

Nancy Drew 101: Internal, Frontispiece, & Other Illustrations by Pamela Thompson

Page 18

I wondered for a long time what internals were. I had seen books listed on eBay, with *internal* illustrations a big selling point. I had at least reasoned out what a frontis was, that's sort of self-explanatory, but didn't all books have innards?

Eventually I managed to figure it out.



The first thirteen Nancy Drew books came out with a glossy frontispiece, and 3 internal glossy illustrations. The next four had only the glossy frontispiece. The remaining early volumes had line drawing frontispieces. These pictures were drawn by Russell H. Tandy, who had also drawn most of the original covers. Personally, I prize these drawings almost as much as the covers, more in some cases. While the glossy pictures were all black and white, they conveyed a lot of personality, and a somewhat detailed look at the lifestyle of the times.

A great example is the picture from *The Secret of the Old Clock*, showing Nancy with the uppity Topham sisters. We see the background of the Topham home, the details of which convey the ritzy décor and feel of the home. The clothes worn by the characters are wonderful, with enough detail to be able to appreciate their stylishness. The faces of the characters also convey the smugness and arrogance of the Tophams, and the truly unpretentious look of Nancy herself.



Some of the pictures show us details of Nancy's roadster, with her driving on dirt roads and in the rain. Others show some detail of the surrounding buildings and other background fixtures. One of my favorites is from *The Secret of Red Gate Farm*, showing Nancy at a roadside lunch stand, and in the background are several people, a car, and a gas pump. Just enough detail to convey the feel of the times, the old fashioned (to us) gas pump, and the quaint lunch stand let us really visualize the scene that is illustrated.



The Tandy line drawings are also quite detailed and full of detail.

Another artist that is highly regarded is Polly Bolian, who illustrated the Cameo editions. These books have beautiful dust jacket designs, and the frontis is the same as the dust jacket picture. The





internal drawings are line drawings, but are beautifully done and have a lot of detail.

In later volumes, the line drawings by other artists, mostly unknown, are less detailed, although some are still quite good.

As time progresses, the pictures



lose more and more detail, and in some of the revised books the drawings are very poorly done and amateurish. Some people have even referred to them as stick figures, and that may be doing them a kindness, in my opinion. Many of them have departed from the story lines and also from Nancy's true personality. For example, Nancy being the fashion plate that she is, would never be caught dead wearing flip-flops, even in a very casual situation!! There is a lot of difference of opinion, but I do believe that this is probably the worst Nancy illustration ever drawn! Contrast it with the others; it makes one wonder if they were cutting the budget and not hiring real artists!