

= Cicely Mary Barker =

Cicely Mary Barker (28 June 1895 ? 16 February 1973) was an English illustrator best known for a series of fantasy illustrations depicting fairies and flowers . Barker 's art education began in girlhood with correspondence courses and instruction at the Croydon School of Art . Her earliest professional work included greeting cards and juvenile magazine illustrations , and her first book , Flower Fairies of the Spring , was published in 1923 . Similar books were published in the following decades .

Barker was a devout Anglican , and donated her artworks to Christian fundraisers and missionary organizations . She produced a few Christian @-@ themed books such as The Children ? s Book of Hymns and , in collaboration with her sister Dorothy , He Leadeth Me . She designed a stained glass window for St. Edmund 's Church , Pitlake , and her painting of the Christ Child , The Darling of the World Has Come , was purchased by Queen Mary .

Barker was equally proficient in watercolour , pen and ink , oils , and pastels . Kate Greenaway and the Pre @-@ Raphaelites were the principal influences on her work . She claimed to paint instinctively and rejected artistic theories . Barker died in 1973 . Though she published Flower Fairy books with spring , summer , and autumn themes , it wasn 't until 1985 that a winter collection was assembled from her remaining work and published posthumously .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

Barker was born the second daughter and youngest child of Walter Barker , a partner in a seed supply company and an amateur artist , and his wife Mary Eleanor (Oswald) Barker on 28 June 1895 at home at 66 Waddon Road in Croydon , Surrey , England . Barker was an epileptic as a child , and cared for at home by her parents . Later , her sister and elder by two years , Dorothy Oswald Barker , continued the care .

The family of four was moderately well off , and belonged to the lower end of the upper middle class . A nanny , a governess , and a cook to prepare special meals for Barker were hired . She spent much time in bed at home amusing herself with painting books and a nursery library that included the works of Kate Greenaway and Randolph Caldecott ? two artists who exerted strong influences on her later art .

= = = Art education and first professional work = = =

Barker took correspondence courses in art , probably until about 1919 . In 1908 at 13 years , she entered an evening class at the Croydon School of Art , and attended the school into the 1940s . In time , she received a teaching position .

In 1911 , Raphael Tuck & Sons bought four of Barker 's " little drawings " for half a sovereign , and published them as postcards . In October 1911 , she won second prize in the Croydon Art Society 's poster competition , and shortly afterward was elected the youngest member of the Society . The art critic for the Croydon Advertiser remarked , " Her drawings show a remarkable freedom of spirit . She has distinct promise . "

Following her father ? s death in June 1912 , the seventeen @-@ year @-@ old Barker submitted art and poetry to My Magazine , Child ? s Own , Leading Strings , and Raphael Tuck annuals in an effort to support both her mother and sister . Her sister Dorothy taught kindergarten in two private schools before opening a kindergarten at home . She brought in some money for the family 's support while supervising the household .

= = = Flower Fairies of the Spring , 1923 = = =

Fairies became a popular theme in art and literature in the early 20th century following the releases

of The Coming of the Fairies by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle , Peter Pan by J.M. Barrie , and the fairy @-@ themed work of Australian Ida Rentoul Outhwaite . Queen Mary made such themes even more popular by sending Outhwaite postcards to friends during the 1920s . In 1918 , Barker produced a postcard series depicting elves and fairies .

In 1923 , Barker sent her flower fairy paintings to various publishers . Blackie paid £ 25 for 24 paintings with accompanying verses , but it wasn 't until publication of Flower Fairies of the Summer in 1925 that Barker received royalties for her work . Mary Violet Clayton Calthrop , wife of author Dion Clayton Calthrop , wrote in April 1925 about Barker and Flower Fairies of the Spring : " She has such exquisite taste , besides draughtsmanship . "

= = = The Waldrons = = =

In 1924 , the family moved into a four @-@ level , semi @-@ detached Victorian house at 23 The Waldrons . Barker had a studio built in the garden and her sister conducted a kindergarten in a room at the back of the house . The family lived frugally and attended both St. Edmund 's and St. Andrew 's in Croydon ? " low " churches for the less privileged . Barker sometimes incorporated portraits of her fellow parishioners in her religious works . She was described by Canon Ingram Hill as " one of the pillars " of St. Andrew 's .

The children in the kindergarten modelled for the Flower Fairies until the kindergarten closed in 1940 . In an interview in 1958 , Barker said , " My sister ran a kindergarten and I used to borrow her students for models . For many years I had an atmosphere of children about me ? I never forgot it . " She also painted the children of relatives as well as Gladys Tidy , the Barkers ' young housekeeper , who posed for the Primrose Fairy in 1923 . The plants were painted from life , and if a specimen was not readily at hand , Kew Gardens staff would provide her the specimens needed . Barker designed and built the Flower Fairy costumes , and based each on the flowers and leaves of the particular plant to be illustrated . The costumes were kept in a trunk in her studio along with wings made of twigs and gauze . Each was broken down after an illustration was completed and the parts recycled for other costumes . She often referred to Dion Clayton Calthrop 's English Costume .

