

THE JEWEL

A ROMANCE

OF

FAIRYLAND

Companion Booklet to the Facsimile Edition

The Jewel

A ROMANCE OF FAIRYLAND



ROCKWELL KENT

1917

Companion Booklet to the Facsimile Edition

ELIOT H. STANLEY, Editor

THE BAXTER SOCIETY

Portland, Maine

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Companion booklet to *The Jewel—a Romance of Fairyland*,
by Rockwell Kent, 1917, sole authorized facsimile edition.

Released November 1990

In memory of GEORGE SPECTOR (1910-1987),
whose dream this was.

Preface

THE publication of *The Jewel* is an auspicious occasion for the community of Kent students, scholars and collectors, and for the book arts world. I am pleased to have been asked to participate in this exciting project. Not only is this book the first previously unpublished book by my late husband to come out since his death, but it is also the earliest *book* known to have been entirely written and illustrated by Rockwell Kent. I congratulate The Baxter Society on the work it has done to bring this book to light.

Almost every book has an interesting story behind it, and this one has a particularly interesting story. Some of that story appears in Rockwell Kent's autobiography, *It's Me O Lord* (Kent 1955), beginning with Chapter VII of Part 3, intriguingly titled "Transgression." There he tells about his romance with a beautiful German girl he met in June 1916 in New York. This, alas, was not his first extramarital adventure nor his last, but in time he came to view these escapades as departures from his better self. In 1916 while he was in his mid-thirties, he espoused the philosophy that an artist's life should not be constrained by conventional mores; by 1955 when he wrote his autobiography, I think he had come to reflect on such affairs as transgressions.

What is important to consider in reading and enjoying *The Jewel* is that Rockwell Kent was an incurable romantic and that his creative energies were heightened by the focus being in love gave to his work. He was that way to the end of his long and exceptional life. Nature, of course, in all its untamed and uncharted magnificence was the great stimulus to his art. But one has only to look at the range of his artistic work to see how often the women in his life were subjects and beneficiaries of his creative genius.

The period of *The Jewel* was a difficult time for Rockwell and his first wife and family. He was a mature man, recognized in New York as a promising painter but unable to earn much

of a living. To save money, his family stayed in various places away from New York City, and he lived alone, working most of the time in an architectural firm and selling drawings to magazines. Out of this rather desperate situation, however, came his uniquely beautiful paintings on glass. I am pleased that the publication of *The Jewel*, with the background research presented in Eliot Stanley's essay, helps to shed new light on the rare glass paintings.

Finally, I commend The Baxter Society for the way it has conducted this publishing project. It is all too easy for publishers to simply appropriate an artist's work without so much as a mention of his artistic estate or its rights in otherwise uncopyrighted works. The Baxter Society came to The Rockwell Kent Legacies and requested our permission to publish this facsimile, and it has taken pains to produce an edition of high quality. I know that if Rockwell Kent were still living he would have been satisfied that this book was being published with the care and respect it deserves.

SALLY KENT GORTON

AuSable Forks, New York
July 1990

Once Upon a Time: Notes on *The Jewel*

by ELIOT H. STANLEY

INDEED, there was a romance in fairyland with a real prince and princess, and *The Jewel* was an expression of that romance. The “prince” was Rockwell Kent and his “princess” was a young Follies dancer named Hildegard Hirsch. It all started in appropriate romantic fashion—with love at first sight. Here is how Kent described that first fateful meeting in New York:

One summer day in 1916 . . .

. . . I found myself at the torn-up corner of Forty-First Street and Seventh Avenue, and about to step upon the plank that bridged the mud pond at the kerb, when I observed a young woman about to cross it from the other end. I stood aside. And as, with downcast eyes to watch her step, she crossed, I looked at her. And what with its being the month of June and all that I have said about the day, what with her being so prettily dressed in white and its so well becoming her golden hair, red lips, blue eyes; what with my being me, it suddenly came over me that never in all my life had I seen so entrancingly lovely a creature. (Kent 1955)

He introduced himself, they talked, and within two weeks they entrained to New Hampshire for a week together on Mt. Monadnock. Kent knew the area well, having been an art student of Abbott Thayer in nearby Dublin some years earlier. In fact, at the time Kent met Hildegard in 1916, he had been married to Abbott Thayer’s niece, Kathleen Whiting, for eight years. Notwithstanding that circumstance, the new lovers revolved in nature and in each other:

Alone at so serene an altitude that mankind far below could no longer be distinguished, his villages appearing as mere specks, their mightiest steeples, emblems of morality, quite impotent to prick the lower atmospheric shell of our ethereal universe, aloof and far removed from obligations, duties, custom, law and all the fabric of

society, we had no sense of guilt; and, like Eve and Adam following their fall, could abandon ourselves to the enjoyment of every pleasure that the body and the soul of man might crave. Naked we'd roam that treeless ridge, climbing its ledges, leaping their fissures, bathing from time to time in its warm rain-water pools. (Kent 1955)

Certainly if ever a romance could have an idyllic beginning, this was it. But the world from which they escaped that week was a troubled one for Rockwell Kent. Already in his mid-thirties, he was struggling desperately to make his mark as an artist.

