

'Peter and Pam found themselves mounted high and riding round the beautiful garden', an illustration for *Peter, Pam and the Wizard*, nd (1934?).

Edward and Stephanie Godwin's Book Illustrations

by Joscelyn Godwin



Edward Fell Scott-Snell.

Edward Fell Scott-Snell (1912-1988) was born in Wimbledon, the son of Edward Scott-Snell, an inventor and engineer who specialized in lighting and heating, and his wife Margaret Fell. After World War One, Major Scott Snell left the family, joining the Indian Army, and Edward and his mother lived in Wimbledon on the munificence of her father, Sir Arthur Fell, MP. She encouraged Edward's early talent for illustration, suggesting literary subjects ranging from the *Odyssey* to *The Wind in the Willows*. He attended King's School, Wimbledon, as a dayboy, and in 1930 entered Oxford University (Christ Church). His mother believed that as a promising artist he would not need an Honours degree, but should read for the easier "Pass degree," a mixture of Classics, French and English, and cultivate potential patrons. He quickly became the principal contributor of drawings to *Isis*, the undergraduate magazine, leaning sometimes towards Beardsley, at others towards Kate Greenaway's nursery style. During his student years he and his mother made the acquaintance of William Morris's daughter May, and visited her at Kelmscott Manor. After graduating in 1933, at the height of the Depression, and failing to find either patrons or a suitable job, Edward co-founded a vanity publishing company, Houghton & Scott-Snell. It issued about 30 books, several of which he illustrated (see below). He then turned to school teaching, but his Pass



Stephanie Mary Allfree.

degree barred him from teaching academic subjects. In 1940 he married Stephanie Mary Allfree (1917-2006), whom he had met in 1935 at the Byam Shaw School of Art. Edward's mother had meanwhile secured a lease on Kelmscott Manor as a bolt-hole in case of war. The lease passed to Edward, and he and Stephanie spent the war years in the historic house, painting and writing, while Edward taught art at Radley, Rugby, Merchant Taylors' and Christ's Hospital Schools.

Edward developed his mature artistic style, a symbolic, pagan-Christian syncretism, out of an invented world, an aesthetic and erotic paradise that he called "Thessyros". At Kelmscott he and Stephani (her then preferred spelling) tried to realize this ideal in verse, paint, and life, as though the hated modern world and its war never existed. I have described it in a compilation from their



'They rowed until they reached the heart of the sunset', an illustration for *Australian Stories for Children*, nd (1935)



An illustration for *Warrior Bard: The Life of William Morris*, 1947.

letters and journals, with many illustrations of their paintings: *The Starlight Years: Love and War at Kelmscott Manor 1940-1948* (Stanbridge: Dovecote Press, 2016). After the war they changed their surname, which they both disliked, to Stephanie's mother's name of Godwin. During a reviving interest in Morris as a socialist pioneer, they wrote and illustrated a popular biography, *Warrior Bard*. They exhibited their paintings in Oxford and Cheltenham, and ran a small boys' school at the Manor.

In 1948, despairing of prospects in Britain, they emigrated to the United States and settled in Woodstock, New York: a village favoured by artists ever since Morris's admirer Ralph Whitehead had founded "Byrdcliffe", an Arts and Crafts community there. Their hope that the New World would embrace their type of fantastic realism was soon dashed: an exhibition in New York City in 1950 sold only one of fifty paintings. But this was a period when Americans could afford to buy well-illustrated clothbound books for their children, especially historical novels with female protagonists. A series of commissions to illustrate such books, as well as writing some of their own, provided a scanty living for the Godwins and their elder son Felix until they separated in 1954. (Their younger son, the present writer, had been adopted shortly after his birth in 1945.)

Their small output is notable in several respects. First, it was a rare case of two people, equally gifted as artists and as writers, who developed a common and virtually indistinguishable style. They sometimes signed their illustrations with

monograms of G enclosing E or S, but also worked on the same drawing, as witness the later monograms SEG or plain G.

Second, they were fiercely anti-modernist. They could illustrate realistically any situation that came up in the story – but whenever possible they would hint at the lost paradise of Thessyros and its partial realization at Kelmscott.

