

3 Excellent Children's Authors You May Not Have Heard Of

If you're like me, you're always on the lookout for great literature for your children. Or, perhaps you're looking to catch up on some novels that you may have missed out on when you were growing up.

Either way, here are three authors I have come across who deserve a much wider readership than they currently enjoy:

1) Ralph Moody

Ralph Moody (1898-1982) did not begin writing until he was 50 years-old. "When I was twenty-one," he writes, "I got a diary as a birthday present and I wrote in it that I was going to work as hard as I could, save fifty thousand dollars by the time I was fifty, and then start writing." On the night of his fiftieth birthday, he did just that. The most notable product of his writing was the *Little Britches* series – his autobiographical account that begins with the move of his family to a ranch outside of Denver when he was eight, and ends with his life in rural Kansas right before his marriage. It has been called "Laura Ingalls Wilder for boys," and provides a beautiful illustration to children of the values of integrity, responsibility, and hard work.

"There are only two kinds of men in this world: Honest men and dishonest men. ...Any man who says the world owes him a living is dishonest. The same God that made you and me made this earth. And He planned it so that it would yield every single thing that the people on it need. But He was careful to plan it so that it would only yield up its wealth in exchange for the labor of man. Any man who tries to share in that wealth without contributing the work of his brain or his

hands is dishonest.” ~ Little Britches

2) George MacDonald

George MacDonald (1824-1905) was a Scottish author, poet, and Christian minister. He has an impressive list of people he influenced. C.S. Lewis wrote of him, “I have never concealed the fact that I regarded him as my master; indeed I fancy I have never written a book in which I did not quote from him.” G.K. Chesterton called MacDonald’s *The Princess and the Goblin* “a book that has made a difference to my whole existence, which helped me to see things in a certain way from the start.” And W.H. Auden referred to MacDonald as “one of the most remarkable writers of the 19th century.”

Among MacDonald’s most popular children’s stories are the aforementioned *The Princess and the Goblin*, its sequel *The Princess and the Curdie*, and the short stories “The Golden Key” and “The Light Princess.” He also wrote adult novels, the most important of which are *Phantastes* and *Lilith*.

*“We are all very anxious to be understood, and it is very hard not to be. But there is one thing much more necessary. What is that, grandmother?”
To understand other people.’
Yes, grandmother. I must be fair – for if I’m not fair to other people, I’m not worth being understood myself. I see.”*

~The Princess and the Goblin

3) Elizabeth Goudge

Elizabeth Goudge (1900-1984) was an English novelist who wrote adult novels, short stories, and children’s books. Upon her death in 1984, the London Times wrote of her: “Fragile in appearance, but strong in spirit, she seemed at one with the peace and simplicity of her setting. Few novelists have had comparable knowledge and faith in the goodness of human

nature, the beauty of childhood, and the pursuit of things lovely and of good report. As with Jane Austen, she 'let other pens dwell on guilt and misery.'" J.K. Rowling has said that Goudge's *The Little White Horse* (later made into the movie *The Secret of Moonacre*) was her favorite book as a child, and that it had a direct influence on her *Harry Potter* series.

"Humanity can be roughly divided into three sorts of people – those who find comfort in literature, those who find comfort in personal adornment, and those who find comfort in food." ~ The Little White Horse?

As C.S. Lewis wrote, "I am almost inclined to set it up as a canon that a children's story which is enjoyed only by children is a bad children's story." One of many reasons these authors' children's stories are so great is that adults are sure to enjoy them, too.