

Vladimir Nabokov: A Descriptive Bibliography, Revised

D-Items – Translations

en Translations in English

These are translations of Russian A-items into English by translators other than Vladimir Nabokov. If, however, Nabokov supervised, oversaw, corrected, or collaborated on the translation, editions of such works can be found in the appropriate A-item slot.

Edition Summary

- D14.en.1.1** Camera Obscura, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST BRITISH EDITION (JOHN LONG), 1936, 3 issues.
- D62.en.1.1** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST AMERICAN EDITION (G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS), 1986, 2 issues.
- D62.en.1.2** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN EDITION (TAFELBERG), 1986, 1 issue.
- D62.en.1.3** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST BRITISH EDITION (PICADOR), 1987, 1 issue.
- D62.en.1.4** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST BOOK CLUB BRITISH EDITION (GUILD PUBLISHING), 1987, 1 issue.
- D62.en.1.5** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST WRAPPERS BRITISH EDITION (PICADOR), 1987, 2 issues.
- D62.en.1.6** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, FIRST LIBRARY AMERICAN BOOK CLUB EDITION (VINTAGE), 1991, 2 issues.
- D62.en.1.7** The Enchanter, FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION, NEW WRAPPERS BRITISH EDITION (PENGUIN), 2009, 1 issue.

D-Items—Translations

en Translations in English

D14

Камера обская / Laughter in the Dark

D14.en.1.1
gb.1936

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION

FIRST BRITISH EDITION (JOHN LONG)

¶ First printing, issue a, 1936

POINTS

There are three issues. The differences are in their bindings and dust jacket spines. In all cases, the textual pages are exactly the same and appear to be from one printing.



D14.en.1.1 First printing, issue a, 1936, cover, front



D14.en.1.1 First printing, issue a, 1936, binding, front

Camera Obscura. By Vladimir Nabokoff-Sirin. Translated by Winifred Roy from the Russian. London: John Long, 1936.

In black cloth over boards with gilt stamping + dj. 288 + 16 pp.

Note: John Long royalty statements (in the Nabokov holdings of the New York Public Library's Berg Collection) show that 567 sets of sheets of *Camera Obscura* were printed. The sheets were warehoused and then bound and shipped according to John Long's marketing needs.

First released were full price copies into the domestic market at 7/6 (i.e., seven shillings and six pence) on 2-Jan-1936. Only 99 copies were sold. At about the same time, John Long, following standard British publishing practice of the time, shipped copies overseas to countries and colonies of the British Empire for sale at less than the full price edition, probably six shillings. These were bound with a preliminary sheet pointing out that the copy was for sale only in a restricted area of the British empire. (See http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-GriBook-_div3-N11A1D.html) John Long records that only 10 such copies were sold.

Eventually, John Long, following its standard practice of re-releasing at a lower price point 7/6-priced books that didn't sell out, issued *Camera Obscura* in its "cheap" line at 3/6. One-hundred fifty-seven cheap copies were sold. Last of all were 277 copies sold at an unknown, remaindered price. A dozen copies were recorded as "free", probably for the author, reviewers, promotions, etc. That left 12 sets of sheets unaccounted for.

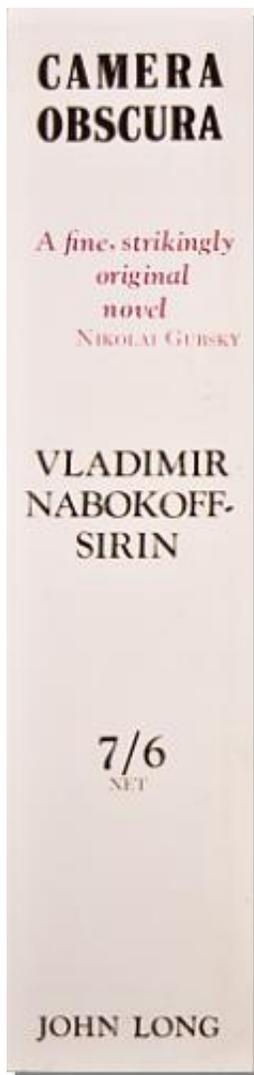
Of the 567 possible bound copies of *Camera Obscura*, only a stackful survive. Those still in their dust jackets are even rarer. I've been able to track three such copies: one at the Berg Collection and which had previously been Nabokov's own copy; a depository copy at the Cambridge University Library; and, one unsuccessfully offered three times (2002, 2005, 2008) by Sotheby's in London, for which I have little information. Ten other institutional copies, almost certainly without dust jacket, are listed on WorldCat and multiple others are in private hands or dealers' catalogs. The surviving population, with and without dust jacket, therefore is minimally a couple dozen.

