

The Ghost of Nancy Drew

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"It would be a shame if all that money went to the Tophams! They will fly higher than ever!"

Thus begins the first book in a series of titles that has whetted the literary appetites of young readers for well over fifty years. *The Secret of the Old Clock* by Carolyn Keene was to set the tone of juvenile adventure stories that is still leading young folks into the joys of reading the standard classics of literature.

Carolyn Keene has been writing the series books chronicling the adventures of Nancy Drew and the Dana Girls since 1929. With over 175 titles published, the author is still going strong, presently producing over fifteen new books each year. Her titles have been translated into at least twelve different languages, and sales records state that the volumes sold number in the hundreds of millions.

More than the mystery of the endurance of such unlikely literature is the question of who Carolyn Keene is and how one person could possibly be the author of such a record number of "best-sellers." Numerous literary histories offer conflicting information concerning the life of Ms Keene. The one common fact is that there exists no actual person by that name. Carolyn Keene is a pseudonym for the author of the series books.

Carolyn Keene was Edward Stratemeyer. Another source says that she was Harriet Adams. Yet others say that she was Edna Squire, Walter Karig, James Duncan Lawrence, Nancy Axelrad, Margaret Scherf, Grace Grote, and a plethora of others. What years of research have yielded is the fact that the one author who established both the original character of Nancy Drew and the characterization formula that has kept the

young detective so popular is one Mildred A. Wirt Benson. Mrs. Benson had created a heroine exhibiting the values and personality that she herself had shown as a student at The University of Iowa.

I first became intrigued by the ambiguous authorship of the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories in 1963 when I was a student doing volunteer work in the public library system in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Since the library catered to the needs of vacationing families, its shelves boasted a large collection of children's books, including the Nancy Drew books. As a child I had dutifully read both the Drew and Hardy Boys mystery stories. The quaint world of roadsters, touring cars, and running boards has stayed with me into my adult years.

What aroused my curiosity was the fact that library catalogue cards for the series listed as author: Carolyn Keene, *pseudonym*. As had millions of other readers, I had always assumed that there really was a Ms Keene, regularly churning out the exploits of the teenage sleuth.

Knowing the thoroughness with which librarians catalogue information, I was surprised that the authorship information simply stopped with the word *pseudonym*. Here was the first instance where I had seen no further information given. Inquiries to the library staff were of no help: no one even seemed to care. During the next three years the only printed fact I found was one small notation in an author catalogue: Carolyn Keene, *real name unknown*.

My first big lead came in the reference department in Baltimore's Enoch Pratt Free Library. While looking through an old volume of the *Cumulative Book Index*, I found a penciled notation next to the list of books by Carolyn Keene: Mildred Augustine Wirt, see Durward Howes' *American Women 1939-1940*. Locating that volume I read, among other biographical facts concerning Wirt, that she was also author of non-Drew titles including *Carolina Castle*, *Sky Racers*, *Through the Moon-Gate Door*, *The Shadow Stone*, and *The Runaway Caravan*. Pseudonyms listed included Dorothy West, Joan Clark, Frances K. Judd, and Carolyn Keene. Returning to the *Cumulative Book Index*, I found

under Wirt's name long lists of unfamiliar book titles. There were also the additional pen names of Frank Bell and Don Palmer. Checking under these two names and her other pseudonyms, I was able to compile a list of over fifty titles, not including the Nancy Drew books. Each year's edition of the CBI added titles to the already substantial list of books by this author.

Another entry appeared. This time it was not a pseudonym. Rather, it was a new surname. Wirt was now in parentheses, followed by the name Mrs. George Aaron Benson. Ms Wirt had gone and gotten married!

I diligently went through each year's volume. What information I gleaned was that this woman had written over 130 books, and, if every indication proved to be correct, was still writing. As Mildred A. Wirt she had written the Penny Parker Mystery Stories, Trailer Stories for Girls, the Ruth Darrow Flying Series, the Brownie Scout Series, the Girl Scout Series, the Cub Scout Series, a historical novel *Pirate Brig*, and numerous other nonseries mystery, adventure, and flying books. As Ann Wirt she had written the Madge Sterling Series. As Frances K. Judd, the Kay Tracey Mystery Stories; as Dorothy West, the Penny Nichols and Connie Carl books; as Frank Bell, the Flash Evans Series; as Don Palmer, the Boy Scout Explorer Series; and as Mildred Benson, *Quarry Ghost* and *Dangerous Deadline*. The latter was winner of the 1957 *Boys' Life*—Dodd, Mead Prize Competition for Children's Fiction.

