

Hugh Lofting

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Hugh Lofting



Born: January 14, 1886

Died: September 26, 1947

Occupation: Novelist

Genres: Children's literature

Hugh John Lofting (Maidenhead, Berkshire, England January 14, 1886 - Topanga, California September 26, 1947) was a British author, trained

as a civil engineer, who created the character of Doctor Dolittle — one of the classics of children's literature.

After serving in World War I, in which he was seriously wounded, he and his family moved to Connecticut in the U.S.A. He was married three times and had three children, one of whom, his son Christopher, is the executor of his literary estate.

"For years it was a constant source of shock to me to find my writings amongst 'Juveniles,'" Lofting reported. "It does not bother me any more now, but I still feel there should be a category of 'Seniles' to offset the epithet."

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Doctor Dolittle



The Doctor Dolittle books (Puffin Editions)

Hugh Lofting's doctor from Puddleby-on-the-Marsh who could speak to animals first saw light in the author's illustrated letters to children, written from the trenches during World War I when actual news, he later said, was either too horrible or too dull. The stories are set in early Victorian England. *The Story of Doctor Dolittle: Being the History of His Peculiar Life at Home and Astonishing Adventures in Foreign Parts Never Before Printed* (1920) began the series. The sequel, *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* (1922), won Lofting the prestigious Newbery Medal. Eight more books followed, and after Lofting's death two more volumes, composed of short unpublished pieces, appeared. The series has been adapted for film and television many times, for stage twice, and for

radio.

Other Works for Children



Other Children's Books
by Hugh Lofting

The Story of Mrs Tubbs (1923) and *Tommy, Tilly, and Mrs. Tubbs* (1936) are picture books aimed at a younger audience than the Doctor Dolittle books. They concern the titular old woman, her pets (whom she can talk to) and how the animals help her out of trouble.

Porridge Poetry (1924), is the only non-Dolittle work by Lofting still in print, and is a light-hearted, colourfully illustrated book of poems for children.

Noisy Nora (1929), is a cautionary tale about a girl who is a noisy eater. The book is printed as if

hand-written, and the many illustrations often merge with the text.

The Twilight of Magic (1930) is, by contrast, aimed for older readers set in an age when magic is dying and science beginning. This work is the only one of Lofting's books to be illustrated by another (Lois Lenski).

Epic poem

Victory for the Slain (1942) is Lofting's only work for adults, a single long poem in seven parts about the futility of war; the refrain "*In war the only victors are the slain*" permeates the poem. It was published only in the United Kingdom.



Bibliography

1. *The Story of Doctor Dolittle* (1920)
2. *The Voyages of Doctor Dolittle* (1922)
3. *Doctor Dolittle's Post Office* (1923)
4. *The Story of Mrs Tubbs* (1923)

5. *Doctor Dolittle's Circus* (1924)
6. *Porridge Poetry* (1924)
7. *Doctor Dolittle's Zoo* (1925)
8. *Doctor Dolittle's Caravan* (1926)
9. *Doctor Dolittle's Garden* (1927)
10. *Doctor Dolittle in the Moon* (1928)
11. *Noisy Nora* (1929)
12. *The Twilight of Magic* (1930)
13. *Gub-Gub's Book, An Encyclopaedia of Food* (1932)
14. *Doctor Dolittle's Return* (1933)
15. *Doctor Dolittle's Birthday Book* (1936)
16. *Tommy, Tilly, and Mrs. Tubbs* (1936)
17. *Victory for the Slain* (1942)
18. *Doctor Dolittle and the Secret Lake* (1948)
19. *Doctor Dolittle and the Green Canary* (1950)
20. *Doctor Dolittle's Puddleby Adventures* (1952)

External links

- A Hugh Lofting website
- Works by Hugh Lofting at Project Gutenberg
 - Project Gutenberg e-texts of some Doctor Dolittle stories by Hugh Lofting

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