= = = Middle years = = =

In the late 1920s , Barker began to doubt she was doing enough for the church and considered focusing solely on sacred works . Family and friends recommended she continue secular and sacred works , which she did .

Barker continued to attend evening classes at the Croydon Art School between the 1920s and the 1940s , eventually receiving a teaching position . She took sketching trips to Amberley and Storrington in Sussex and to Cornwall and the southern coast with family and friends . She visited and stayed with artist Margaret Tarrant in Gomshall , Surrey and with family in Ugglebarnby , Near Whitby , North Yorkshire .

In 1940 , the Barker 's live @-@ in maid retired , and Dorothy Barker closed her school at the back of the house in The Waldrons . She continued to supervise the household , and to give both her mother and sister the care they needed . Dorothy and her sister collaborated upon only two books : Our Darling 's First Book and the Christian @-@ themed , He Leadeth Me . In 1954 Dorothy Barker died of a heart attack . Barker was unable to pursue her art to any significant extent following her sister 's death , as all the care of her aged mother devolved upon her , but she did manage to begin planning a stained glass window design in her sister 's memory for St. Edmund 's , Pitlake .

= = = Later life and death = = =

Barker 's mother died in 1960 , and , in 1961 , Barker moved from 23 The Waldrons to 6 Duppas Avenue in Croydon . She restored a maisonette in Storrington , Sussex , England , bequeathed by her friend Edith Major , and named it St. Andrew 's . After taking up residence , her health began to deteriorate . She was in and out of nursing and convalescent homes , and tended by relatives and

friends .

Barker died at Worthing Hospital on 16 February 1973 , aged 77 years . Two funeral services were held ? one in Storrington Church and one in Barker 's maisonette . Her ashes were scattered in Storrington churchyard . In 1989 , Frederick Warne , a division of Penguin Books since 1983 , acquired the Flower Fairies properties .

= = Art = =

Barker worked principally in watercolor with pen @-@ and @-@ ink , but she was equally competent in black @-@ and @-@ white , in oils , and in pastels . She carried a sketchbook with her for capturing interesting children . She once indicated , " I have always tried to paint instinctively in a way that comes naturally to me , without any real thought or attention to artistic theories . "

Kate Greenaway was a childhood favorite and an influence on her art . Barker 's child subjects wear nostalgic clothing as Greenaway 's children do , though Barker 's children are less melancholy and less flat in appearance , due perhaps to advances in printing technology . Barker studied flowers with an analytical eye and was friend to children 's illustrator , Margaret Tarrant . Along with Greenaway , illustrator Alice B. Woodward also influenced Barker 's work .

The Pre @-@ Raphaelites were a strong , lifelong influence on Barker . She once indicated , " I am to some extent influenced by them ? not in any technical sense , but in the choice of subject matter and the feeling and atmosphere they could achieve . " She admitted a fondness for the early paintings of John Everett Millais and " the wonderful things " of Edward Burne @-@ Jones .

= = = Depictions of children = = =

Barker 's sketches , drawings , and paintings of children were given to friends or to the parents of the subjects , donated to charitable institutions and church sponsored events , or exhibited through various art organizations . She illustrated magazine covers , dust jackets , and produced series of postcards for Raphael Tuck and other publishers such as Picturesque Children of the Allies (1915) , Seaside Holidays (1918) , and Shakespeare 's Boy and Girl Characters (1917 , 1920) . Her own Old Rhymes for All Times (1928) and The Lord of the Rushie River (1938) , a tale about a girl who lives among swans on a riverbank , were critically well received . Set about 1800 , Groundsel and Necklaces (1943) tells of a girl named Jenny who rescues her family from poverty through the agency of the fairies . The story features an old Scrooge @-@ like man called Mr. Petercoo and tonally suggests a Dickensian social consciousness . Simon the Swan , intended as a sequel to Rushie River was outlined in 1943 with Groundsel , but only developed in 1953 . It was published posthumously in 1988 and is critically considered less successful than Groundsel .

= = = Christian @-@ themed works = = =

Barker was a devout Christian , and produced religious @-@ themed works throughout her life . She published eight postcards and five guardian angel birthday cards for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge in 1916 and in 1923 respectively . Christmas cards were designed for The Girls ' Friendly Society over a 20 @-@ year period , and the first three designs sold out a combined printing of 46 @,@ 500 in 1923 . An original design for the society called The Darling of the World Has Come was purchased by Queen Mary for ? 5 @.@ 5 @.@ 0 in 1926 . The Croydon Art Society hung Barker 's booklet cover design for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in its November 1919 exhibition .