My last stop that afternoon was to check the city directory for her last recorded home town, Toledo, Ohio. There, along with her address and telephone number, was listed her occupation—courthouse reporter, *Toledo Blade*.

During the next weeks I began the search for copies of Wirt's non-Drew books. With the majority being out-of-print, my visits to used book shops rewarded me with the first of many of her titles. A trip to Philadelphia resulted in my returning home with two full shopping bags. Each bookstore seemed to have some of her titles.

The next step was to start reading them. Even though author and character names were different, everything else seemed quite familiar: not just plot lines and situations, but colorful descriptions of country roads, dark passageways, and the like all had a pleasant, readable flow. There were even roadsters and touring cars. I truly had found a gold mine—Nancy Drew was having adventures in the guise of other characters.

I met Mildred A. Wirt in 1969. I had written to her requesting an interview because of an article appearing in the January 25, 1969, issue of *Saturday Review*. "The Secret of Nancy Drew" by Arthur Prager told of the "grandmotherly lady" who was author of the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories. Harriet S. Adams had been writing that popular series of books since its inception in 1930. She, along with four other authors, had also penned all Hardy Boys; Tom Swift, Jr.; and Bobbsey Twins books, and was yearly producing one new title per series. At that time she was working on her forty-third Drew title.

Having read the majority of books written under the name of Wirt and her pseudonyms, I was convinced that she indeed was Carolyn Keene. Therefore, why was this Adams woman being touted as author of those books?

I had since moved to Indianapolis, Indiana, which according to the map, did not seem to be too far from Toledo. I wrote to Wirt. Her response to my request was to have our meeting at her *Toledo Blade* office. She was a slight, gray-haired woman, both charming and witty. As she opened her desk drawer to put away her scarf I caught a glimpse of that particular issue of the *Saturday Review*. I knew that my decision to request the interview had been a good one.

Mildred Augustine was the first woman to graduate from the School of Journalism of The University of Iowa. She also received that University's first master's degree in journalism. While a student there she had had numerous short stories published in magazines including *St. Nicholas*, *Youth's Companion*, *Lutheran Young Folks*, and *Boy Life*. Many stories sold had

been written for English class, where teacher Frank Luther Mott had said that she had no potential as an author, giving her a "B" for her course work.

Having taken a year between degrees to work as general reporter and society editor at the *Clinton Herald*, she read an ad in a trade publication requesting authors to write books for children. Traveling to New York for an interview, she met with Edward Stratemeyer, who was hiring writers to produce books in various series he was overseeing. As an editor for Horatio Alger, he had learned how to successfully glut the market with countless titles for young folks.

Augustine showed him her many published short stories, being told that he would contact her, should there be any work suited to her particular style of writing. Shortly thereafter, Stratemeyer requested that she try to breathe new life into his faltering Ruth Fielding Series. *Ruth Fielding and Her Great Scenario* by Alice B. Emerson was written at her parents' home in Ladora, Iowa, the hackneyed plot and characters fighting her all the way through. Cupples and Leon published the title in 1927.

Stratemeyer was satisfied enough to request more Fielding titles. *Ruth Fielding at Cameron Hall* and *Ruth Fielding Clearing Her Name* were both written after hours in The University of Iowa School of Journalism. The series lasted for thirty volumes, the final eight titles being written by her.

Upon completion of each title, Augustine would receive the usual payment of \$100, accompanied by a short typed document to be signed by her. This "release" relegated to Stratemeyer all claims of authorship, plots, characters, and the names of Alice B. Emerson and Ruth Fielding.

Having since received her master's degree, Augustine began work for the Iowa City *Press-Citizen*, where she met and married Associated Press correspondent Asa Wirt. With her husband's move to Cleveland's *Plain Dealer*, Mrs. Wirt started writing the first of many books to be published under her own name. The Ruth Darrow Flying Series appeared in 1930 under the publishing banner of Barse & Company. The Darrow

character came about because of a new interest in women's flying exploits. The character's name was inspired by that of Ruth Elder who, in 1927, was the first woman to attempt a flight across the Atlantic Ocean. During the next two years Ruth Darrow was to have four adventures: *In the Air Derby*, *In the Fire Patrol*, *In Yucatan*, and *In the Coast Guard*. The year 1932 brought about the absorption of the Barse Company by Grosset & Dunlap. It was this same publishing house that had recently debuted the adventures of America's most famous girl sleuth.

