews. The lack of dust cover speaks to a common trend in the collection, for many of the books lack this valuable component. Often the reason I can purchase these older editions is because a lack of dust cover decreases its value. If I later come across the same format with its dust cover at a reasonable price, I often purchase the book and try to sell the other copy.


9. **The Sign of the Twisted Candles, 1968**


10. **The Password to Larkspur Lane, 1933**

Keene, Carolyn. *The Password to Larkspur Lane*. Grosset & Dunlap, 1933 (ca. 1938-1941). Missing dust jacket, blue binding orange figure, orange silhouette endpapers, one glossy illustration.


10. The Password to Larkspur Lane, 1966

11. The Clue of the Broken Locket, 1934
Keene, Carolyn. The Clue of the Broken Locket. Grosset & Dunlap, 1934 (ca. 1938-1941). Missing dust jacket, blue binding orange figure, orange silhouette endpapers, one glossy illustration.
Keene, Carolyn. The Clue of the Broken Locket. Grosset & Dunlap, 1934 (ca. 1946). Missing dust jacket, dark blue binding orange figure, orange silhouette endpapers, one paper illustration missing, poor quality pulp paper.

11. The Clue of the Broken Locket, 1965

12. The Message in the Hollow Oak, 1935


15. *The Haunted Bridge*, 1937


15. *The Haunted Bridge*, 1972


17. *The Mystery of the Brass-Bound Trunk*, 1940

Keene, Carolyn. *The Mystery of the Brass-Bound Trunk*. Grosset & Dunlap, 1940 (ca. 1940-1941). Missing dust jacket, blue binding orange figure, orange silhouette endpapers, one glossy illustration.


18. *The Mystery at the Moss-Covered Mansion*, 1941


19. *The Quest of the Missing Map*, 1942


20. *The Clue in the Jewel Box*, 1943

20. *The Clue in the Jewel Box*, 1972


22. *The Clue in the Crumbling Wall*, 1945


22. *The Clue in the Crumbling Wall*, 1973


23. *The Mystery of the Tolling Bell*, 1946


23. *The Mystery of the Tolling Bell*, 1973


29. *The Mystery at the Ski Jump*, 1952


31. *The Ringmaster’s Secret*, 1953


32. *The Scarlet Slipper Mystery*, 1954
32. *The Scarlet Slipper Mystery*, 1974


34. *The Hidden Window Mystery*, 1956

34. *The Hidden Window Mystery*, 1975


35. *The Haunted Showboat, 1957*


37. *The Clue in the Old Stagecoach, 1960*


38. *The Mystery of the Fire Dragon, 1961*


40. *The Moonstone Castle Mystery*, 1963


41. *The Clue of the Whistling Bagpipes*, 1964


42. *The Phantom of Pine Hill*, 1965


43. *The Mystery of the 99 Steps*, 1966


44. *The Clue in the Crossword Cipher*, 1967


45. *The Spider Sapphire Mystery*, 1968


50. *The Double Jinx Mystery*, 1973


52. *The Secret of the Forgotten City*, 1975


55. *Mystery of Crocodile Island*, 1978


56. *The Thirteenth Pearl*, 1979


57. *The Triple Hoax*, 1979


Aladdin Paperbacks


130. *The Sign of the Falcon*, 1996


133. *The Mystery at the Crystal Palace*, 1996


137. *In Search of the Black Rose*, 1997


140. *The Door-to-Door Deception*, 1997


Foreign Editions
Keene, Carolyn. *Password to Larkspur Lane*. Collins, Great Britain, 1972. #30

Library Editions
	Bound by American Publishers Corporation of Chicago, IL, olive green binding.


