



Garth Williams, American Illustrator

Elizabeth K. Wallace, James D. Wallace

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Open the pages of so many children's classics—*Stuart Little*, *Charlotte's Web*, *Mister Dog*, *The Cricket in Time's Square*, *The Rescuers*, the Little House books—and you will see page after page of the artistry that brought those stories to life. And behind the illustrations sparking the imagination of generations was a man who had an extraordinary existence.

Born in New York City in 1912, Williams was educated in England and trained on the continent. After enduring the Blitz in London, he returned to New York, where he encountered the vibrant art and cultural scene of the 1940s. He made his home first in New York, then Aspen, and finally Guanajuato, Mexico and was married four times. During his life he met people who shaped and exemplified the twentieth century: Winston Churchill, E. B. White and Ursula Nordstrom, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and countless more.

This is a biography of Garth Williams as an artist and an illustrator. It is the story of how his journey led him from winning sculpture awards at the Royal College of Art in London, to capturing the essence of frontier life in the American West, to rendering the humanity of beloved animal characters. The biography also explores the historical context that affected Williams' life and art, both in the old world and the new. Against the frenetic pace of post-war suburbanization, Williams' illustrations nurtured a connection with the animal world and with a vanishing agrarian life. By tapping into American themes, Williams spoke to a postwar yearning for simplicity.

Complete with more than 60 illustrations, this is the first full biography of Garth Williams written with the help and cooperation of his family.

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