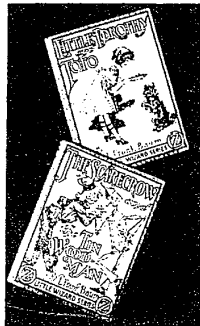


# Amazing find—6 Little Wizards



Get your last \$750 on it. On some youngsters' Christmas list in 1914 were the words Little Wizard books. The child may very well have had his wish fulfilled.

In all there were six in this early series by L. Frank Baum of Wizard of Oz fame, produced to sell for a very modest amount.

While all Oz books are collectible, said rare book dealer James Babcock, he added that finding all six of the Little Wizard series in good condition was highly unusual.

The price tag on these in Babcock's showcase in the Stalker and Boone store in the Great American Mall, is \$750. Each Little Wizard book is a story unto itself, not a watered down version of The Wizard of Oz as might be imagined. The color, vintage illustrations are the work of John R. Neill.

In the same case with these is a small book by R. (Randolph) Caldecott, whose title is almost longer than the text, "Diverting History of John Gilpin. The Three Jovial

Huntsmen an Elegy on the death of a Mad Dog."

It was Caldecott for whom the contemporary children's book award is named. This one is priced at \$50 and also has a number of Kate Greenway type illustrations.

For Dickens fans, there are two copies of the weekly magazine he edited and wrote for. One of his stories in the Christmas 1866 issue is titled "Magby Junction." In the Christmas 1865 issue, one Dickens' piece is "Dr. Marigold's Prescriptions." These each sell for \$50 and contain material by other writers as well as Dickens.

The other rare book in Babcock's case is Skazki by Maria Morevia, written in Russian and published in St. Petersburg in 1903. It is the color lithographs in this book which are captivating. Babcock said he wasn't certain of the exact reproduction process, but pointed to the gold on the illustrations which looked like applied gold leaf.

Baum's Little Wizard series was designed for young readers — books to be read at bedtime. Some of the characters, like the Tin Man, pictured above, were the same ones he used in the Oz books, but they had different adventures. At right, is an illustration from R. Caldecott's small book about hunters and mad dogs. (Staff photos by Dick Kelley)



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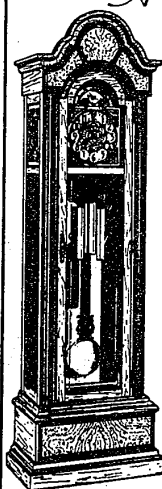
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