Miscellaneous


The Connie Blair Mystery Stories

The Connie Blair Mystery Stories, written by Betty Cavanna under the pen name Betsy Allen between 1948 and 1958, includes twelve books. The twelfth book was written by an acquaintance of Cavanna. Another of the Grosset & Dunlap series, these follow the “adventures of a typical teen-age American girl” and each book features a different color in the title. Connie works her way from being a model at a department store in Philadelphia to being a secretary at an advertising firm. The mysteries are often set against diverse backdrops due to her work-related travels and family vacations.

Table 4: Authors of Connie Blair – all under pen name Betsy Allen

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
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Table 5: Connie Blair Collection

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1. **The Clue in Blue, 1948**


   This is one of the few books in the collection that was owned by my grandmother. Still retaining its dust jacket, it is the first in the Connie Blair series. When I read this as a child, I was very confused by Connie’s job as a model in a department store: what a strange idea! I love these books for this exact reason, and it is why I find them to be so important for young children. They provide an understanding of our history in a way that illuminates the small differences in everyday life, and reveal facts one wouldn’t learn in a history textbook.


2. **The Riddle in Red, 1948**


3. **Puzzle in Purple, 1948**


4. **The Secret of Black Cat Gulch, 1948**


5. **The Green Island Mystery, 1949**


6. **The Ghost Wore White, 1950**


7. *The Yellow Warning*, 1951
The Cherry Ames Nurse Stories

The Cherry Ames Nurse Stories, written between 1943 and 1968, includes twenty-seven books. Helen Wells was the original author, but she turned the series over to Julie Campbell Tatham beginning with volume 9, *Cruise Nurse*. Wells receives credit for this book, however, as the dust jacket had already been designed. Tatham later returned the series to Wells for volumes 17-27. Beginning with Cherry’s exploits in nursing school, the early books follow chronologically as she then proceeds to join the army during World War II. After the conclusion of the war, Cherry’s adventures become less chronological and can more easily be read out of order. Nurse Linda Laskowski-Jones notes that “Though the author wasn’t a nurse, she clearly researched her subject well as the book contained an admirable measure of accuracy, yet was still appropriate for the targeted young teen audience.” Cherry inspired many future nurses with proclamations such as “Only a nurse could experience such broad human adventure, such profound inner reward.”

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 6: Authors of Cherry Ames</th>
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<tr>
<td>1-8 Helen Wells</td>
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<td>10-16 Julie Campbell Tatham</td>
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<td>17-27 Helen Wells</td>
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## Table 7: Cherry Ames Collection

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### Key
- Dust Jacket
- Missing Dust Jacket
- Picture Cover
1. **Student Nurse, 1943**


2. **Senior Nurse, 1944**


*Senior Nurse* is a personal favorite of mine, and the final graduation scene when Cherry and all her classmates volunteer to join the army always brings me to tears. Full of all the “high jinks” one must learn to expect from Cherry, it also navigates the difficulties of friendship and teaches the oft repeated yet important lesson that meanness stems from insecurity and can be corrected with kindness and understanding. This copy is likely the first edition. Due to the wartime date of 1944, the paper is of a poor quality that has badly yellowed with time.


3. **Army Nurse, 1944**


As with the wartime edition of *Senior Nurse*, this first edition is likewise printed on poor quality paper and in a bright red binding. It too bears the label “A Wartime Book” and states that “This complete edition is produced in full compliance with the government’s regulations for conserving paper and other essential materials.” The graphic of an eagle carrying a book and a banner declaring “Books are weapons in the war of ideas” is a powerful image. The first in Cherry’s army career, *Army Nurse* explores the brutal realities of training. It is a softened version, to be sure, but not a bright and shiny one. Cherry and her classmates struggle, both physically and emotionally, with
their first encounter with war. One can’t help but think of the child who may have read this book. Perhaps her father was deployed in Europe, or her sister a nurse like Cherry playing her role in the conflict. To this end, the struggles are never insurmountable, and the overall tone is a hopeful one. In its original context, this patriotism and optimism is exactly what was needed.