In June 1915, Kent and his young family had returned to New York from an unhappy eighteen months in Newfoundland. Their stay was terminated abruptly by an expulsion order from the Governor of Newfoundland for Kent's outspoken pro-German sentiments in a British colony then at war with Germany. Kent was a lifelong enthusiast for German culture; in fact, he learned that language before he spoke English from a German nanny in his affluent Tarrytown childhood home. He misjudged the effect his half-serious defense of the Kaiser would have on the stolid Newfoundlanders, and they gave him the English boot.

Most of the paintings he started in Newfoundland were still to be finished after his return to New York. The best known of them, *House of Dread* (c. 1915), has come to epitomize his feelings of artistic and marital despondency for art historians and biographers. Returning to New York did little to improve those feelings. Kathleen gave birth to their fourth child in June 1915; their oldest, Rockwell III, was not yet five. Kent found a cottage near New London, Connecticut, for Kathleen and the children and took cheap lodgings in New York City by himself.

Kent already had established himself as a promising artist. Critical notice of his first show in 1907 at the Clausen Gallery in New York had been favorable, and his New England land- and seascapes continued to attract favorable comment over the next decade. But it would be 1919 before he could sell one of

them. By 1915, he was scraping for any kind of work he could find around New York. Old friends from his days at Columbia as an architectural student provided part-time work at the firm of Ewing and Chappell. Kent also found a small market for light magazine illustrations, essentially cartoon drawings, with such publications as *Vanity Fair* and *Puck*, using the *nom de brosse* "Hogarth, Jr." He preferred the name "Rockwell Kent" to be associated only with his "serious" oil paintings. Little did he realize that these early line drawings were the seeds of a career that would blossom and see him hailed as America's greatest book illustrator by 1930.

But it was still 1916, and Kent was married but living alone in New York when he met Hildegarde not far from Times Square. Hildegarde (who was called "Gretchen" in Kent's 1955 autobiography, as she was then living) was a chorus dancer who emigrated from Munich in 1910 (Figure 1). She had been trained at the Munich School of Ballet and was brought to the United States as a member of a dancing troupe that included both German and English dancers. She never worked for the famous Ziegfeld Follies, but in New York of that era there were numerous "Follies" productions in the grand halls of the Republic, the Lyric and the New Amsterdam. One production she appeared in was called the "Eight Berlin Madcaps." The impresario who brought her to the States had to post bond to guarantee that she and other pretty young ladies were not being imported for the nefarious "white slave trade."

Hildegarde took a husband soon after she arrived in the country. This was a brief marriage that served mainly to secure her citizenship. By the time she met Kent, the ex-husband was still a friend, but one whose occasional presence made Kent a little uneasy. This is obvious from the letters she saved over a five-year period beginning in August 1916 (see Sources at conclusion).

From August 1916 until March 1917, the letters reflect Kent's intense romantic interest in his lover. Some days he wrote three

or four times—from across town! The letters mention numerous phone calls, as well. They rhapsodize about nights they spent together or plans they made for the next day or two (Figure 2). In several letters, Kent writes in German and quotes Hesse and Maeterlinck. Clearly, Hildegarde's nationality was part of her special charm. He talks about Wagnerian opera and seems from an early point in their romance to have spun a little mythology about the two of them living as prince and princess in a special time and place he calls "Hildegarten."

Storm clouds begin to appear in his letters to her from March 1917:

I'm far from happy about tonight. Never can there be any relationship between us two but that profound and trustfull (sic) love that I have longed for—love that for us two shall obliterate everything if need be . . . Oh Hildegarde—if I have been unfaithfull (sic) I have been deep deep down in my heart ever true to you—ever, my Hildegarde.

It is not known whether Kent's "unfaithfulness" to Hildegarde arose from his continuing marriage to Kathleen and his obvious affection for the children of that marriage, or from his seeing other women in New York. Hildegarde's nephew, Thompson Flint, grew up in the home in Larchmont, N.Y., in which she later lived and believes that Kent wanted to marry Hildegarde and was prepared to leave his first marriage, but Hildegarde wisely sensed that he likely would be no more loyal to her as his wife than he had been to Kathleen. Thus it appears from the letters that sometime in early 1917 she began to resist his building too much of a romantic edifice around her, and he resented it (Figure 3). Repeatedly he suggested that they find an apartment to share. She steadfastly maintained her apartment on West 36th Street with her sister Freida who was also a dancer.

One of the projects Kent hit upon to make money in New York during this period was oil painting on glass, an old Euro-

pean artform popular in 19th- and early 20th-century America (Figure 5). The technique, *verre églomisé*, involved painting part of a scene on an underpane and other parts in reverse on the inner side of an outer pane, thus giving depth to the overall design. It is possible Kent learned this craft from Hildegarde. His first glass paintings appear to date from 1916, and he credits her with “assisting” him in making the paintings. Most were either 6 x 8 or 8 x 10 inch designs framed as mirror headpieces or framed alone. The frames were made of gilded wood by Kent’s artist friend, Max Kuehne. The enterprise was named “Hogarth mirrors” and Kent designed a logo for it (Figure 8).

In addition to Kent’s photographs of her, Hildegarde saved several pencil and watercolor sketches he made of her. These images bear a strong resemblance to the female figure in many of the glass paintings, and her nephew recalls a comment by her that she had served as Kent’s model.

Only about two dozen of these lovely but fragile paintings are known to exist; most are in private collections and two hang in the Columbus Museum of Art in Ohio. Wanamaker’s department store in New York retailed them during the brief period of almost two years in which Kent painted them; none is known to be signed by him.

