

Traveling to the Past

by Marilyn Force, Reference Librarian

If you didn't get to go away this summer, try a trip back in time at the Wyckoff Library!

For a photographic exploration of the world from 1850-1960 check out *The Color of Time* (2018) by Dan Jones and Marina Amaral. Using a colorizing technique with old photos, images of key individuals and events are portrayed and described. Some images are well-known such as Dorothea Lange's Dust Bowl shot of a mother named Florence Owens, while others are unfamiliar, yet startling. An example is a shot of a newsboy's bold headline proclaiming the loss of the Titanic in 1912 taken on a city street corner.

How about traveling back one hundred years ago to 1922? Looking at some books published that year and about that year, it is possible to explore key events.

Polar explorer Ernest Shackleton died in 1922 on board ship at South Georgia near Antarctica during a return journey to the area. Recent rediscovery of his ship *Endurance* in March, 2022 has heightened interest in his explorations. Wyckoff Library owns multiple books and films about him including *South: the illustrated story of Shackleton's last expedition 1914-1917* by Shackleton. Recently discovered period photos enhance this volume.

Another expedition of a different type occurred in November, 1922 when Howard Carter discovered the tomb of King Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. Take an armchair trip back to those days by reading *The World Beneath the Sands* by Toby Wilkinson. Focus on King Tut himself with *Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs* by Zahi Hawass.

A revolution was taking place in Ireland this same year. Revolutionary leader Michael Collins lost his life in an ambush in August, 1922 as he toured County Cork. *The Man Who Made Ireland: the Life and Death of Michael Collins* by Tim Pat Coogan as well as the movie called *Michael Collins* with Liam Neeson will transport you to that time.

Across the world the USSR was created in 1922 after years of turmoil following the end of the Romanov dynasty and the Russian Revolution. Vladimir Lenin headed the new country and his story is told in 2017's *Lenin: The Man, the Dictator, and the Master of Terror* by Victor Sebestyen.

Upheaval wasn't limited to politics. A recent work highlighted the importance of 1922 as the beginning year of modernism, a movement defined as a search for new forms of literary expression especially after World War I. Take a look at Bill Goldstein's *The World Broke in Two: Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, D.H. Lawrence, E.M. Forster and the Year That Changed Literature*.

Although the year included much unrest around the world, one of the most beloved children's books of all time was released in 1922. That book is *The Velveteen Rabbit* by Margery Williams about a toy rabbit that becomes "real" after being played with and loved by its owner. This book can be found in the library's Children's Rizzo Room.

The most notable book for adult readers published in 1922 was James Joyce's *Ulysses*, a "mock odyssey" set not in ancient Greece, but in the gritty city of Dublin. The novel has been hailed as the finest novel written in English in the 20th century as well as one of the hardest and most challenging to read. We own multiple copies – plenty for everyone!

Finally, a somewhat more accessible novel from 1922 is Sinclair Lewis's *Babbitt* about a Midwestern businessman from the fictional town of Zenith. The book is a criticism of middle-class American values and unthinking conformity.

Going back in time or into the future are both possible with a visit to the library. Start exploring the opportunities this month with your library card.