4. *Chief Nurse, 1944*


5. *Flight Nurse, 1945*


Of all my copies of Cherry Ames, *Flight Nurse* is the story I have read and reread the most. It’s English setting, wartime context, dashing pilots, and the mysterious figure of Mark Grainger who is ultimately revealed to be British Intelligence are enthralling. It is here that Cherry learns of Lex’s engagement, and “frankly wept.” Immediately after the tears begin, however, she realizes “What am I really crying about? I never really wanted to marry him… Just the same a terribly forsaken feeling pervaded her. The pang would not go away.” This pang doesn’t last forever, and soon enough Cherry is swept up in Christmas festivities and overcomes her broken heart. Helen Wells skillfully navigates this loss of love, giving Cherry just the right amount of unwanted pain yet allowing her to move on from Lex and with her life. I marveled at this as a young girl, and it taught me the importance of self-love above all else. The front cover is also a masterful depiction of a strong, determined woman. Who can help but be inspired by such an image?

6. *Veterans’ Nurse, 1946*
7.  **Private Duty Nurse, 1946**

8.  **Visiting Nurse, 1947**

9.  **Cruise Nurse, 1948**

10. **At Spencer, 1949**

11. **Night Supervisor, 1950**

12. **Mountaineer Nurse, 1951**

13. **Clinic Nurse, 1952**

14. **Dude Ranch Nurse, 1953**

15. **Rest Home Nurse, 1954**


17. *Boarding School Nurse*, 1955


18. *Department School Nurse*, 1956

19. *Camp Nurse*, 1957


20. *At Hilton Hospital*, 1959


21. *Island Nurse*, 1960


23. *Staff Nurse*, 1962

24. *Companion Nurse*, 1964

25. *Jungle Nurse*, 1965


27. *Ski Nurse Mystery*, 1968
**The Vicki Barr Flight Stewardess Series**

The Vicki Barr Flight Stewardess Series, written between 1947 and 1964, includes sixteen books. Helen Wells was the original author, but she turned the series over to Julie Campbell Tatham beginning with volume 4, *The Secret of Magnolia Manor*. Wells receives credit for this book, however, as the dust jacket had already been designed before Wells abandoned the series. Tatham returned the series to Wells for volumes 8-15. The final volume, *The Brass Idol Mystery*, is credited to Helen Wells but is now believed to have been written by Walter B. Gibson. Vicki Barr travels to many exotic locales due to her job, but for the modern reader glimpses of commercial air travel in its earlier years is even more foreign. As Vicki progresses in her career and encounters newer jet planes and transatlantic flights, one can trace the evolution of aviation.

![Image of Vicki Barr Collection]

**Table 8: Vicki Barr Collection**

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<th>Dust Cover</th>
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**Table 9: Authors of Vicki Barr**

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<td>Julie Campbell Tatham</td>
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<td>8-15</td>
<td>Helen Wells</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Walter B. Gibson, attributed to Helen Wells</td>
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</table>
1. *Silver Wings for Vicki*, 1947


*Silver Wings for Vicki* is the first book in the Vick Barr series, and this copy is one of only two Vicki Barr editions in the collection to retain its dust jacket. The dust cover is in poor condition, and I hope to someday treat it. True to the time, women were restricted to the role of stewardess, but friend Jean Cox and later Vicki herself are licensed pilots. Vicki must first pass Stewardess School, however, and she does so with flying colors! Accuracy is assured by the author’s dedication: “I am grateful to Miss Ruth Anderson, Assistant Superintendent of Flight Stewardesses, American Airlines, for the information so generously given me in the preparation of this book.”


2. *Vicki Finds the Answer*, 1947


Unlike with some other series where the endpapers went through an evolution over the various printing campaigns, all Vicki Barr editions in the collection have the same teal, airport scene plastered across the front and back. These books span nearly twenty years, so it is surprising that no changes appear to have been made. Vicki Barr was never the most popular series, however, and thus it went through fewer re-printings than series such as the ubiquitous Nancy Drew or even the Dana Girls, both of which were also begun nearly twenty years prior to Vicki Barr.


