

Creation of the Original Statue

Mabel Landrum Torrey was born in a sod house in Colorado. Her father became a judge in Sterling, Colorado where she taught school before she left to attend the Art Institute of Chicago, majoring in the art of sculpture. When she married Fred, also a sculptor, they opened a studio across from the University of Chicago.

Research did not reveal an exact date, but an approximate date of the original Wynken, Blynken and Nod statue being created in the early 1920's. However, it received enthusiastic praise from art critics when it was exhibited at the Chicago Art Institute. Mrs. Torrey presented Denver Mayor Robert W. Speer with her original piece of work and he was so delighted with it, he commissioned Mrs. Torrey to sculpt one in marble to be placed in the Children's Fountain, Washington Park, Denver. That one and the one on "The Green" in Wellsboro are the only known such statues.



Washington Park, Denver

Bringing Wynken, Blynken & Nod to Wellsboro

Elizabeth Cameron Bailey, Daughter of Tioga County Judge David Cameron, became the bride of Fred Bailey on June 16, 1892. Both were Wellsboro natives. They spent their married life in Denver where Mr. Bailey became a State Senator, a major stockholder in the Crippled Creek gold Mine and the Brown Palace Hotel. He was one of the founders of the United States National Bank.

Mr. Bailey honored his wife following her death with the bronze statue of Wynken, Blynken and Nod to be placed in her memory on The Green where it has remained since it's dedication on Friday, September 23, 1938. Among the reported 2000 who attended the ceremony were Mrs. Torrey, her daughter and Peter Cameron, brother of Mrs. Bailey.

Additions by the Community

In May 22, 1950, the Wellsboro Lions Club voted to finance the erection of a wrought iron fence for the protection and added beauty of the statue and fountain.

In 1976, the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hospital erected a plaque containing the poem, a very much-appreciated addition.

On May 15, 1982, the statue sailed away to temporary quarters while the Carson Construction Company made repairs to the fountain foundation.

In April 1989, a committee was formed for the restoration and preservation of the statue and fountain and to raise the necessary funds. Arthur Voorhees, owner of the Gettysburg Restoration and Preservation Association, Inc and his assistant, Jeff Miller of Morris, did the work.

The installation of lighting in the fountain was done by Kaminski and Son of Wellsboro.

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Excerpt from Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
By Betty Coolidge Frazier

Wynken, Blynken, & Nod

**A Dutch
Lullaby**



Wynken, Blynken, & Nod

A Dutch Lullaby
By Eugene Field

Wynken, Blynken and Nod one
night

Sailed off in a wooden shoe
Sailed on a river of crystal light,
Into a sea of dew,

“Where are you going, and what do
you wish?”

The old moon ask the three.

“We have come to fish for the
herring fish

That live in this beautiful sea;
Nets of silver and gold have we,”
Said Wynken,
Blynken,
and Nod.

The old moon laughed and sang a
song,

As they rocked in the wooden
shoe,

And the Wind that sped them all
night long,

Ruffled the waves of dew.

The little stars were the herring fish
That lived in that beautiful sea-

“Now cast your nets wherever you
wish-

Never afeared are we;”

So called the stars to the
fishermen three;

Wynken,
Blynken,
and Nod.

All night long their nets they threw
To the stars in the twinkling foam-
Then down from the skies came the
wooden shoe,

Bringing the fishermen home;
“T was all so pretty a sail it seemed
As if it could not be.

And some folks thought ‘t was a
dream they’d dreamed

Of sailing that beautiful sea-
But I shall name you the

fishermen three:

Wynken,
Blynken,
and Nod.

Wynken and Blynken are two little
eyes,

And Nod is a little head.

And the wooden shoe that sailed
the skies

Is a wee one’s trundle-bed.

So shut your eyes while mother sings
Of wonderful sights that be,

And you shall see the beautiful
things

As you rock in the misty sea.

Where the old shoe rocked the
fishermen three;

Wynken,
Blynken,
and Nod.

The End

The Poem

Over 100 years ago, Wynken, Blynken, and Nod came alive in the mind, heart and imagination of Eugene Field. On March 9, 1889, he penned the immortal words of what is also known as “*The Dutch Lullaby*.” Today, it is still considered the most perfect childhood poem.

Field, considered to be the first newspaper columnist in the US, lived only 45 years from 1850 to 1895. During that time, he wrote over 500 poems and short stories, many about children. It was his belief that childhood was the most precious time of life and therefore, should be enjoyed, day dreaming, pretending and using one’s imagination before the realities and responsibilities of adult life were attained.

Much of his poetic writing was done in Denver and Chicago where he was on staff of those cities’ newspapers.