The rocky romance continued through the spring and summer months of 1917. One letter during this period discusses a spat during which Hildegarde apparently threw one of the glass paintings at Kent, and his efforts to have the glass repaired. In mid-September, Kent left New York to join his wife and family at Monhegan Island, Maine, for about six weeks. His letters to Hildegarde from Monhegan show that he was probably working on *The Jewel* while there: being away from her and receiving only infrequent letters from her added greatly to his anxiety about their relationship. He mentioned that he was working on drawings without being too specific. It is also likely that the strain of his love for Hildegarde was becoming a big problem in the Kent family household, for at this time

he referred to their youngest child as "Hildegarde." (After Kent left for Alaska in mid-1918, Kathleen resumed calling her Barbara, as she was so named at birth in 1915.)

By 31 October 1917, Kent had returned to Manhattan and wrote Hildegarde a long, troubled letter containing themes embodied in the allegory of *The Jewel*:

For my part I have behaved always, but at those times when I absolutely lost control of myself, with all the chivalry and truth that must be my part in this fairy land romance with you, my dear love. I can't feel that you have lost much of your belief in my honor, in the depth of my love for you, in any of the qualities you loved but one—serenity. Here I have failed terribly and so often. But, darling, about you I have had grave doubts. There has come about a gradual destruction of the ideal about which my love had entwined itself . . . Hildegarde, my faith in you is shaken. I no longer believe you. I find it hard to believe that you have religion enough in your nature, faith enough, I mean, love enough, to make a covenant that you would keep.

About a week after this letter, Kent gave Hildegarde *The Jewel—a Romance of Fairyland*, dated on its title page 6 November 1917. Kent followed the gift of *The Jewel* with a handmade jewelry box for Christmas that year—a small chest which closely resembles the one shown as the last illustration in the book (Figure 6). If he had hoped to save the romance with these remarkable gifts, it appears he was unsuccessful.

During the fall of 1917, Kent had reached a firm decision to spend an extended time in the wilderness of Alaska. Monhegan had shown him the beneficial effects of remote solitude on his thinking and art during his first stay there from 1905 to 1910; he had hoped Newfoundland would be another such special place but it was not. He considered a long trip to the American southwest just before deciding on Alaska. Kent's close friend, the late Carl Zigrosser, wrote in later years that Alaska and subsequent wilderness ventures to Tierra del Fuego (1922-23) and Greenland (1929, 1931-32, & 1933-35) were brought on to some

extent by Kent's instinct to flee impossibly complex social entanglements at home.

It is clear from Kent's letters to Hildegarde he wanted her to come to Alaska with him and that the two of them had saved some money toward a journey to the mythical "Hildegarten" somewhere in the north. But she would not budge. Other sources report that Kent asked Kathleen but she also refused before he entreated Hildegarde to come. Finally, he persuaded Kathleen to let him take his oldest child, Rockwell III, who turned seven in October 1917. In late July 1918, the two Rockwells boarded a train for Alaska.

Soon after arriving at Fox Island in Resurrection Bay a few miles from the mainland town of Seward, Kent again begged Hildegarde to join him. If she had entertained an inclination to go, his accounts of the fierce Alaska weather that galed for weeks at a time and his comment that she would have to pay her own passage probably convinced her to stay in New York. Cavorting like Eve at Mt. Monadnock was sufficient wilderness for Hildegarde. Again, Kent grew despondent at the infrequency of her letters. That she was still very much on his mind is reflected in his drawing titled "The Snow Queen" reproduced in *Wilderness*. It is the only female figure among his Alaska drawings.

On 2 December 1918 Kent wrote Hildegarde a letter from Alaska which appears to have concluded the "active" love affair between them:

I have made a *choice*—as the only possible solution of what is an inextricable and tragic tangle! I have chosen to go back to Kathleen and to the children, to leave New York and leave it forever maybe and go far into the country somewhere where no other people will be, to live on the least it can be done for and dedicate my time to work without end. I do this of my own free will. I have no defense. I have not been threatened by Kathleen of whose love I am far from being certain.

His remaining letters to Hildegarde from Alaska were less

frequent and less affectionate. Kent returned to New York in March 1919. Soon he was swept up in a whirlwind of success and new friendships following a show of his Alaska drawings at Knoedler Galleries and the publication of his first commercial book, *Wilderness—A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska* in early 1920. Just preceding the release of that book, Kent inscribed a copy of it to Hildegard with a drawing of the musical notes of Siegmund's love song from Wagner's *Die Walküre*: "Siegmund zu Sieglinda, Marz 10, 1920." The last letter from him found in her effects was dated 12 May 1921.

Hildegard remained unmarried the rest of her life. She had relationships with other men over the years. The best known of those was the late violinist Mischa Elman, according to her nephew Thompson Flint. He remembers her as a lively, opera-loving woman, in his words, an "Auntie Mame." She made a trip back to Munich in the 1920s, thinking she might resettle there. But the government confiscated some of her possessions, including a painting by William Merritt Chase (which Kent may have given her), and she decided to come back to America. She died in 1960 while on a short visit to Munich. She is thought to have been 70 at her death.