3. *The Hidden Valley Mystery*, 1948


4. **The Secret of Magnolia Manor, 1949**


*The Secret of Magnolia Manor* is only one of two editions in the Vicki Barr collection with its dust jacket, and it is a good example of the way each of these series advertised the others in all spare space on the cover. In the inside of the jacket, both the other books in The Vicki Barr Flight Stewardess Series and The Cherry Ames Stories are advertised, and the back promotes the Beverly Gray Mystery Stories. The advertisement for Cherry Ames reads as follows:

> It is every girl’s ambition at one time or another to wear the crisp uniform of a nurse. The many opportunities for service, for adventure, for romance make a nurse’s career a glamorous one. Certainly, girls everywhere love to read stories in which a nurse is the heroine. At least a million girls already know and admire Cherry Ames, and have laughed over her pranks and thrilled over her gay adventures and wept over her problems. In case you have missed one of them, here is a complete list of all the *Cherry Ames* books in print.

It is from such lists of books that the date of printing is estimated. Often, by cross referencing all lists on the dust jacket and those printed within the pages of the book itself, the earliest possible date of printing can be obtained. Additionally, the marketing is a fascinating avenue to explore, and helps in gaining a glimpse into the desired audience and intended selling points of each series.

5. **The Clue of the Broken Blossom, 1950**


6. **Behind the White Veil, 1951**


7. **The Mystery at Hartwood House, 1952**


8. **Peril Over the Airport, 1953**


9. **The Mystery of the Vanishing Lady, 1954**

10. **The Search for the Missing Twin, 1954**

11. **The Ghost at the Waterfall, 1956**


12. **The Clue of the Gold Coin, 1958**


13. **The Silver Ring Mystery, 1960**


14. **The Clue of the Carved Ruby, 1961**


15. **The Mystery of Flight 908, 1962**


16. **The Brass Idol Mystery, 1964**
The Dana Girls Mystery Stories

The Dana Girls Mystery Stories, written between 1934 and 1968 and again between 1972 and 1979 under the pseudonym of Carolyn Keene, includes thirty books in the first set and seventeen books in the second set (thirteen of which were re-issued editions from the original set). Volumes 1-4 were written by Leslie McFarlane, volumes 5-12 and 14-16 were written by Mildred A. Wirt Benson, and 13, 17-30 (first set) and 14-17 (new titles in the second set) were written by Harriet S. Adams. The Dana Girls series is considered by many to be a combination of elements from the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew. They attend school, but also retain a degree of independence. Aunt Harriet and Uncle Ned, caretakers of the orphaned girls, refer to Edward Stratemeyer – founder of the Stratemeyer Syndicate – and his daughter Harriet Stratemeyer Adams who, with her sister Edna Stratemeyer Squier, created the Dana Girls series.
### Table 10: Authors of Dana Girls – all under pseudonym Carolyn Keene

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**Key:**
- **Dust Jacket**
- **Missing Dust Jacket**
- **Picture Cover**
- **Glossy Picture Cover**
1. **By the Light of the Study Lamp, 1934**

Keene, Carolyn. *By the Light of the Study Lamp*. Grosset & Dunlap, 1934 (ca. 1939). Missing dust jacket, pink binding, green figure endpapers, one glossy illustration.


2. **The Secret at Lone Tree Cottage, 1934**


3. **In the Shadow of the Tower, 1934**


4. **A Three-Cornered Mystery, 1935**


5. *The Secret at the Hermitage*, 1936


Of all the wartime editions in the collection, this is the only with its dust cover. It is a particularly unusual dust cover, with its bold, graphic pink and green and the words “A New Story by the Author of Nancy Drew” fancifully written diagonally across the back cover. An art deco influence is evident.