During the time that Wirt was writing the first Darrow titles, Edward Stratemeyer contacted her asking if she were interested in beginning a new series of books for him. The Hardy Boys by Franklin W. Dixon had recently been put on the market as a new adventure-mystery series for young boys. Written for him by Canadian journalist Leslie McFarlane, the series proved to be instantly popular, warranting a similar set of books to be produced for young girls. Stratemeyer felt that Wirt's approach to the Fielding books was an indication that his new heroine would do well in her hands. The new character's name was to be Nancy Drew.

Stratemeyer's regimen for books produced through his offices was to hire established authors to write texts from brief synopses prepared by him. On index cards were listed character names, their relationships to one another, and a paragraph or two, telling the essence of the intended plot. Carolyn Keene's *The Secret of the Old Clock* was to tell of Drew's search for a missing will, hidden by one Josia Crowley. Wirt said of the plot received, "Certain hackneyed names and situations could not be bypassed. Therefore I concentrated on Nancy, trying to make her a departure from the stereotyped heroine of the day." Never was Nancy patterned after a real person. She was changeable to the reader, who projected her imagination to become Nancy. Nancy Drew represented freedom for girls which was a new concept. Girls were ready for that.

"Mr. Stratemeyer expressed bitter disappointment when he received the manuscript, saying the heroine was much too flip, and would never be well received." Wirt's manuscript never-

theless was sent off to Alexander Grosset and George Dunlap, whose publishing house aggressively had been selling Stratemeyer's Hardy Boys, Tom Swift, and Bobbsey Twins books. Not sharing the viewpoint of Stratemeyer, the publishers requested that the same author prepare two more titles for the series. *The Hidden Staircase* and *The Bungalow Mystery* were to be distributed simultaneously with the first title. The three-volume "breeder set" was published in 1930. Wirt's payment per book was \$125, with all rights released over to Stratemeyer, as was required of all of his "ghosts."

Immediate sales figures foretold the financial potential of the series, prompting a need for additional titles. The books, seemingly destined for star status, almost met an early demise: Edward Stratemeyer died on May 10, 1930. His organization had been supplying all titles in Grosset and Dunlap's inventory of series starring Rover Boys, Outdoor Girls and Boys, Moving Picture Girls and Boys, Bunny Brown, Six Little Bunkers, Honey Bunch, Gary Grayson, X Bar X Boys, Ted Scott, Blythe Girls, and others. Panicking, the publishers appealed to the Stratemeyer daughters, Harriet and Edna. The women, who had not been allowed to participate in their father's business dealings, took over his operations, forming what eventually was to be called the Stratemeyer Syndicate. Original staff and ghost writers were retained at the request of Stratemeyer's principal publishing houses, Grosset & Dunlap and Cupples & Leon. Writing continuity within each series thus was assured.

Mildred Wirt received a request for the next Nancy Drew mystery story, *The Mystery at Lilac Inn*. This title most likely was the last to depend on a plot devised by Stratemeyer before his death. Wirt dutifully wrote *The Secret at Shadow Ranch*, *The Secret at Red Gate Farm*, and *The Clue in the Diary*. Requests also came for the first two titles in a new series for girls. As Julia K. Duncan, Wirt was to write *Doris Force at Locked Gates* and *Doris Force at Cloudy Cove*.

At the height of the Great Depression, Wirt received distressing news from Harriet Stratemeyer Adams: payment for forth-



coming books would have to be reduced to \$75 per manuscript. Wirt declined the invitation to write the next three volumes in the Drew series. *Nancy's Mysterious Letter*, *The Password to Larkspur Lane*, and *The Sign of the Twisted Candles* all appeared as scheduled. Adams had enlisted the talents of another of her ghosts to write those titles. A war historian and best-selling novelist, Walter Karig, had written several Perry Pierce, X Bar X Boys, and two Doris Force books for her organization. His schedule had permitted his producing the three Drew titles on demand.