The copies I've examined and the citations I've found reveal several points regarding bindings, dust jacket spines, and advertisements. For each point, the findings are listed in their probable order of issue. First are the bindings:

- **Binding a** – Black cloth-covered boards with gilt stamping;
- **Binding b** – Red cloth-covered boards with black stamping;
- **Binding c** – Wrappers (cited but unobserved).

Then are the dust jacket spines:

- **Dust jacket spine a** – Black and red lettering on a white ground (reading from the top down: title, blurb, author's name, price at 7/6, and publisher's name; see the photo of the issue a spine);



D14.en.1.1 First printing, issue a, 1936, dust jacket, spine

- **Dust jacket spine b** – A strip, overlaying the original spine, with black and red lettering on a yellow ground (reading from the top down: probably (because of incomplete information on a poorly preserved spine) the author’s name, title, two lines mentioning *Despair*, price at 3/6, and probably the publisher’s name; see the photo of issue b).

In addition, bound into each copy is a concluding separately paginated signature of advertisements for John Long books. Those signatures are listed here in their probable chronological order. (Be aware of John Carter’s admonition in *ABC for Book Collectors* that when using bound-in advertisements to assess priority of issue, one must use the evidence with great caution.):

- **Advertisement set a** – Sixteen pages headed “JOHN LONG | Books | SUMMER LIST, 1935”. There are 11 pages for summer 1935 books, three pages for spring 1935 books, one for cheap editions, and one for a writing competition “...for a mystery or detective novel to be submitted...not later than 1st July, 1935...”. There is no mention of *Camera Obscura* or the 1937 John Long *Despair* anywhere in the ads;
- **Advertisement set b** – Sixteen pages headed “JOHN LONG’S NEW BOOKS”. Page one has the further heading “GENERAL”, encompassing eight pages of listings and page nine is headed “NOVELS” and encompasses eight pages. *Camera Obscura* is advertised on p. 10. There is no mention of *Despair*;
- **Advertisement set c** – Sixteen pages headed “JOHN LONG’S NEW BOOKS”. There are 15 pages, plus one page for “RECENT NOVELS”. *Camera Obscura* is advertised on p. 9 and subheaded “Author of ‘Despair’”. But there is no separate listing for *Despair*;
- **Advertisement set d** – Four pages headed “JOHN LONG’S 3/6 LIBRARY | LOVE, LIFE & ROMANCE”. There is no mention of Nabokov or either of his two John Long titles. The fact that all of the books listed here are part of the “3/6 Library” implies that these advertisements were intended to be bound in with a John Long book selling at 3/6.

We come now to the actual copies examined:

- Binding a, dj spine a, advertisement set a;
- Binding a, dj spine a, advertisement set b;
- Binding a, unknown dj, advertisement set c;
- Binding b, unknown dj, advertisement set d;

And the copies, unexamined, with incomplete citations:

- Binding b, unknown dj, four pages of ads that are possibly advertisement set d;
- Binding c, unknown dj (if any), unknown ads, released in 1938.

With this information in hand, I have parsed this edition into three issues:

- **Issue a** – Binding a (black) and dust jacket spine a at 7/6: certainly the full price issue;
- **Issue b** – Binding a (black) and dust jacket spine b at 3/6: probably the cheap issue;
- **Issue c** – Binding b (red) and unknown dust jacket at unknown price: probably the remaindered issue.

Since I have not examined or found solid citations for colonial or wrappers releases, I have not given them the status of separate issues.

I have ignored the advertising sets here. Though they can with confidence be chronologically organized, the binder could have grabbed whatever current or old ones he had at hand when binding them into any of the issues: Witness ad set a with its references to spring and summer 1935 bound into a book released in January 1936.

D. Barton Johnson speculates that the credited translator, Winifred Roy, is in fact, Winifred Ray. Johnson researches come up with no mention of Roy. but that “...Winifred Ray was active as a translator from German and French in the 1930s. At least one of her translations was published by John Long, making it not unlikely that Nabokov’s *Laughter in the Dark* was

also Ray's work. There is no evidence that Ray knew Russian, so if she was the translator, she must have worked from Doussia Ergaz's French version (V. Nabokov-Sirine, *Chambre obscure* [Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1934])." (See D. Barton Johnson's "Sources of Nabokov's *Despair*", p. 15n, in *Nabokov at Cornell*, Gavriel Shapiro, ed., Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2003.)

John Long was an imprint of the British publisher Hutchinson. Though the colophon at the foot of p. 288 gives a 1935 printing date, *Camera Obscura* was actually published on 2-Jan-1936. The cover artwork is signed "Abbey".