7. *The Mystery of the Locked Room*, 1938


8. *The Clue in the Cobweb*, 1939

9. *The Secret at the Gatehouse*, 1940
10. *The Mysterious Fireplace*, 1941


11. *The Clue of the Rusty Key*, 1942


15. *The Secret of the Jade Ring*, 1953


The Judy Bolton Mystery Stories

The Judy Bolton Mystery Series, written by Margaret Sutton between 1932 and 1967, includes thirty-eight books. Margaret Sutton was born Rachel Irene Beebe in Odin, Pennsylvania on January 22, 1903, and married William H. Sutton in 1924. Around 1930 her novel *Melissa of Dry Brook Hollow, or, The Great Roulsville Flood* was accepted by Grosset & Dunlap, but they changed the name of her main character as well as her own “too ethnic” Rachel to Margaret. In 1932, the book was finally published as the first Judy Bolton book, *The Vanishing Shadow*. Margaret Sutton legally changed her first name to retain the rights to the series, and over the years fought the editors over the direction of the stories.

Unusually, each story was “based on something that actually happened” and the author used her real life as source material. Even more unusual was Judy’s marriage and parental role, although Sutton was forced to write Roberta – Judy’s ward – out of the series. While never garnering the same popularity of the Nancy Drew series, the Judy Bolton series did attain a loyal following which only grows to this day.

Considered both one of the most popular and difficult series to collect, many volumes – particularly the later books which only went through one print run – are scarce.
Table 12: Judy Bolton Collection

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1. *The Vanishing Shadow*, 1932


This edition is striking with its green binding and pink endpapers. Many dust covers advertise other series in their inner flaps or back cover, but here even the hidden inside page is covered in advertisements! The back cover is also of note, due to its unusual presentation of the author’s image. Most of the series were written by ghostwriters, and Judy Bolton was unusual due to Margaret Sutton’s sole authorship. Judy Bolton was not part of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, which allowed Sutton a bit more control of her series. However, she blamed the Syndicate for the cancelation of the series, believing that they wanted to remove competition for the Nancy Drew series.


2. *The Haunted Attic*, 1932


3. *The Invisible Chimes*, 1932


4. *Seven Strange Clues*, 1932

5. *The Ghost Parade*, 1933

6. *The Yellow Phantom*, 1933

7. *The Mystic Ball*, 1934


This edition is special for its use of poor quality pulp paper in the post-war era. Nancy Drew books printed in 1946 likewise have poor quality paper, perhaps a remnant of wartime restrictions and the desire to continue conserving materials or use the available paper. 1946 is also the year when Judy Bolton books transitioned from green to red binding, and it is the red binding with blue print that appears here. In 1947, the books would keep the red color but transition to a clothlike cover, and also return to higher quality paper. This copy therefore embodies a moment of transition for the printing styles.

*The Riddle of the Double Ring* is also one of only a few Judy Bolton books I have read. This edition was found in the attic of my grandmother’s house, and I read it long before deciding to collect the series. The decision not to read the other copies in my collection stems from the fact that Judy Bolton is one of the few series that progresses chronologically, and one of the few in which the main character ages. For this reason I have decided to wait until I have a more complete set, and then to find a summer to read them from beginning to end.
11. *The Unfinished House*, 1938
13. *The Name on the Bracelet*, 1940
14. *The Clue in the Patchwork Quilt*, 1941


15. *The Mark on the Mirror*, 1942


17. *The Rainbow Riddle*, 1946


23. *The Black Cat’s Clue*, 1952


31. *The Discovery at the Dragon’s Mouth*, 1960

34. *The Puzzle in the Pond*, 1963
35. *The Hidden Clue*, 1964
37. *The Search for the Glowing Hand*, 1966
Additional Series - Children

The Happy Hollisters

The Happy Hollisters, written by Andrew E. Svenson under the pen name Jerry West between 1953 and 1969, includes thirty-three books. The only series in the collection directed towards young readers – those between the ages of 4 and 12 – it is also the only published not by Grosset & Dunlap but by Doubleday & Co. The Stratemeyer Syndicate was, however, responsible for the series and author Andrew Svenson was a partner in the company. After his death in 1975 the Syndicate assigned all rights to his widow, Marian Svenson, later becoming the property of The Hollister Family Properties Trust. The familial nature of the series extends to the stories, for Svenson modeled the Hollisters after his own family and took storylines from his past and interviews with school children and teachers. There are often educational aspects of the stories, as well as interaction with different cultures.