The hiatus from the work for Adams had permitted Wirt's visiting various publishing houses to sell her independent work. Her first series to see print from the Goldsmith Publishers was the three-volume Madge Sterling Series by Ann Wirt. *The Missing Formula*, *The Deserted Yacht*, and *The Secret of the Sundial* were all shorter in length than most mystery stories of the day, having only fifteen chapters, instead of the traditional twenty-five. With the thickness of these dime store-distributed

titles being less than usual, Wirt's first name could not be accommodated across the books' spines. The name of Ann was chosen arbitrarily by the publishers to replace that of Mildred.

1934 saw Wirt's return to the Nancy Drew series. The Stratemeyer organization had been able to offer acceptable payment for its contract work, and *The Clue of the Broken Locket* was published. *The Message in the Hollow Oak* was the title for 1935. It was also in that year that Wirt received a book order to continue a Stratemeyer-owned series that had been begun by someone else. The Kay Tracey Mystery Stories by Frances K. Judd had had its first two titles written by children's author Anna Perrott Wright. Wirt's first contribution to that seventeen-volume series was *The Mystery of the Swaying Curtains*. She eventually was to write the next eleven titles, ending with *The Sacred Feather* in 1940. Kay Tracey's adventures were published by Grosset & Dunlap's heartiest competitor, Cupples & Leon.

Victor W. Cupples and Arthur T. Leon were the first major publishers to accept large numbers of books written by the Stratemeyers' most prolific ghost. Beginning with *The Twin Ring Mystery* in 1935, the firm published fifty-six independently produced titles by Wirt.

The respected Penn Publishing Company also had a 1935 Wirt title. *Sky Racers* was the first of two flying novels to come from that company. Before its later absorption by Books, Incorporated of New York, it published Wirt's first historical novel for children, *Carolina Castle*. Both *Sky Racers* and *Courageous Wings* were reprinted frequently by the latter company. *Carolina Castle*, one of Wirt's finest works, saw few print runs, now being her scarcest title.

Grosset & Dunlap had recently come out with a new girls' series by Carolyn Keene. The Dana Girls were younger versions of Nancy Drew, solving mysteries between classes at Starhurst Boarding School. Author of the first four of their adventures was Leslie McFarlane, ghost of the Hardy Boys. McFarlane said years later in his autobiography that he "was tempted to turn them loose in one of Bayport's numerous

abandoned buildings with the Hardy Boys, just to see what would happen. It might have done the four of them no end of good."

Wirt was requested to write manuscripts for all Dana titles from 1936 through 1954. She also received orders for five of the Syndicate's Honey Bunch Books: *Her First Little Treasure Hunt*, *Her First Little Club*, *Her First Trip in a Trailer*, *Her First Trip to a Big Fair*, and *Her First Twin Playmates*.

1936 was the beginning of Wirt's most prolific period. Cupples & Leon were so pleased with the success of *The Twin Ring Mystery* that they advertised the new Mildred A. Wirt Mystery Series. "Mildred A. Wirt sounds a new and triumphant note in the field of mystery and adventure stories for girls with this vibrant group of stories. Told in the modern manner with a warmth of depth and feeling, and a powerful web of suspense, these stories unfold against colorful backgrounds in a panorama of excitement and mystery." From 1936 to 1940 she added eight titles to the series, including *The Clue at Crooked Lane*, *The Hollow Wall Mystery*, *The Shadow Stone*, *The Wooden Shoe Mystery*, *Through the Moon-Gate Door*, *Ghost Gables*, *The Painted Shield*, and *Mystery of the Laughing Mask*.

The Trailer Stories for Girls was yet another set published by Cupples & Leon in 1937. The "thoroughly modern series of adventure stories, unique in subject matter, precise in treatment and alive with up-to-the minute action," consisted of *The Runaway Caravan*, *The Crimson Cruiser*, *Timbered Treasure*, and *The Phantom Trailer*.

Joan Clark's Penny Nichols Series was the last series to be started during that two-year period. The four-title series was published by Goldsmith Publishers, still garnering profits from her earlier Madge Sterling Series. Under the Clark identity she also wrote that company's *Connie Carl at Rainbow Ranch* in 1939.

