#### LIFE in VICTORIAN BRITAIN



0. LIFE in VICTORIAN BRITAIN - Story Preface

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This image—online via the UK National Trust—depicts Beatrix Potter when she was 15 years old. Her father Rupert—an avid photographer—took this picture of his oldest child with her dog Spot.

<u>Helen Beatrix Potter</u> was born in <u>London</u> on July 28, 1866. Her parents - Rupert Potter and Helen Leech - were financially secure. Thanks to the <u>Industrial Revolution</u>, and its many <u>innovative machines</u>, both had inherited <u>cotton fortunes</u> from wealthy <u>Lancashire</u> families. (Don't miss the animations in this paragraph.)

Because mother and daughter had the same first name, the new parents called their daughter "Beatrix" - or, simply, "B" - to avoid confusion. Although she gave the baby her name, Mrs. Potter did not give the child much time. The role of care giver was filled by a nurse and, later, governesses.

<u>Growing up</u> in her home at <u>2 Bolton Gardens</u>, <u>Kensington</u>, Beatrix led a life separate from her parents. Miss McKenzie, her nurse, was from the <u>Scottish Highlands</u>. Of her, Beatrix once said:

She had a firm belief in witches, fairies and the creed of the terrible John Calvin (the creed rubbed off but the fairies remained.) (Beatrix Potter: The Artist and Her World, page 10.)

When she was six, Beatrix was joined in the nursery by a baby brother, Walter Bertram Potter. Because their parents discouraged close friendships with others, <u>Bertram and Beatrix</u> became close companions. Their nurse allowed them to have pets, including rabbits and squirrels.

Prevented from having friends her own age, <u>Beatrix</u> started a secret journal when <u>she was fifteen</u>. <u>Using a code</u> she developed herself, she added to the journal until she was about thirty. After she died, <u>the code</u> remained a mystery until <u>Leslie Linder</u> deciphered it (in 1958).

Educated at home - like other wealthy girls in <u>Victorian Britain</u> - Beatrix had a penchant for drawing. Between the ages of five and fifteen, she worked on her skills in <u>Scotland</u>, where <u>her family</u> spent the summer months.

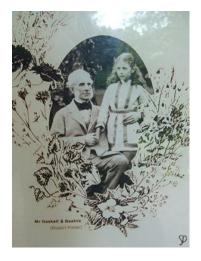
See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/LIFE-in-VICTORIAN-BRITAIN-Miss-Potter

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/LIFE-in-VICTORIAN-BRITAIN-Miss-Potter

Media Stream



# <u>Helen Beatrix Potter - As a Young Girl</u> Photo, courtesy Victoria & Albert Museum.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Helen-Beatrix-Potter-As-a-Young-Girl



# Map of England

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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# <u>Lancashire - Location in England</u>

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lancashire-Location-in-England">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Lancashire-Location-in-England</a>



#### Beatrix Potter - As a Child in England

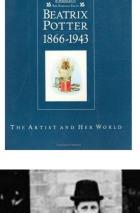
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#### Beatrix Potter - Childhood Home in Kensington

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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## Beatrix Potter - Summers in Scotland

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Beatrix-Potter-Summers-in-Scotland

#### Beatrix Potter - The Artist and Her World

Image online, courtesy the <u>amazon.com</u> website.

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http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Beatrix-Potter-The-Artist-and-Her-World

#### Beatrix Potter - With Brother, Walter Bertram Potter

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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#### Beatrix Potter - As a Teenager

Image online, courtesy Google Books, featuring *Beatrix Potter Artist, Storyteller and Countrywoman*, by Judy Taylor.

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## Beatrix Potter - Age 15, with Spot (Her Dog)

Image online, courtesy the National Trust.

View this asset at:

http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Beatrix-Potter-Age-15-with-Spot-Her-Dog-



#### Beatrix Potter - Her Kensington Neighborhood

Image online, courtesy the map-of-london blog site.

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#### Beatrix Potter - Her Secret Code

Image online, courtesy the Warne archive.

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#### Beatrix Potter - Summers in Scottish Highlands

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Beatrix-Potter-Summers-in-Scottish-Highlands



#### Beatrix Potter - With Her Family

Image online, courtesy Princeton University, <u>Cotsen Children's Library</u> website.

View this asset at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Beatrix-Potter-With-Her-Family">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Beatrix-Potter-With-Her-Family</a>



# <u>History of the Writings of Beatrix Potter, A</u> Image online, courtesy the amazon.com <u>website</u>.

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