1. *The Happy Hollisters*


2. *The Happy Hollisters on a River Trip*


3. *The Happy Hollisters at Sea Gull Beach*


4. *The Happy Hollisters and the Indian Treasure*

5. The Happy Hollisters at Mystery Mountain

6. The Happy Hollisters at Snowflake Camp

7. The Happy Hollisters and the Trading Post Mystery

8. The Happy Hollisters at Circus Island

9. The Happy Hollisters and the Secret Fort

10. The Happy Hollisters at the Merry-Go-Round Mystery

11. The Happy Hollisters at Pony Hill Farm

12. The Happy Hollisters and the Old Clipper Ship

13. The Happy Hollisters at Lizard Cove

14. The Happy Hollisters and the Scarecrow Mystery

15. The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery of the Totem Faces

16. The Happy Hollisters and the Ice Carnival Mystery

17. The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery in Skyscraper City
18. **The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery of the Little Mermaid**

19. **The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery at Missile Town**

20. **The Happy Hollisters and the Cowboy Mystery**

21. **The Happy Hollisters and the Haunted House Mystery**

This book was owned by my mother, and is one of the many I read as a child. The story introduces the Hollister children, and the reader, to a deaf child. A chart of the American Sign Language alphabet is included in the Table of Contents. The inclusion of such a character was suggested by a reader, as West reveals in the verso. Although a part of the Stratemeyer Syndicate, Svenson’s sole control of the series enabled such interaction between author and reader.

22. **The Happy Hollisters and the Secret of the Lucky Coins**

23. **The Happy Hollisters and the Castle Rock Mystery**

24. **The Happy Hollisters and the Cuckoo Clock Mystery**

25. **The Happy Hollisters and the Swiss Echo Mystery**

26. **The Happy Hollisters and the Sea Turtle Mystery**

27. **The Happy Hollisters and the Punch and Judy Mystery**
28. The Happy Hollisters and the Whistle Pig Mystery

29. The Happy Hollisters and the Ghost Horse Mystery

30. The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery of the Golden Witch

31. The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery of the Mexican Idol

32. The Happy Hollisters and the Monster Mystery
33. The Happy Hollisters and the Mystery of the Midnight Trolls

Honey Bunch Books

Six Little Bunker Series
**Additional Series - Girls**

The Barton Books for Girls


Betty Gordon Series


The Campfire Girls Series


The Greycliff Girls Series


A Kay Tracey Mystery


The Moving Picture Girls Series


Shirley Flight Air Hostess


The Shirley Flight series was published in the United Kingdom in the 1960s, with many written by author Edward Reginald Home-Gall under pseudonym Judith Dale. Longer than Vicki Barr books, they are also considered more exciting and dangerous.


Additional Series - Boys

The Aeroplane Series (originally The Bird Boys Series)


The Airplane Boys Series


The Battleship Boys Series

The Hardy Boys


1. **The Tower Treasure**


2. **The House on the Cliff**


4. **The Missing Chums**


6. **The Shore Road Mystery**


22. **The Flickering Torch Mystery**


28. **The Sign of the Crooked Arrow**


32. **The Crisscross Shadow**

35. The Clue in the Embers


The Rick Brant Science-Adventure Series


The title of Rick Brant series tellingly includes the word “science.” Science, technology, and futuristic transportation are often explored in these series for young boys. Unfortunately lacking in the series for young girls, this is a product of mid-century America. Exposing such gaps is one of the key functions of these “additional series.”