Third, Edward was almost unable to write or paint without the stimulus of benzedrine or some similar drug, which was semi-legal (it could be extracted from sniffers for cold cure) and code-named as "Starlight". Under its influence he could paint or write for hours with intense concentration on detail. On the night of 25th November, 1950, he drew fifteen of the exquisite pencil drawings for *Roman Eagle*. Stephanie used the drug reluctantly and with unpleasant side-effects, but she, too, dictated 12,000 words of a novel on the life of Botticelli, in an all-night session on 14-15th May, 1952. Thus much of their work could be classified as psychedelic art.

Their last collaborations were, frankly, hack-work, and their separation virtually ended Edward's creative career. Stephanie's continued, despite a difficult life, and produced three main bodies of work. During years in Nevada and California (1954-60) she moved out of Edward's influence into water-colour landscapes and portraits. After the death of President Kennedy in 1963, with whom she had had a brief liaison years before, she painted a series of tributes depicting mourning angels, fauns, and ephebes, succeeded by flower children during the hippie era of the later 1960s. During a year spent in Venezuela (1970-71) she experimented with landscapes in oils and drew portraits both real and imaginary. She also worked to further the reputation of her father, Lt. Geoffrey Stephen Allfree, RNVR, RBA (1889-1918). As a member of the Royal Society of British Artists, he had been commissioned to sketch and paint war scenes while captaining his own gunboat. After his death on active service off the Cornish coast, his wartime work became national property and is now in the Imperial War Museum.

Stephanie's and Edward's journals and letters from 1936-1948 are in the Special Collections of Colgate University, Hamilton, New York, as part of the Scott-Snell Collection, which includes documents and original artwork from Edward's time at



'Three misses and but a single try left', an illustration for *The Song of a Thrush*, 1952.

Oxford and after. Many original drawings and manuscripts were given to the collection of children's and young adult literature founded by Dr Irvin Kerlan, and are now in the Children's Literature Research Collections of the University of Minnesota Libraries in Minneapolis. Stephanie's journals from 1949-1989 are in the Historical Society of Woodstock, New York.

Bibliography

A. Illustrations by Edward Scott-Snell (EF Scott-Snell, Edward Fell; later Edward Godwin)

1. Drawings published in *Isis*, the Oxford University undergraduate magazine. 56 drawings in various issues from no. 807 (29 Oct. 1930) to no. 857 (9 Nov. 1932).

Note: Many original drawings in the Scott-Snell Collection, Colgate University Library.

B. Books illustrated by Edward Scott-Snell.

1. Edward Scott-Snell. (No separate title), Oxford: Shakespeare Head Press, n.d. [1931]. Edition of 137 copies. 14 drawings, one repeated on cover. Decorated paper cover. 280 × 200mm, [32 pp.]. Note: Mostly signed E. F. Scott-Snell, and previously published in *Isis*. Dedicated "To S. de B." (Serge de Borchgrave).

2. *A Second Book of Drawings* by Edward Scott-Snell. Oxford: Holywell Press, n.d. [1932]. Edition of 150 copies. 15 drawings including cover. Decorated card cover. 313 × 215mm. 32pp. Note: Mostly signed E. F. Scott-Snell, and previously published in *Isis*. Dedicated "To Wilfred Rooke-Ley".

3. *Peter, Pam and the Wizard* (A Romance for Children of all ages) by John I. Macpherson. London: Houghton & Scott-Snell, nd [1934?].

4 colour plates (one repeated on cover), 6 full-page drawings. Red cloth with mounted plate. 205 × 155mm, 207 pp. Note: Drawings signed E. F. Scott-Snell.

4. Alan Singh or *The Land of Magic* by Evangeline Deverell. London: Houghton & Scott-Snell, 1934. Coloured frontispiece (repeated on cover), 7 full-page drawings in ink and Chinese white, 5 smaller drawings. Blue cloth with mounted plate. 213 × 160mm, 179 pp. Note: Drawings mostly signed E. F. Scott-Snell. Original drawings in the Scott-Snell Collection, Colgate University Library, and in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

5. *Australian Stories for Children* by Kit Murray. London: Houghton & Scott-Snell, nd [1935]. Coloured frontispiece, 1 colour plate, 4 full-page drawings. Red cloth. 210 × ??mm. [original not seen], 77 pp. Note: All but one signed Edward Fell.

C. Dustwrapper and/or cover illustrations to publications by Houghton & Scott-Snell, 1932-1936. Original drawings with these titles are in the Scott-Snell Collection, numbered as indicated, but I have only verified the book marked *.

1. *The Virgin of the Veronica* by GF Knox (156).