The years 1938 and 1939 produced two additional series from Cupples & Leon: Dot and Dash by Dorothy West and Flash Evans by Frank Bell. The five-title Dot and Dash Series told of adventures of a young girl and her dog and was aimed at much younger readers. By contrast, *Flash Evans and the Darkroom*

Mystery and *Camera News Hawk* were for older boys. The latter series proved to be so impressive that producers for radio's *Jack Armstrong, All-American Boy* wrote to the books' publishers asking that they contact "Mr. Bell" concerning his writing scripts for their program.

Wirt's most significant independent series was begun in 1939, once again for Cupples & Leon. The Penny Parker Mystery Stories strove for realism. "Featuring a daring, live-wire heroine—Penny Parker, daughter of a newspaper editor and a girl with a real 'nose for news'—these stories with their glamorous newspaper background unfold a series of baffling mysteries that lead the unofficial girl reporter into countless thrills and dangers." Titles such as *The Clock Strikes Thirteen*, *Hoofbeats on the Turnpike*, *Saboteurs on the River*, *Guilt of the Brass Thieves*, *Signal in the Dark*, *Voice from the Cave*, *Swamp Island*, and *The Cry at Midnight* were unusual for this genre of children's fiction. So was the often solemn approach used to stress the severity of the war years. Few books of that era dealt with black market sales, mine detection devices, and brass and gold hoarding. Penny Parker encountered them all.

Even Penny Parker could not seem to overcome the popularity of Nancy Drew. Going as strong as ever, the Drew girl was still having her adventures written by Wirt. However, there was a change that had begun to come into the texts of the books. The original volumes in the series had been written from a paragraph-long plotline that had been supplied by Edward Stratemeyer, and later by his daughters. As the series progressed over the years, the paragraph evolved into page, pages, and finally an outline to which Wirt steadfastly complied. Character development and inventiveness were phased out in favor of what was to be known as the Stratemeyer Syndicate's "formula." Chapter beginnings and endings were specifically defined. The use of short words and sentences was stressed. The Stratemeyer sisters were becoming experts at how juvenile fiction should be written.

In the late 1940s the Nancy Drew Mystery Stories and Dana Girls Mystery Stories began appearing in print with small

alterations made from Wirt's original manuscripts. The first changes were barely noticeable: discreet changes of word placement, numerous adverbs added, small deletions from the original. By the time 1947's *The Clue in the Old Album* was published, it had been altered so drastically that the entire original text had been rewritten. Someone was practicing how to write Nancy Drew.

Mildred Wirt received an order for *The Ghost of Blackwood Hall* in 1947. It would be the last title of the Drew series she would write until 1953's *The Clue of the Velvet Mask*. Four titles were to be written by Iris Vinton and others, only to have Wirt return for that one final contribution in 1953. *Mystery at the Crossroads*, 1954's Dana Girls adventure, was to be Wirt's last book written for the Stratemeyer Syndicate.

The final four series written by Wirt were all published by her principal company, Cupples & Leon. Brownie Scout, Girl Scout, and Cub Scout series had six, three, and six titles respectively. The Boy Scout Explorer Series by Don Palmer boasted three volumes. Dodd, Mead and Company's *Dangerous Deadline* (1957) and *Quarry Ghost* (1959) were the last two titles written by her.

In 1959, Grosset & Dunlap began publishing a new *The Secret of the Old Clock* and *The Hidden Staircase*. Shorter in length, they and all subsequent "updated" titles bore the inscription on their copyright page, "This new book for today's readers is based on the original of the same title." Wirt's earliest writing of the Syndicate-owned titles was being phased out. On the average of two volumes per year, all original Drew titles by her have been rewritten to remove what the Syndicate called "objectionable material." The character of Nancy Drew also underwent a dramatic change: the strong-willed teen was having her personality diluted, causing her to lose her characteristic independence.

During the period of the first revisions of the Drew books, the name of Harriet Adams was beginning to be brought to the attention of the public. It seemed that for years she secretly had been writing all of the bestselling children's series books, and

only now was going public. Occasional articles said that the Hardy and Drew series had had their first titles written by her father before his death, but the majority of all press releases stated that it indeed was she who was sole author. Mildred Wirt said not a word. She was legally sworn to secrecy by having signed the releases for all of her work.

