



[Home](#) > Return to the Hundred Acre Wood

Return to the Hundred Acre Wood

Books Reviewed:

[Return to the Hundred Acre Wood](#) [1]

Issue:

[181](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Brian Alderson](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

2

?...in that enchanted place on the top of the Forest a little boy and his Bear will always be playing.? A nostalgic, but fitting conclusion to **The House at Pooh Corner** as boy and Bear are silhouetted dancing away from the reader. They had had a score of rural outings together and a valedictory meeting, with a signed Rissolution, had been organised by all their friends. Nothing more needed to be said.

But Publishing Egonomics and the Trustees of Pooh Properties have decreed otherwise. ?Further Adventures? must be generated and although Disneyfication has done for the imagery years ago ?the style of E H Shepard? is to be revived for the occasion. (Mark Burgess, who did the colouring-in of the Gift Book editions of **Winnie-the-Pooh** and **The House at Pooh Corner**, knows the style well enough and has no difficulty in matching either Shepard?s lay-outs or his portrayal of such ?friends? as Piglet, Eeyore and Tigger, but his Pooh lacks the wonderful subtlety of gesture with which he was originally imbued and his Christopher Robin would surely scorn outright the programme here prepared for him.)

Like many another serial devised for commercial ends (remember **Peter Pan in Scarlet**?) the whole venture is misconceived. Far from the delightful entertainment promised by the dust-jacket, tedium prevails. Christopher Robin turns up on a blue bicycle for ten more engagements with his friends but their revival serves only to show us what has been lost. The events of the book are just that, factitious happenings (Owl tries to write a book; a silly cricket match etc.) with none of the endearing barminess which gave the originals their classic status; the introduction of Lottie the otter is superfluous; word-play is leaden (?Piglet said: ?It?s not a Census, it?s a Nonsense? and then blushed at his cleverness?) as are most of the attempts to match Milne?s always skilful verse. Anyone confronting the ?Return? without knowing of its sources will hardly be encouraged to investigate further.

Running Order:

20

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Links:

[1] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/return-to-the-hundred-acre-wood>

[2] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/181>

[3] <http://booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/brian-alderson>