2. *The Second Knife* by HE Gill (157).
3. **Tales & Legends of Northumbria* by Marion Douglas (158). Dustwrapper and pictorial red boards. 186 × 124mm, 70 pp.

4. *A Balcony in Paris* by F Simons (159).

5. *Green Hellebore* by Agnes Cresswell (160).

6. *Fools like me* by Paul Marche (161).

D. Bibliography of books illustrated by Edward and Stephani(e) Godwin.

i. Books written and illustrated by them

1. *Warrior Bard: The Life of William Morris* by Edward and Stephani Godwin. London: George G Harrap, 1947.

Coloured frontispiece, 10 chapter-heading drawings in ink and Chinese white.

Grey cloth. Dustwrapper with lettering on background of Morris design. Endpapers decorated with Morris's "Willow" design.

197 × 130mm, 176 pp.

Note: Dedicated "To Starlight and the Memory of May Morris".

2. *Thessyros* by Stephani Mary Godwin, Author of *Warrior Bard*, the Life of William Morris. Oxford: Oxonian Press, 1947.

Two drawings, one on cover repeated as frontispiece.

Decorated blue and white card covers.

220 × 140mm, 32 pp.

Note: First, suppressed issue had cover in black and white with author's name "Stephani Scott-Snell". The name still appears on the second drawing, "Cupid and Cherry in the Ivory Tower", unless erased by the author. Dedicated "To Edward Scott-Snell". Original cover drawing in the Society of Antiquaries of London collection, Kelmescott Manor.



Frontispiece for *The Greenwood Tree*, 1950.

3. *The Greenwood Tree: A Portrait of William Shakespeare* by Edward and Stephani Godwin. Illustrated by the Authors. New York: E P Dutton, 1950.

Coloured dustwrapper repeated as frontispiece, allegorical figures of Comedy and Tragedy on endpapers, 10 full-page drawings, 2 narrow double-page drawings, 19 smaller drawings, mostly signed with monogram EG, SG, or plain G (presumably collaborative).

Green cloth, decorated.

203 × 140mm. 178 pp.

Note: Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries. Dedicated "To Walter de la Mare, in memory of Summer days at Taplow".

4. *Roman Eagle* by Stephani and Edward Godwin. New York: Oxford University Press, 1951.

20 pencil drawings (chapter headings), 3 smaller decorations, one signed with monogram SG.

Decorated cloth gilt.

215 × 135mm, 211 pp. Coloured dustwrapper, map on endpapers.

Note: Dedicated "To our sons, Felix and Joscelyn Roland". Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

5. *Out of the Strong* by Stephani and Edward Godwin. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.

No internal illustrations.

Yellow cloth. 208 × 140mm, 183 pp. Two-coloured dustwrapper.

Note: A later issue has blue and yellow pictorial boards.

ii. Illustration of books by other authors

1. *The Young Brahms* by Sybil Deucher, illustrated by Edward and Stephani Godwin. New York: EP Dutton, 1949.

13 full-page drawings, 4 narrow double-page drawings, 25 smaller drawings, musical scores.

Decorated green cloth.

236 × 176mm. 152 pp.

Three-coloured dustwrapper, drawings on endpapers.

Note: Drawings mostly signed with monogram EG or SG. Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

2. *Another Spring: The Story of Lady Jane Grey* by Katherine Wigmore Eyre.

Pictures by Stephani and Edward Godwin. New York: Oxford University Press, 1949.

Six full-page drawings, 15 smaller drawings in ink and Chinese white

Blue cloth, coloured dustwrapper.

203 × 135mm, 207 pp.

Note: Drawings mostly signed with monogram EG or SG. Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

3. *Delbic of the Green Gate* by Helen Fern Daringer. Illustrated by Edward Godwin. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950.

Four full-page drawings, 4 narrow double-page drawings, 9 smaller drawings. Decorated blue-grey cloth, two-coloured dustwrapper.

203 × 135mm, 232 pp.



Frontispiece for *Another Spring*, 1949.

Note: Drawings mostly signed with monogram EG or SG (though Stephanie is not credited in the book). Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

4. *Elizabeth of the Mayflower* by Myrtle Jamison Trachsel. Illustrated by Stephani Godwin. New York: Macmillan, 1950.

20 chapter-heading drawings.

Green pictorial boards. Dustwrapper not seen.

204 × 133mm. 207 pp.