Tom Corbett Space Cadet


Tom Swift Jr.


The X Bar X Boys

4. Wish List


The thirty-ninth book in the Nancy Drew series is the only number for which I own not a single edition. I would be content to purchase any format, so that I could finally declare success in owning a complete set of Nancy Drews. Ultimately, the goal is to obtain a complete set of solid blue bound editions, tweed blue bound editions, picture cover editions, and glossy hardcover editions.


Companion books were often produced in conjunction with these series. They can be telling about the future roles expected for the young readers. While Nancy was used to market a cookbook, a book of science projects accompanied the Rick Brant Science-Adventure Series.


Printed and distributed in the UK, these annuals each contain two Cherry Ames short stories by Helen Wells alongside contributions from other authors. It is curious that these annuals were only published abroad, and it would be interesting to see how the nature of the stories may have changed to suit this audience.

*Cherry Ames’ Nursing Game*. Parker Brothers, 1959.

Although books form the entirety of this collection, I would like to begin including items such as this board game. The difficulty in finding such pieces is all that has prevented me from expanding the collection to include related ephemera. A description of the game, found on “the cherry ames unofficial home page,” reads as follows:

In 1959, the Cherry Ames’ Nursing Game was published by American board game manufacturer, Parker Brothers. Designed for 2 to 6 players, the game consists of a center-seamed, illustrated game board depicting various rooms in a hospital, 6 colored tokens, 36 colored rings, 20 directional cards, and a spinner. The object of the game is to travel about the board, gather six rings, and then leave the board at the space marked graduate.


Finding a first edition of the first book in the Cherry Ames series is, perhaps surprisingly, of importance to me. Cherry Ames is my favorite series, but more significantly this first edition would have been printed during WWII. Of the first five books in the series, I have three such wartime editions, and I would like to complete this mini collection.


As explained, I hope to complete the mini collection of wartime first edition Cherry Ames books. In addition to the first story it is this, the fourth book, that I lack.


There is not a single foreign language edition in the collection, and while I don’t ever plan to direct my focus on that area alone, it would be interesting to obtain at least one such copy. This specific book is simply a stand in for any foreign language edition from any of the series. The cover art is strikingly different for these versions, and I am curious to see how and if the story and characters change as well.

I first learned of the Beverly Gray Mystery Stories from the back cover of a Vicki Barr dust jacket. It is amazing that these advertisements are still reaching their prime audiences! The advertisement reads as follows: “Beverly Gray is a delightful girl with a knack of attracting adventure and a flair for solving mysteries. Her fascinating experiences at college and as a career girl provide one of the most popular series for girls available today.” Beverly is usual in her attendance of college during the timeline of the stories. Vicki Barr, for example, went to college for two years, but the series finds her already set on a career path. I am curious as to the translation of the genre to the college campus.


The series was originally published by the A.L. Burt Company, who sold the rights to Grosset & Dunlap in 1938 after the publication of the first eight books. Grosset & Dunlap eliminated the sixth book, *Beverly Gray at the World’s Fair,* due to concerns of the setting dating the book too much. This is curious in consideration of the Cherry Ames books set during WWII. It also reveals the longevity they planned for this and other series. Due to the unusual nature of the Beverly Gray books with their continuing storylines, the removal of a book from the series caused confusion. The author campaigned for it to be reissued, and even offered to write a replacement volume, but neither of these occurred.


I would only purchase this book if it retained its dust jacket, because as opposed to most of the collection, my interest in this title is primarily due to the cover art and illustrations. Julian Paul, my great-great-uncle, has discussed his involvement in the production of illustrations for the Nancy Drew series. Currently, this is the only attribution I have been able to uncover. It is likely that his work went uncredited in many cases, however I hope to continue the search and find more such listings.
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