The Jewel is essentially a special communication from Kent to his lover, an elaborate letter in an extensive correspondence. It is both an appeal to her to revitalize the intense passion they had experienced in the first weeks of their romance and a condemnation of her for denying the possibilities of their love. There is no question Kent was anguished about his relations with her and with his wife. Both women were beginning to distrust his love and, accordingly, to withhold their commitments to him. A poignant pen-and-ink sketch found in Hildegard's effects (Figure 4) powerfully reflects the anguish lovers know best. Kent's marriage to Kathleen continued until 1925. The Hildegard affair was the second of three romances outside his first marriage acknowledged by Kent in his autobiography.



Figure 1 Hildegarde Hirsch in feathered hat, c. 1917-18. Hand-colored photograph, c. 6" x 8". Collection of Dr. Arthur H. and Margery D. Groten. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.



Figure 2 Rockwell and Hildegarde, Atlantic City, 1917. Photograph, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", original photographer unknown. Courtesy of Thompson Flint. Copy photograph by Just Black and White.

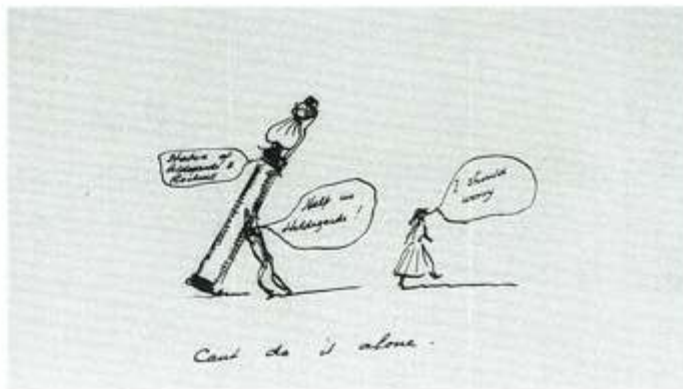


Figure 3 A cartoon by Kent, saved with Hildegarde's correspondence. Ink on paper, 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Groten collection. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.



Figure 4 Drawing of embracing couple, from Hildegarde's papers. Ink over pencil on paper, $5\frac{3}{8}$ " x $7\frac{1}{8}$ ". Author's collection. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.



Figure 5 Mirror decorated with oil-on-glass painting, c. 1916-17. This 1989 photograph shows Kent grandchildren Clara, Elizabeth and Christopher in the reflection. Glass painting, $7\frac{1}{2}$ " x $5\frac{5}{8}$ "; frame, $11\frac{1}{8}$ " x $38\frac{1}{4}$ " overall. Courtesy of Clara Kent Dennison. Photograph by Bruce Kennett.

Bibliographical Aspects of *The Jewel**Provenance and Authorship*

It was not until November 1981 (ten years after Kent died) when it was auctioned at Sotheby's in New York City, that the existence of this book was known publicly. Following Hildegard's death in 1960, it passed by will to her nephew Thompson Flint and remained in his home until the 1981 sale. The purchasers at auction were George and Gladys Spector of Queens, New York, and the book remains in their collection. The Baxter Society received permission from the book's owner Gladys Spector, following the death of her husband in 1987, to use the book for a facsimile edition. Legal research by The Baxter Society established that the copyright laws had evolved considerably since the original 1917 gift of the book to Hildegard, and that as of this time it would be advisable to secure authorization to publish the facsimile edition from both the heir of the original recipient and from The Rockwell Kent Legacies. The cooperation of these entities was accomplished with the generosity of all concerned.

Inasmuch as Rockwell Kent did not sign his name to the book nor has specific corroboration of his authorship been located in any letter or memoir, it is necessary to rely on a variety of circumstantial evidence to establish that he did, in fact, make this book.

As mentioned in the story of Rockwell and Hildegard, the fairy tale told in *The Jewel* follows very closely the points or themes in Kent's letter to Hildegard of 31 October 1917, a week before the date on the title page of *The Jewel*. There are other considerations:

Hildegard pasted a fragment of wrapping paper on a tipped-in page of the book which reads "This book was made for Hildegard by Rockwell" (Figure 7). The same blue ink on brown paper, and the same lettering style, was used by Kent for the wrapper around

the jewel box he gave her for Christmas a few weeks later. That wrapper reads: "I am not to be opened but when Rockwell is near." The chest was also inscribed on its underside "Rockwell to Hildegard/ December 27, 1917."

The semi-calligraphic lettering of the text is the same style used on the title page of *The Seven Ages of Man*, a portfolio of Kent's drawings published in 1918 (Figure 9).

The title-page illustration of a man embracing a deer was a mark that first appeared on stationery Kent used to write Hildegard in 1916. It appears to be reproduced from a drawing (see further discussion under "Illustrations" below). It was included in Kent's 1929 book, *Bookplates and Marks*, and designated "H.H."

Kent referred to the mark in one of his 1917 letters to Hildegard: "I love to lay a sheet of our paper before me and see us thus clinging together in the starry night."

The binding paper used on the case of *The Jewel* is "Hurd's Scotch Granite," a commercial writing paper of the period, the same paper used with the H.H. mark as stationery.

The other six pen-and-ink drawings that illustrate *The Jewel* are stylistically similar to other drawings Kent did in 1917-18 (see "Illustrations" below).