Works:

1) *Camera Obscura* [Камера обскура]

¶ First printing, issue b, unknown date

As issue a, except

Camera Obscura. By Vladimir Nabokoff-Sirin. Translated by Winifred Roy from the Russian. London: John Long, n.d..

In black cloth over boards with gilt stamping + dj with spine b overlay.

Note: Issue b has the same binding as issue a but the dust jacket spine has a strip overlaying the original spine, as described above, repricing the issue at 3/6 as John Long's cheap issue.



D14.en.1.1 First printing, issue b, full view

¶ First printing, issue c, unknown date

As issue a, except

In red cloth over boards with black stamping + unknown dj.

Note: The differences between this issue and the previous two are the red binding with black stamping. The red cloth and black stamping imply the common British practice then of producing a cheaper remaindered binding with the first printing's sheets.



D14.en.1.1 First printing, issue c, binding, front

D62

Собрание сочинений: III [Волшебник / The Enchanter]

D62.en.1.1
us.1986

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION (G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS)

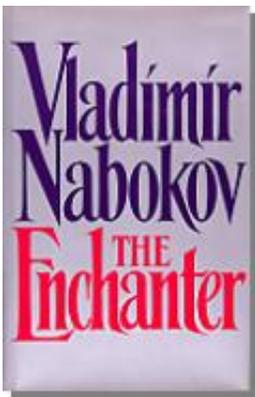
¶ First printing, 1986

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1986. With "Translator's Note"; translator's postscript, "On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*".

In quarter cloth over paper boards + dj. 128 pp. ISBN: 0-399-13211-2.

Works:

- 1) **Excerpt:** On a Book Entitled *Lolita*
- 2) **Excerpt:** [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
- 3) The Enchanter [Волшебник]



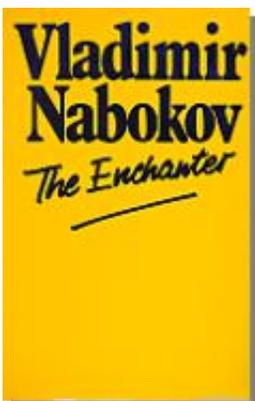
D62.en.1.1 First printing, 1986,
cover, front

¶ Second printing, 1986

As first printing, except

Note: “2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10” at bottom of copyright page.

D62.en.1.2
za.1986



D62.en.1.2 First printing, 1986,
cover, front

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION
FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN EDITION (TAFELBERG)

¶ First printing, 1986

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. Cape Town: Tafelberg, 1986. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

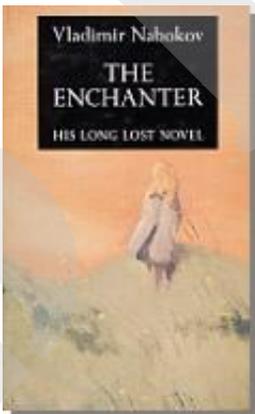
In wrappers. 128 pp. ISBN: 0-624-02434-2.

Note: The South African edition was published several months after the American edition. In fact the body of the book, less the preliminaries and cover, is a reproduction of the American version.

Works:

- 1) *Excerpt:* On a Book Entitled *Lolita*
- 2) *Excerpt:* [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
- 3) The Enchanter [Волшебник]

D62.en.1.3
gb.1987



D62.en.1.3 First printing, 1987,
cover, front

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION
FIRST BRITISH EDITION (PICADOR)

¶ First printing, 1987

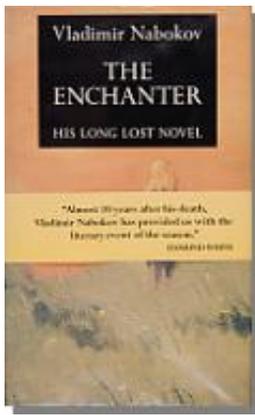
The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. London: Picador, 1987. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

In cloth over boards + dj + wraparound band. [3–130] pp. ISBN: 0-330-29666-3.

Note: The cover is a detail from a painting by F. Vallatton, 1913.