Publishing history was made in 1979. All subsequent books in Stratemeyer Syndicate series were to be published by Simon and Schuster. The relationship between the Syndicate and Grosset & Dunlap, begun in 1914, had come to an end. The reason for the separation was not made public. Grosset & Dunlap sued the Syndicate and Simon and Schuster. The Syndicate sued Grosset & Dunlap.

The lawsuit did not come to trial until 1980 and publicity for it waned, for this was to be a year of celebration. Nancy Drew was fifty years old and still as popular as ever. Harriet Adams and new publisher Simon & Schuster were in the spotlight. The festivities received coverage from *Time*, *Newsweek*, and the *New York Times*. Adams was interviewed on National Public Radio. The National Endowment for the Arts was sponsoring a filmed documentary made by her grandson, because she was a "national treasure." The name Wirt was never mentioned.

The United States District Court opened the case of Grosset & Dunlap versus Gulf & Western Corporation and the Stratemeyer Syndicate in May of 1980. Present was Grosset & Dunlap's principal witness: Mildred A. Wirt. Wirt had learned of the impending trial from one of her fans. I had been told of the lawsuit during a lecture I was giving to book collectors and had passed the information along to her. During that same period of time Wirt had been contacted by an editor of Grosset & Dunlap's juvenile line. The company had recently purchased the inventory of the long defunct Cupples & Leon Company. On review of their assets they had come upon her Penny Parker Mystery Stories and felt that the books would be a good addition to their line of series books. Wirt was asked if she were interested in revising the texts for today's readers. During a telephone conversation concerning her reworking of the series,

Wirt asked about the progress of the trial. When asked what her interest was, she replied: "I wrote the books."

Present in the courtroom on opening day was Harriet Adams. Upon being introduced to Wirt, her first response was, "I thought that you were dead."

While on the witness stand Wirt was presented with numerous documents and letters which had been subpoenaed by the plaintiff's attorneys. She was able to identify and verify all work releases signed by her, as well as numerous documents that proved the truth about her claims to authorship. Letters submitted included one from 1938 sent to Adams from attorneys for Warner Brothers Pictures, Inc. It had seemed that the planned series of motion pictures about Nancy Drew could not come about unless Wirt were forced to sign a release of movie rights for her books. The original releases she had signed had made no mention of any medium, other than the written one.

Another letter was submitted as evidence. The arrival of Nancy Drew to television had prompted the Syndicate's attorneys to "remind" Wirt that should she make any claim to the Drew character, "legal or equitable action including an action for damages" would be taken against her.

The trial ended. Judge Robert J. Ward found in favor of the Stratemeyer Syndicate. While author pseudonyms and principal characters appeared in all series titles, the content of a particular book was not contingent on what had gone before in previous volumes. Therefore, Simon and Schuster was to be the new publisher of all Syndicate titles.

While on the witness stand, Harriet Adams was presented with, and questioned about the releases signed by both her and Wirt. Even though she publicly acknowledged that Wirt was author of the books, she still insisted, "I wrote the books." Adams then became so unnerved by her cross-examination that she fell out of her chair in the witness box. Judge Ward called for an early ending to the day's proceedings.

Harriet Adams died in 1982. Her many obituaries celebrated her as author of hundreds of childrens' books, including all Hardy Boys, Bobbsey Twins, Tom Swift, and Nancy Drew

titles. Her work was to be carried on by her once-silent partners Nancy Axelrad, Lorraine S. Rickle, and Lieselotte Wuenn. The partnership was dissolved in 1984. All titles, characters, and properties were sold to Simon and Schuster.

Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys have begun to appear in more titles than ever before. Each set of characters has had created an additional series written for more mature readers. The older teen market is reading the exciting adventures of a new genre of heroine. She is fiercely independent, daunted by no limitations previously endured by the Syndicate-written Nancy. Nancy Drew has once again become the Nancy Drew created by Mildred A. Wirt.

I last spent time with Mildred Wirt Benson on Thanksgiving in 1987. She is still active as a full-time reporter for the *Toledo Blade*. She swims and plays golf regularly and retains pilot's licenses for private, commercial, seaplane, and instrument flight, regularly participating in the Louisiana Air Tour.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following is a bibliography of the published works of Mildred A. Wirt Benson. Series titles are listed in sequence of publication, under the various names and pseudonyms used by her. Pseudonyms followed by an asterisk (*) are those owned by Edward Stratemeyer, and later, by the Stratemeyer Syndicate. Dates are those of first publication of said titles. Numerous short stories are not included.

