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The standard first editions of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland published by Macmillan were bound in a red cloth, per the wishes of the author compared to the standard Macmillan green. This cover design of the book remained largely unchanged from 1866 to 1942. This cover design was very simple with the red cloth cover and gold-colored gilt. The gilt filled the border lines, the text for the title and on the spine and two images, one on the front and the other on the back of the book. The front image design was an image of Alice herself in a circular border. The back image was an image of the Cheshire cat's head, also in a circular frame, but smaller than the front image. According to the online archive of Early Books at the University of Maryland, Carroll specifically requested for the novel to be bound in red cloth instead of green because the red would be "more attractive to childish eyes."

Other later editions, such as the 2011 Macmillan Alice were designed as gift books. When books first became more accessible due to the growing print industry in the 18th and 19th centuries, they were often sold and marketed as the perfect gift. Creating books with the intention of being a special edition or gift is something that is still prevalent, as many reprints of classics are designed for beautiful gift displays.

Overall, most of the covers from Macmillan over the years have featured a young girl in the role as Alice interacting with one of the more well-known characters on the cover. Regardless of the medium or artistic style of the design, each image is colorful and playful.

The most significant difference is between the most recent edition from 2020. In this edition, the cover appears to refer back to the original book which prominently features red and has Alice in the center of the design. There are more whimsical and current imaginations of other characters in each corner, all which are colorful and carefully positioned. The most stark contrast is The