
In Johnny Gruelle: Creator of Raggedy Ann and Andy, Patricia Hall has crafted more than a biography of the man who created one of America's most beloved dolls. Into the fabric of early twentieth-century American cultural and political commentary, the author has woven a pattern depicting a talented observer of the Hoosier scene. The book is a history of an Indiana cartoonist, illustrator, and writer, a welcome resource on a person about whom little has heretofore been written.

John B. Gruelle was born December 24, 1880, in Arcola, Illinois, and moved at a very young age to Indianapolis. His father, landscape painter R. B. Gruelle, along with artists T. C. Steele, J. Ottis Adams, William Forsyth, and Otto Stark, became known as the Hoosier Group of American Impressionists. A regular visitor to the Gruelles' home in what is now the Lockerbie Street area was Indiana poet James Whitcomb Riley. "Riley's profound effect on Johnny Gruelle would become apparent years later, when Gruelle began writing his own stories" (p. 30).

In 1903 Johnny Gruelle was selected to be the first assistant illustrator of the city's newest newspaper, the Indianapolis Star. He left that newspaper briefly to work for the Daily Sentinel, where his political cartoons became a daily feature. Gruelle returned to the Star where he once again supplied the paper with sports cartoons, headline comics, and single-frame commentary cartoons (p. 40).

Gruelle's talent as a cartoonist led him to the Cleveland Press and, upon winning a comic-drawing contest, to the New York Herald. Relocating in Norwalk, Connecticut, Gruelle was also a freelance illustrator for women's magazines and a satirical cartoonist for Judge magazine.

Revealing a lifelong interest in folktales, Gruelle illustrated Margaret Hunt's 1914 translation of Grimm's Fairy Tales and later wrote and illustrated his own book of fairy tales. Although the cartoonist incorporated rag doll characters in his illustrations and comic drawings, he did not patent his "Raggedy Ann" doll design until May, 1915. The doll was in many ways a three-dimensional cartoon (p. 105).

The P. F. Volland Company of Chicago first published Gruelle's Raggedy Ann Stories in 1918. That book's publication was followed in 1920 by a sequel, entitled Raggedy Andy Stories. These stories revolved around dolls and toys who came alive and enjoyed a secret, magical life when humans were away or asleep (p. 112).

Combining the works of Hoosier illustrator Johnny Gruelle and Indiana poet James Whitcomb Riley, the Bobbs-Merrill Company of
Indianapolis published Johnny Gruelle's *Orphant Annie Story Book*, which was a series of stories and illustrations based on Riley's poem "Little Orphant Annie." Johnny Gruelle died January 9, 1938.

Although the title of the book identifies Gruelle as the creator of Raggedy Ann and Andy, Patricia Hall rightly devotes half of her book to other significant contributions Gruelle made as an illustrator, cartoonist, writer, and businessman. Hall provides an impressive list of published books written and/or illustrated by Johnny Gruelle, a checklist of magazine and newspaper appearances of his work, and a detailed bibliography of principal sources. The numerous reproductions of photographs, cartoons, and drawings greatly enhance the biographical study of this very talented Hoosier artist.

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The outlaw life is every child's fantasy, and what is an adult but a child writ large? Hamlet considered it ("to take arms against a sea of troubles"); Don Quixote did it. Storytellers from forgotten balladeers to today's crop of movie makers have catered to a universal fascination with the individual who stands apart from society, flouting its rules, defying its conventions, reaping its fruits without bearing its burdens, living life on his own terms, writing his own code. There is something in everyone that responds to the idea of the universal Robin Hood, the fleeting wish to chuck everyday responsibility and live life on the outside, finally to check out in a blaze of glory, leaving behind a heroic memory.

Outlaw legendry has permeated American culture for two centuries even though as Frank Richard Prassel demonstrates in *The Great American Outlaw*, it is mostly the same story over and over—the story older than Robin Hood (who may have been four people, or just one, or nobody at all)—of the loner who defies everything society regards as decent and in the process earns the reader's admiration and even affection. From Hereward the Wake, foe of William the Conqueror, to Blackbeard the Pirate, Billy the Kid, Belle Starr the Bandit Queen, and Jesse James, Sam Bass, John Dillinger, and Patty Hearst to the movie characters played by Charles Bronson, Clint Eastwood, and David Janssen, the legend is the same: the