BELL, FRANK

Flash Evans Books

Flash Evans and the Darkroom Mystery 1940

Flash Evans, Camera News Hawk 1940

BENSON, MILDRED

Dangerous Deadline 1957

Quarry Ghost 1959

Kristie at College [Quarry Ghost] 1960

CLARK, JOAN

Penny Nichols Mystery Stories

Penny Nichols Finds a Clue 1936

Penny Nichols and the Mystery of the Lost Key 1936

Penny Nichols and the Black Imp 1936

Penny Nichols and the Knob Hill Mystery 1939

Connie Carl at Rainbow Ranch 1939

DUNCAN, JULIA K. *

Doris Force Mystery Stories

Doris Force at Locked Gates 1931

Doris Force at Cloudy Cove 1931

EMERSON, ALICE B. *

The Ruth Fielding Series

Ruth Fielding and Her Great Scenario 1927

Ruth Fielding at Cameron Hall 1928

Ruth Fielding Clearing Her Name 1929

Ruth Fielding in Talking Pictures 1930

Ruth Fielding and Baby June 1931

Ruth Fielding and Her Double 1932

<i>Ruth Fielding and Her Greatest Triumph</i>	1933
<i>Ruth Fielding and Her Crowning Victory</i>	1934
JUDD, FRANCES K. *	
Kay Tracey Mystery Stories	
<i>The Mystery of the Swaying Curtains</i>	1935
<i>The Shadow on the Door</i>	1935
<i>The Six Fingered Glove Mystery</i>	1936
<i>The Green Cameo Mystery</i>	1936
<i>The Secret at the Windmill</i>	1937
<i>Beneath the Crimson Brier Bush</i>	1937
<i>The Message in the Sand Dunes</i>	1938
<i>The Murmuring Portrait</i>	1938
<i>When the Key Turned</i>	1939
<i>In the Sunken Garden</i>	1939
<i>The Forbidden Tower</i>	1940
<i>The Sacred Feather</i>	1940
KEENE, CAROLYN *	
<i>Mystery at the Lookout</i>	1942
Dana Girls Mystery Stories	
<i>The Secret at the Hermitage</i>	1936
<i>The Circle of Footprints</i>	1937
<i>The Mystery of the Locked Room</i>	1938
<i>The Clue in the Cobweb</i>	1939
<i>The Secret at the Gatehouse</i>	1940
<i>The Mysterious Fireplace</i>	1941
<i>The Clue of the Rusty Key</i>	1942
<i>The Portrait in the Sand</i>	1943
<i>The Secret in the Old Well</i>	1944
<i>The Clue in the Ivy</i>	1952
<i>The Secret of the Jade Ring</i>	1953
<i>Mystery at the Crossroads</i>	1954
Nancy Drew Mystery Stories	
<i>The Secret of the Old Clock</i>	1930
<i>The Hidden Staircase</i>	1930
<i>The Bungalow Mystery</i>	1930
<i>The Mystery at Lilac Inn</i>	1930
<i>The Secret at Shadow Ranch</i>	1931
<i>The Secret of Red Gate Farm</i>	1931

<i>The Clue in the Diary</i>	1932
<i>The Clue of the Broken Locket</i>	1934
<i>The Message in the Hollow Oak</i>	1935
<i>The Mystery of the Ivory Charm</i>	1936
<i>The Whispering Statue</i>	1937
<i>The Haunted Bridge</i>	1937
<i>The Clue of the Tapping Heels</i>	1939
<i>The Mystery of the Brass Bound Trunk</i>	1940
<i>The Mystery at the Moss-Covered Mansion</i>	1941
<i>The Quest of the Missing Map</i>	1942
<i>The Clue in the Jewel Box</i>	1943
<i>The Secret in the Old Attic</i>	1944
<i>The Clue in the Crumbling Wall</i>	1945
<i>The Mystery of the Tolling Bell</i>	1946
<i>The Clue in the Old Album</i>	1947
<i>The Ghost of Blackwood Hall</i>	1948
<i>The Clue of the Velvet Mask</i>	1953

PALMER, DON

Boy Scout Explorer Series

<i>Boy Scout Explorers at Emerald Valley</i>	1955
<i>Boy Scout Explorers at Treasure Mountain</i>	1955
<i>Boy Scout Explorers at Headless Hollow</i>	1957

