



# The History of The Hobbit

*John D. Rateliff*

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## **The History of The Hobbit** John D. Rateliff

Marking exactly 70 years since *The Hobbit* was first published, this commemorative boxed set comprises hardback gift editions of *The Hobbit* and the two-volume companion work which includes the very different unpublished draft version of Tolkien's masterpiece. This three-volume collector's boxed set presents for the first time the complete text of the original manuscript of 'The Hobbit' alongside the definitive hardback edition of the book. First published on 21 September 1937, *The Hobbit* has gone on to be one of the most treasured stories of all time, often dismissed as a children's book but enjoyed as much by adults as children. Like its successor, 'The Lord of the Rings', this is a story that "grew in the telling", and many characters and story threads present in the published text were completely different when Tolkien first read his story aloud to his young sons as part of their "fireside reads". As well as recording the many changes made to the story both before and after publication, 'Mr Baggins' and 'The Return to Bag-End' examine -- chapter-by-chapter -- why those changes were made and how they reflect Tolkien's ever-growing concept of Middle-earth. The original account of where Bilbo meets Gollum and steals the ring from him is reprinted here in its proper context for the first time in over fifty years, as are many little-known illustrations and previously unpublished maps for the story by Tolkien himself. Also featured are extensive annotations and essays on the date of composition, the influence of Tolkien's professional and early mythological writings, the imaginary geography, and Tolkien's later revisions. Finally, this boxed set makes available for the first time the text of Tolkien's attempt to recast 'The Hobbit' into the style of 'The Lord of the Rings'.

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