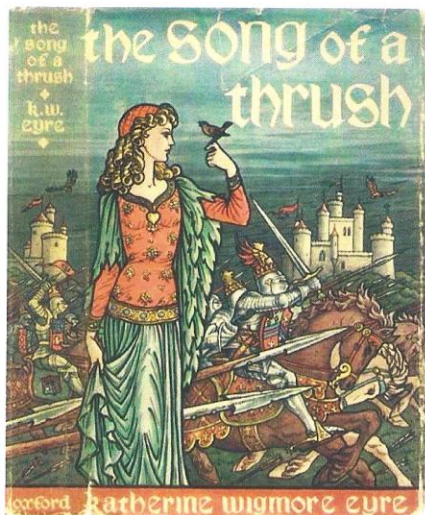
Note: Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

5. *The Story of Joseph* by Josephine Sanger Lau. Illustrated by Edward and Stephani Godwin. New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950.

Ten full-page drawings, 3 smaller drawings. Decorated red-brown cloth. Two-coloured dustwrapper.

209 × 144mm, 192 pp.

Note: Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.



Dustwrapper design for *The Song of a Thrush*, 1952.

6. **Country Cousin** by Helen Fern Daringer. Illustrated by Edward and Stephani Godwin. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1951.

Four full-page drawings, 3 narrow double-page drawings, 15 smaller drawings, 1 decoration

Orange cloth. Three-coloured dustwrapper. 204 × 136mm. 277 pp.

Note: Drawings mostly signed with monogram EG, SG, or in one case SEG. Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

7. **The Bible Story for Boys and Girls. New Testament** by Walter Russell Bowie. "Illustrated with 19 color plates and with 20 black-and-white decorations by Stephani and Edward Godwin." New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951.

Illustrations as stated. The colour plates are by various artists.

Yellow cloth.

228 × 150mm. 160 pp.

8. **The Bible Story for Boys and Girls. Old Testament** by Walter Russell Bowie. "Illustrated with 23 color plates and with 20 black-and-white decorations by Stephani and Edward Godwin." New York and Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1952.

Illustrations as stated. The colour plates are by various artists.

Blue cloth. 228 × 150mm, 224 pp.

9. **The Song of a Thrush** by Katherine Wigmore Eyre. Illustrated by Stephani and Edward Godwin. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952.

Three decorations, 4 full-page drawings. Blue-grey cloth. Coloured dustwrapper.

202 × 130mm, 253 pp.

Note: Drawings signed with monogram SEG. Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

10. **The Crusade and the Cup** by Elizabeth Bleecker Meigs. Illustrated by Edward and Stephani Godwin. New York: EP Dutton, 1952.

Coloured frontispiece, 10 full-page drawings, 9 smaller drawings.

Decorated blue cloth. Coloured dustwrapper repeating frontispiece.

202 × 143mm. 151 pp.

Note: Drawings signed with monogram G or SEG. Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.

11. **The Keepsake Ring** by Helen Fern Daringer. Illustrated by Stephani and Edward Godwin. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1953.

Six full-page drawings, 1 narrow double-page drawing, 11 smaller drawings

Grey cloth, black spine. Two-coloured dustwrapper.

202 × 133mm, 174 pp.

Note: Drawings signed with monograms EG, SG, G, or SEG. Original drawings in the Kerlan Collection, University of Minnesota Libraries.



'The Jinn's Wedding', an illustration for *Peter, Pam and the Wizard*, nd (1934?).

12. **Walt Disney's Bear Country** adapted by Betty Ren Wright. Pictures by Edward and Stephani Godwin. Racine: Whitman Publishing Co., 1954.

Illustrated in colour on cover, endpapers, and every page.

Pictorial boards. 153 × 136mm. 28 unnumbered pages.

13. **Science Far and Near** by Herman and Nina Schneider. Illustrated by Edward and Stephani Godwin [and 5 others]. NY: D C Heath & Co., 1954.

About 64 pages contain coloured illustrations that seem to be by the Godwins.

Pictorial boards.

219 × 160mm, 282 pp.

14. **A Child's Book of Butterflies.**

"Illustrated by Edward Godwin. Text by Elizabeth Godwin." New York: Maxton Publishers, Inc., 1956.

Alternate openings illustrated in colour and black-and-white.

Pictorial boards. 252 × 177mm. 32 pp.

Note: Elizabeth Bridges Godwin (1931-2015) was Edward's second wife.