THORNDYKE, HELEN LOUISE *

Honey Bunch Books

<i>Honey Bunch, Her First Little Treasure Hunt</i>	1937
<i>Honey Bunch, Her First Little Club</i>	1938
<i>Honey Bunch, Her First Trip in a Trailer</i>	1939
<i>Honey Bunch, Her First Trip to a Big Fair</i>	1940
<i>Honey Bunch, Her First Twin Playmates</i>	1941

WEST, DOROTHY

Dot and Dash Books

<i>Dot and Dash at the Maple Sugar Camp</i>	1938
<i>Dot and Dash at Happy Hollow</i>	1938
<i>Dot and Dash in the North Woods</i>	1938
<i>Dot and Dash in the Pumpkin Patch</i>	1939
<i>Dot and Dash at the Seashore</i>	1940

WIRT, ANN

Madge Sterling Series

<i>The Missing Formula</i>	1932
<i>The Deserted Yacht</i>	1932
<i>The Secret of the Sundial</i>	1932
WIRT, MILDRED A.	
<i>Sky Racers</i>	1935
<i>The Twin Ring Mystery</i>	1935
<i>Carolina Castle</i>	1936
<i>Courageous Wings</i>	1937
<i>Mystery of the Laughing Mask</i>	1940
<i>Linda</i>	1940
<i>Pirate Brig</i>	1950
Brownie Scout Series	
<i>The Brownie Scouts at Snow Valley</i>	1949
<i>The Brownie Scouts in the Circus</i>	1949
<i>The Brownie Scouts in the Cherry Festival</i>	1950
<i>The Brownie Scouts and Their Tree House</i>	1951
<i>The Brownie Scouts at Silver Beach</i>	1952
<i>The Brownie Scouts at Windmill Farm</i>	1953
Dan Carter, Cub Scout Series	
<i>Dan Carter, Cub Scout</i>	1949
<i>Dan Carter and the River Camp</i>	1949
<i>Dan Carter and the Money Box</i>	1950
<i>Dan Carter and the Haunted Castle</i>	1951
<i>Dan Carter and the Great Carved Face</i>	1952
<i>Dan Carter and the Cub Honor</i>	1953
Girl Scout Series	
<i>The Girl Scouts at Penguin Pass</i>	1953
<i>The Girl Scouts at Singing Sands</i>	1955
<i>The Girl Scouts at Mystery Mansion</i>	1957
Mildred A. Wirt Mystery Stories	
<i>The Clue at Crooked Lane</i>	1936
<i>The Hollow Wall Mystery</i>	1936
<i>The Shadow Stone</i>	1937
<i>The Wooden Shoe Mystery</i>	1938
<i>Through the Moon-Gate Door</i>	1938
<i>Ghost Gables</i>	1939
<i>The Painted Shield</i>	1939

Penny Parker Mystery Stories

<i>Tale of the Witch Doll</i>	1939
<i>The Vanishing Houseboat</i>	1939
<i>Danger at the Drawbridge</i>	1940
<i>Behind the Green Door</i>	1940
<i>Clue of the Silken Ladder</i>	1941
<i>The Secret Pact</i>	1941
<i>The Clock Strikes Thirteen</i>	1942
<i>The Wishing Well</i>	1942
<i>Ghost Beyond the Gate</i>	1943
<i>Saboteurs on the River</i>	1943
<i>Hoofbeats on the Turnpike</i>	1944
<i>Voice from the Cave</i>	1944
<i>The Guilt of the Brass Thieves</i>	1945
<i>Signal in the Dark</i>	1946
<i>Whispering Walls</i>	1946
<i>Swamp Island</i>	1947
<i>The Cry at Midnight</i>	1947

Ruth Darrow Flying Stories

<i>Ruth Darrow in the Air Derby</i>	1930
<i>Ruth Darrow in the Fire Patrol</i>	1930
<i>Ruth Darrow in the Coast Guard</i>	1931
<i>Ruth Darrow in Yucatan</i>	1931

Trailer Stories for Girls

<i>The Runaway Caravan</i>	1937
<i>The Crimson Cruiser</i>	1937
<i>Timbered Treasure</i>	1937
<i>The Phantom Trailer</i>	1938