Allegorical references in the text of *The Jewel* connect the book to known facts about their intimate relationship: e.g., love at first sight; the princess is a sister of the wild deer—the name Hirsch means "deer" in German (Figure 11); the crystal globe, possibly a reference to a glass globe with which she posed for a photo mentioned in one of his June 1917 letters; the little fortune accumulated—a probable reference to a joint savings account for income from the sale of glass paintings, etc.; "Hildegarten in the far North," a place often mentioned in his letters as the mythical site of true happiness, and a play on her name; "into her heart had crept doubt,"—referred to in his 31 October letter among others; the last drawing depicts the treasure chest that he made as a Christmas gift for her that year, with the H.H. mark on the inside of the lid (the mark was also glued to the inside lid of the actual box); "Broken Faith," another mention made in his 31 October letter.

The Rockwell Kent Collection, Columbia University Library, has a pencil sketch, undated, which appears to be a study for a book cover or title page, showing the words "Das Hildegartenbuch." It is possible he first considered using that title for *The Jewel*.

In the same chapter of his autobiography that discussed glass paintings, Kent states that he made a hand-lettered book for a Dr. Wagner of Brooklyn as a memorial to the doctor's daughter. This book has yet to surface and may be quite similar to *The Jewel*. Which he made first cannot be determined by the context of the autobiography.

The book was examined by several experts on Kent's work, beginning at the time of the Sotheby's sale in 1981, and all are satisfied that this is his work.

Bibliographical Importance

The appearance of *The Jewel* has understandably caused a great stir among collectors of Kent's works worldwide. It has several major bibliographical distinctions:

It is the earliest known book to be *both* written and illustrated by Rockwell Kent. Previously the first book known to have been fully illustrated by him was *Architectonics or the Tales of Tom Thumtack* (1914). Kent contributed only drawings for that book, plus the cover design, without attribution, and the text was by his architect-friend Frederick Squires. Kent later acknowledged his role in the book but did not consider it serious work. The first book previously considered to have been both written *and* illustrated by him is *Wilderness—A Journal of Quiet Adventure in Alaska* (1920). Now it must be said that this was his first commercial book to distinguish it from the privately made *Jewel. The Blue Mouse* (Spring 1906) of which two copies were made and one has been found, was an intended periodical in unbound manuscript. It was a collaborative editorial/artistic effort between Rockwell Kent and James Gillespie Blaine Ewing, made for their respective mothers. It appears that Kent did the artwork and much of the text. It is a

charming and extraordinary manuscript and represents Kent's earliest known effort at combining text and illustration.

The Jewel is the only book known to have been substantially handmade by Rockwell Kent. While it is possible that the private memorial book made for "Dr. Wagner of Brooklyn," discussed earlier, also may have been handmade, that is simply not knowable at this time as the book has yet to be located. *The Blue Mouse* is entirely handwritten and illustrated work, but it is not sewn and bound and was intended to be a periodical magazine for an audience of two. It is also unclear what Ewing contributed to the effort—the handwriting appears to be Kent's and the artwork is clearly his, but both are shown as collaborators on the project. Following *The Jewel*, Kent's other known books were press printed and bound by others. The best evidence that Kent did the binding for *The Jewel* is the use of "Hurd's Scotch Granite" blue-green paper on the case, as well as for his personal stationery with the "H.H." mark during the same period. The use of painter's canvas on the spine, as opposed to a commercial binder's cloth or leather, also indicates he was the probable binder of this book. The paper inside is "Whatman's 1916," a mould-made artist's watercolor paper, not handmade by Kent. In later years, Kent often participated in details of book design, binding and illustration: e.g., in the 1925 Aventuros edition of *The Memoirs of Casanova*, it is known that he assisted in making copperplate engravings of his drawings for the edition and that he added finishing touches to those plates with a burin. He also joined engravers' and other craft guilds during the course of his artistic career.

The Jewel is the first previously unpublished book by Rockwell Kent to be published since his death in March 1971. Before he died, Kent began signing copies of the 1970 revised edition of *Wilderness*. That edition, designed by Ward Ritchie, contained some original materials omitted from the first 1920 and subsequent editions. Kent was unable to sign all of the 1550

copies before he died, and many copies of the book were not circulated until later that year. There also have been some posthumous prints of wood engravings, etc., authorized by his estate. In most instances, these involved works that Kent did some years earlier but for one reason or another had only taken through the trial-proof stage.

The Jewel is the rarest Kent book known to exist, as there is only one original. Prior to this time, that distinction was accorded to *The Golden Chain* (1922), of which six copies were printed letterpress by Egmont Arens at The Flying Stag Press. Four of those copies have been located and are now in institutional collections. *Tristan and Iseult* (1923), the single copy done as a gift for Kent's second wife Frances Lee, was what might be called a "grangerized" book. To make it, Kent took a commercially printed edition (Mosher, Portland, Maine, 1922) of the classic, removed the title page and binding and substituted a new title page with wood engraving and a new binding. All was done at The Lakeside Press, Chicago. Certainly it is unique, but hardly as breathtaking or significant as *The Jewel*, which Kent created from cover to cover. The other private book Kent made for the Brooklyn doctor has yet to be located and *The Blue Mouse* also can be distinguished from *The Jewel* on several important points.