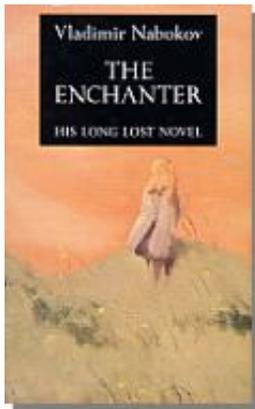
Works:

- 1) *Excerpt:* On a Book Entitled *Lolita*
- 2) *Excerpt:* [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
- 3) The Enchanter [Волшебник]



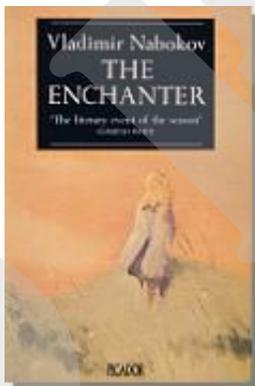
D62.en.1.3 First printing, 1987,
wraparound band (obi)

D62.en.1.4
gb.1987



D62.en.1.4 First printing, 1987,
cover, front

D62.en.1.5
gb.1987



D62.en.1.5 First printing, 1987,
cover, front

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION
FIRST BOOK CLUB BRITISH EDITION (GUILD PUBLISHING)
¶ First printing, 1987

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. London: Guild Publishing, 1987. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

In cloth over boards + dj. [3–130] pp.

Works:

- 1) **Excerpt:** On a Book Entitled *Lolita*
- 2) **Excerpt:** [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
- 3) The Enchanter [Волшебник]

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION
FIRST WRAPPERS BRITISH EDITION (PICADOR)
¶ First printing, 1987

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. London: Picador, 1987. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

In wrappers. [3–130] pp. ISBN: 0-330-30070-9.

Works:

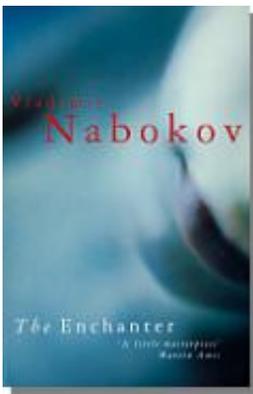
- 1) **Excerpt:** On a Book Entitled *Lolita*
- 2) **Excerpt:** [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
- 3) The Enchanter [Волшебник]

¶ Second printing, unknown date

As first printing, except

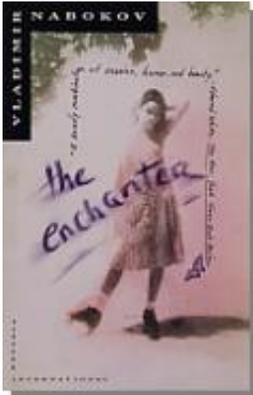
The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. London: Picador, n.d.. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

Note: Cover illustration by Ivano Confalone.

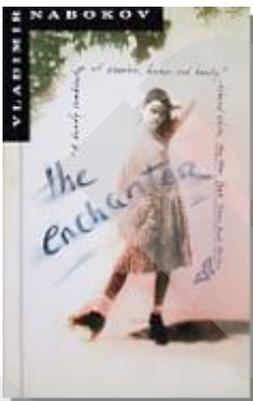


D62.en.1.5 Second printing,
cover, front

D62.en.1.6
us.1991



D62.en.1.6 First printing, 1991,
cover, front



D62.en.1.6 Tenth printing,
cover, front

D62.en.1.7
gb.2009

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION
FIRST WRAPPERS AMERICAN EDITION (VINTAGE)
¶ First printing, 1991

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. New York: Vintage, 1991. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

In wrappers. xxii, 122 pp. ISBN: 0-679-72886-4. In series “Vintage International”.

Note: Reprinted multiple times (at least 10).

Works:

- 1) On a Book Entitled *Lolita*
- 2) [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
- 3) *The Enchanter* [Волшебник]

¶ Tenth printing, unknown date, distributed by Paw Prints

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. New York: Vintage, n.d.. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

In pictorial boards. ISBN: 978-1-44874766-5.

Note: This issue is library bound in pictorial boards. It retains the first printing ISBN on its copyright page but a new ISBN on its back cover.

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION
NEW WRAPPERS BRITISH EDITION (PENGUIN)
¶ First printing, 2009

The Enchanter. Translated by and Dmitri Nabokov. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2009. With “Translator’s Note”; translator’s postscript, “On a Book Entitled *The Enchanter*”.

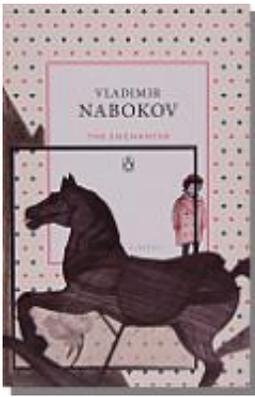
In wrappers. xi, 84 pp. ISBN: 978-0-141-19118-8.

Note: Cover designed by Pentagram. Cover illustration by Slawa Harasymowicz.

Works:

- 1) On a Book Entitled *Lolita*

- 2) [To Walter J. Minton, 6-Feb-1959]
3) The Enchanter [Волшебник]



D62.en.1.7 First printing, 2009,
cover, front

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(Draft of 26 Mar 2015)