Religious @-@ themed books include The Children 's Book of Hymns (1929) and He Leadeth Me (1933) , the latter written in collaboration with her sister . Major religious works include the triptychs in oil , The Feeding of the Five Thousand (1929) , for the chapel in Llandaff House , a home for destitute women at Penarth , Wales , and The Parable of the Great Supper (1934) for St. George 's Chapel , Waddon . The Feeding has since disappeared , and only a black @-@ and @-@ white photograph dated 1929 reproduces the work . In 1941 , she completed oil panels on the subject of

the seven sacraments for the baptismal font at St. Andrew 's , South Croydon . She designed baptismal rolls for the wall behind the font in 1948 and 1962 . In 1946 , she completed the 4 x 7 ft. oil painting , Out of Great Tribulation , for the Memorial Chapel of Norbury Methodist Church . Following the death of her sister in 1954 , Barker began designs for a stained glass memorial window depicting Christ preparing to wash the feet of his disciples . Her last religious @-@ themed work , it was installed in St. Edmund 's , Pitlake , in 1962 .

= = Works = =

= = = Cards = = =

Picturesque Children of the Allies ; J. Salmon , 1916
National Mission ; Society for the Preservation of Christian Knowledge , 1916
Shakespeare 's Boy Characters ; C. W. Faulkner , 1917
Shakespeare 's Girl Characters ; C. W. Faulkner , 1920
Seaside Holiday ; J. Salmon , 1918 , 1921
Elves and Fairies ; S. Harvey , 1918
Guardian Angel ; Society for the Preservation of Christian Knowledge , 1923
Christmas cards ; Girls ' Friendly Society , 1920s , 1930s
Christmas cards (US) ; Barton @-@ Colton , 1920s , 1930s
Beautiful Bible Pictures ; Blackie , 1932

= = = Books = = =

Flower Fairies of the Spring ; Blackie , 1923
Spring Songs with Music ; Blackie , 1923
Flower Fairies of the Summer ; Blackie , 1925
Child Thoughts in Picture and Verse (by M. K. Westcott) ; Blackie , 1925
Flower Fairies of the Autumn ; Blackie , 1926
Summer Songs with Music ; Blackie , 1926
The Book of the Flower Fairies ; Blackie , 1927
Autumn Songs with Music ; Blackie , 1927
Old Rhymes for All Times ; Blackie , 1928
The Children ? s Book of Hymns ; Blackie , 1929 ; rep . 1933
Our Darling ? s First Book (written in collaboration with Dorothy Barker) ; Blackie , 1929
The Little Picture Hymn Book ; Blackie , 1933
Rhymes New and Old ; Blackie , 1933
A Flower Fairy Alphabet ; Blackie , 1934
A Little Book of Old Rhymes ; Blackie , 1936
He Leadeth Me (written in collaboration with Dorothy Barker) ; Blackie , 1936
A Little Book of Rhymes New and Old ; Blackie , 1937
The Lord of the Rushie River ; Blackie , 1938
Flower Fairies of the Trees ; Blackie , 1940
When Spring Came In at the Window ; Blackie , 1942
A Child ? s Garden of Verses (Robert Louis Stevenson) ; Blackie , 1944
Flower Fairies of the Garden ; Blackie , 1944
Groundsel and Necklaces ; Blackie , 1946 ; reprinted as Fairy Necklaces
Flower Fairies of the Wayside ; Blackie , 1948
Flower Fairies of the Flowers and Trees ; Blackie , 1950
Lively Stories ; Macmillan , 1954
The Flower Fairy Picture Book ; Blackie , 1955
Lively Numbers ; Macmillan , 1957

Lively Words ; Macmillan , 1961 .
The Sand , the Sea and the Sun ; Gibson , 1970

= = = = Posthumously published = = = =

Flower Fairies of the Winter ; Blackie , 1985
Simon the Swan ; Blackie , 1988
Flower Fairies of the Seasons ; Bedrick / Blackie , 1988
A Little Book of Prayers and Hymns ; Frederick Warne , 1994
A Flower Fairies Treasury ; Frederick Warne , 1997
Fairyopolis ; Frederick Warne , 2005
Wild Cherry Makes A Wish ; (collaboration with Pippa Le Quesne) Frederick Warne , 2006
How to find Flower Fairies ; Frederick Warne , 2007
Return to Fairyopolis ; Frederick Warne , 2008

= = = Book covers = = =

A New Epiphany ; Society for the Preservation of Christian Knowledge , 1919
43 Annuals ; Blackie , 1920s , 1930s

= = = Religious works = = =

St. Cecily 's Garden ; 1920
Cradle roll design ; St. Edmund 's , Pitlake , 1922
Banner design ; St. Mary 's , Sanderstead , 1923
The Feeding of the Five Thousand ; reredos triptych , chapel at Penarth , Wales ; 1929
The Parable of the Great Supper ; triptych , St. George 's chapel , Waddon
The Seven Sacraments ; baptismal font panels , St. Andrew 's , Croydon
St. John the Baptist ; central banner panel , Abesford church , 1943
Lettering , sword , and shield ; mount for a list of men and woman serving in the Forces , St. Andrews , Croydon , 1943
Baptismal rolls ; St. Andrews , Croydon , 1948 , 1962
The font in St Andrew 's Church , South Croydon
Out of Great Tribulation ; memorial chapel , Norbury Methodist church , 1948
I Am Among You As He That Serveth ; stained glass window design , St. Edmund 's , Pitlake , 1962