The Story and Its Illustrations

Kent was quite familiar with the fable as a storytelling vehicle. When he was a child he first heard "Teutonic legends" told by his German nanny, and in one of his October 1917 letters to Hildegarde from Monhegan, he mentions reading bedtime fairy tales to his children. He returned to this form in later years, most notably in *The Golden Chain* (1922) and in *The Birthday Book* (1931), incorporating in the latter the illustrations he had done for the former and adding new fairy tale text.

Kent also illustrated various classic "fairy tales" during his career: *Beowulf* (1932) and *The Saga of Gisli Son of Sour* (1936) to name two.

There is a decided element of disappointment, even bitterness, that pervades the fable of *The Jewel*. To the extent that Kent still was trying to turn Hildegarde's heart toward him again, the story is designed to manipulate her thinking. But it also contains an ominous tone of finality in its closing pages. The author does not disguise his despair from his reader. He uses the word "casket" to describe the place where their treasure is kept, and the treasure chest itself turns out to be empty. In this respect, it brings to mind some of Shakespeare's most beautiful but utterly desolate love sonnets.

The script Kent used was a kind of semi-calligraphic hand close to his handwriting, although larger. The hand lettering in *The Blue Mouse*, done eleven years earlier, is recognizably Kent's, but smaller and less readable than *The Jewel* script. As mentioned above, the title-page label he did for *The Seven Ages of Man* (1918) is very similar to *The Jewel*'s style (Figure 9). The careful reader will find at least one partial repeat of a line in *The Jewel*, suggesting that Kent was copying from a written-out text on another page; and at another point there is an erasure not discernible in the facsimile, where the word "canopied" was done over.

The charm of *The Jewel* lies in its tasteful presentation of script and illustrations; its value as literature is not really at issue. Its creator worked from a design, albeit a simple one, that gives this modest little book its special beauty and sophistication. Of the illustrations, the only one known to appear elsewhere was the title-page mark discussed earlier. The six pen-and-ink drawings which illustrate the text are originals pasted on alternating pages and show a considerable maturation of graphic style over the 1914 drawings for *Architectonics*.

In one of his letters to Hildegarde from Monhegan in October 1917, Kent mentions he had completed the first of four

drawings he intended to publish as a set. This is a clear reference to *The Seven Ages of Man* portfolio. Thus it is hardly surprising that the drawings for *The Jewel* and for *The Seven Ages* are quite similar in style (Figure 10), as he was preparing both during the fall of 1917. What is interesting about the *Seven Ages of Man* sequence (in which the artist, without text, comments about war by showing four scenes instead of seven, the last of which is the body of a young soldier dead on a battlefield), is that it would mark the first time the name “Rockwell Kent” appeared on a publication of his graphic work.

The opening illustration of *The Jewel* shows a male figure in a furtive position, walking as if outcast or shunned. This is the first appearance of a design motif Kent used often in later graphic illustration: a similar figure entitled “Night” was one of the drawings done in Alaska and reproduced in the 1920 edition of *Wilderness*. Another example is a drawing entitled “Many More” in a portfolio he did for advertising use by the Schering pharmaceutical company around 1940. A drawing he gave Hildegarde (Figure 4) uses another artistic device not previously seen in his early work but used frequently in his later work. The drawing shows a doorway or passage to one side of the design. This usually accompanies figures shown in anguish, grief, solitude or some other disconsolate condition and seems to symbolize rejection in the larger sense.

In the second *Jewel* drawing, the female figure has long tresses similar to those seen in some of Kent’s glass-painting designs. This is a probable link to Hildegarde as his model. Kent repeated this scene, of lovers kneeling on the ground and clinging to each other, in later work, e.g., in a prospectus design for an edition of *Venus and Adonis* (1931). These are not the anguished lovers of the drawing Kent gave to Hildegarde (Figure 4), but innocent and hopeful lovers.

The Jewel’s third illustration shows the princess contemplating a large globe of crystal just before it breaks. It may have been inspired by the photo of Hildegarde with a crystal ball

which Kent mentions in one of his 1917 letters. Here again the female figure is shown with long tresses of hair. The fourth drawing is a fairly generic north-woods scene similar to many of Rockwell Kent's works, including Christmas cards he did for friends and later for the American Artists' Group in New York. Those familiar with his art will instantly recognize the Kent style in the treatment of sky, mountains, trees and foreground. A good comparison is to his depiction of sky and land in the famous colophon page of Voltaire's *Candide* (1928), the first Random House book.

The fifth illustration introduces another device Kent would use many times in his later work. The bird-in-flight is a symbol of innocence, happiness or gaiety. His design for the silk binding cloth of *The Birthday Book* (1931) is perhaps his most delightful use of the bird motif. Over the entrance to the house in this drawing is an indecipherable inscription (Kent's later home at AuSable Forks, New York, has the word "Gladshiem" over its front doorway, which means "Home of the Gods" in Icelandic; the farm where the home was built he called "Asgaard," farm of the gods, from the same language). The same trellised dooryard greets readers of Kent's *Home Decorator and Color Guide*, 1939, an advertising booklet for the Sherwin-Williams Paint Company.

The final illustration, a drawing of the treasure chest, is a close approximation of the chest or jewel box he actually made as a Christmas gift for Hildegarde later in 1917 (Figure 6). Even the shape of the key and the inside-lid design are similar to the chest he made, although there are some differences: the jewel box has pictorial designs around the sides and lacks the curved sides and cabriolet legs shown in the drawing, features he may have found difficult to construct.

Finally, the title-page illustration, Hildegarde's mark, was erroneously called a wood engraving in the prospectus and ads produced at the outset of this facsimile edition project. This error was due in part to the fact that this is the only artwork in



Figure 6 The jewel box presented to Hildegarde on 27 December 1917. Painted wood, $7\frac{1}{2}$ "w x $4\frac{3}{4}$ "d x 5"h. Groten collection. Photograph by Bruce Kennett.

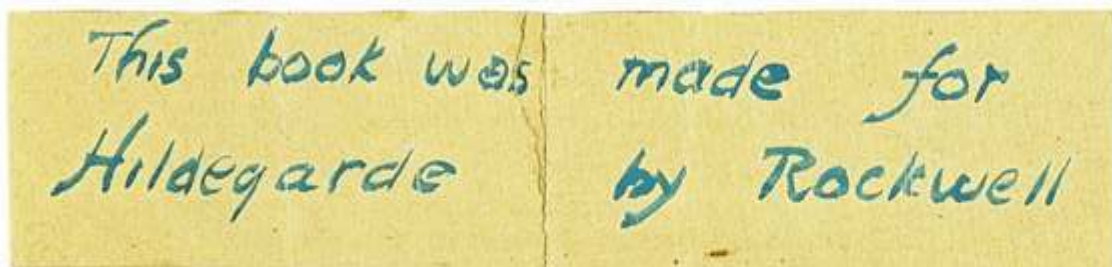


Figure 7 Fragment of wrapping paper pasted into *The Jewel*. Blue ink on kraft paper, $4\frac{9}{16}$ " x 1". Collection of Gladys Spector. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.



Hogarth
mirrors
Designed and
painted by

23 West 12 St
New York.

Figure 8 Logo for Kent's glass-painting business. Hildegarde was probably model for face. Photomechanical reproduction of pen-and-ink drawing, $1\frac{1}{4}$ " x 2". Author's collection. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.

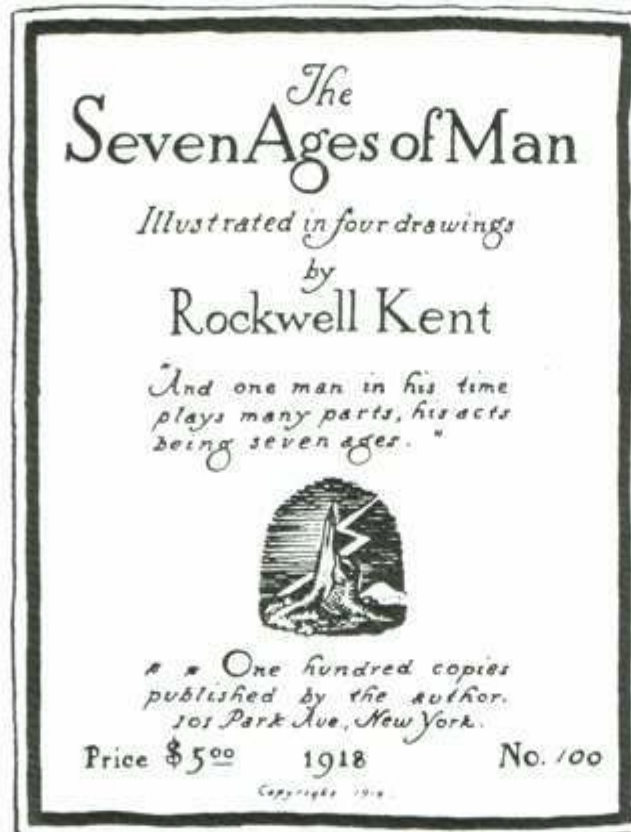


Figure 9 Portfolio label for *The Seven Ages of Man*, 1918. Photomechanical reproduction of pen-and-ink drawing on paper, $3\frac{1}{4}$ " x $4\frac{1}{2}$ ". Copy number 100 of portfolio was inscribed from Kent to Hildegarde. Author's collection. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.



Figure 10 Drawing from *The Seven Ages of Man*, 1918. Photomechanical reproduction of pen-and-ink drawing on paper, 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.



Figure 11 Hildegarde astride a deer, c. 1916-17. Pencil and watercolor on paper, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". Author's collection. Copy photograph by Bruce Kennett.

The Jewel Kent made prior to the time of the book. It is clearly a reproduction from another source, cut out and pasted onto the title page as the other illustrations are pasted on the sheets presumably after Kent had completed the ink lettering. In order to determine if this small mark was a wood engraving, it was taken to Marjorie B. Cohn, the Carl A. Weyerhaeuser Curator of Prints at Harvard University's Fogg Art Museum. She examined it under a microscope and found that it lacks the characteristic incisions that create white lines in a wood engraving. Had it been determined to be a wood engraving, it would have been Kent's earliest known example of that technique.

Considerations in Making the Facsimile Edition

Rockwell Kent fashioned *The Jewel* from materials he, as an artist, had at hand on Monhegan Island—painter's canvas for the spine, watercolor paper (Whatman's 1916), Hurd's Scotch Granite stationery paper to cover the cardboard binding case, paste, thread and India ink.

One thing he probably had done upon his return to New York was the gilt stamping on the cover. Otherwise, the book displays the simplicity one might expect from its origins. Kent liked to work with his hands and he enjoyed the challenges presented by all aspects of bookmaking.

When it came to designing a facsimile edition of *The Jewel*, there were certain obstacles to making a perfect replica: Whatman's 1916 watercolor paper is no longer available, nor is Hurd's Scotch Granite.

Perhaps the most important decision was how best to reproduce the hand-lettered text. A comparison was made using trial proofs of both offset and letterpress techniques. While our esthetic sentiments lay with letterpress printing on handmade paper, the trial proofs revealed that the fine strokes of Kent's hand were better captured by the photo-offset method in this case. Kent's original hand strokes were *planographic*, while let-

<i>Element</i>	<i>Original</i>	<i>Facsimile</i>
Case size, finished	6¼" x 10" x ¼"	6½" x 10" x ⅛"*
Cover on boards	Hurd's Scotch Granite stationery paper	Canson Ingres Vidalon Sky Blue #39
Gilt letters on cover	By stamping press, line printed	Die cut from photo of original
Boards	.082 cardboard	.082 cardboard, acid-free
Spine covering	Painter's canvas	Holliston Mills Roxite Record Buckram, vellum finish, white
Interior paper	Whatman's 1916 watercolor, mould-made	Lanaquarelle 90 lb. cold pressed, mould-made
End papers	Whatman's 1916 watercolor, mould-made	Lanaquarelle 90 lb. cold pressed, mould-made
Page dimensions	5½ to 6" wide by 9½" max. height	Same as original
Sewing	Linen thread	Linen thread
Illustration, title-page	Drawing, from line negative reproduction, pasted on	Offset lithography printed directly
Text	India ink by pen	Offset lithography
Illustrations to text	India ink pasted on	Offset lithography printed directly
"Made for Hildegarde by Rockwell" wrapper fragment	Pasted on tipped in page in front next to endpaper	Reproduced in companion booklet as Figure 7
Copyright information	None	On reverse of title page
Colophon page	None	Next to last page
Slipcase	None	Houses both facsimile and companion booklet
Companion booklet	None	Contains descriptive information on the facsimile

* Although individual page size remains the same, other differences come from the slightly greater bulk of Lanaquarelle.

terpress is a *relief* process in which ink fills a depression struck into the paper.

The decision about process forced the selection of a paper that would approximate the color and weight of Kent's original watercolor paper (Whatman's 1916) but would have enough sizing and uniformity of caliper to make it suitable for offset printing. The initial choice, Rives Heavyweight, was rejected when it was discovered that tiny fibers from that paper settled into the black ink areas of the illustrations, a phenomenon known as "picking." The paper then found to best meet all criteria for this project was Lanaquarelle watercolor paper, 90-pound cold pressed, pH neutral and all-cotton. Like the original Whatman's 1916, the Lanaquarelle is a mould-made paper. It comes from the Lana Mill in Lorraine, France, established in 1590. The paper selected for the binding cover was Canson Ingres Sky Blue #39, a close match to the original color and weight of Hurd's Scotch Granite. The companion booklet was typeset in Linotype Granjon and letterpress printed on 100-pound Mohawk Superfine text at The Shagbark Press in South Portland, Maine. The illustrations were printed on 100-pound Potlatch Karma by Penmor Lithographers, Lewiston, Maine.

The chart on the opposite page summarizes the differences between the original and facsimile edition.

Conclusion

At the time Rockwell Kent made *The Jewel* as a private gift for Hildegarde Hirsch, he was a known artist with the ambition for fame. In one sense, as we have pointed out, *The Jewel* was simply a special love letter in a continuing dialogue between the lovers. Kent did not expect it to be published and Hildegarde kept it as a private gift through her entire lifetime. However, *The Jewel* was more than the context of its creation as a personal gift would suggest. Like Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*, which was composed as a gift to his wife Cosima on the birth of their son

in 1869, *The Jewel* has an intrinsic beauty and charm that will find a wider audience and a place for this book in history.

As we have shown, *The Jewel* gives valuable insights to Kent's budding career in the book arts: the book follows a simple but effective design; the original drawings he did for it mark the first appearance of several motifs he used in other works, and the fable as a storytelling vehicle he would use again in other contexts. All these elements come together here for the first time in a Kent book. He would reach the zenith of his book designing talent thirteen years later in the great Lakeside Press edition of *Moby Dick*, considered by many experts the finest book produced in America during this century. Whether Kent was aware of it or not, *The Jewel* was also part of an artbook tradition that had its beginnings in Blake's *Songs of Innocence* (1789). It is known that Kent studied Blake extensively during the trip to Alaska in 1918-19, and he may have known of that artist-poet's handmade books when he began work on *The Jewel*. Finally, the publication of *The Jewel—a Romance of Fairyland* extends Kent's bibliography in the important areas discussed. All of us who are students or collectors of Rockwell Kent's works are indebted to those who made publication of *The Jewel* possible.

Sources

PRIMARY sources for historical information on *The Jewel* were interviews with Thompson Flint, Hildegarde Hirsch's nephew, who lives in Larchmont, New York, and a correspondence file of Kent's letters to Hildegarde in the collection of the Sutton Place Foundation Library, New York City. Additional primary source materials were obtained from the collection of Dr. Arthur H. and Margery D. Groten, Poughkeepsie, New York, and from the author's collection. Secondary sources included the following books and articles:

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