ABCipher

This is an encryption scheme published in London around 1868. You can see some examples in the collection in the first gallery. Carroll's instructions make use of a grid of letters. You can use this iPad app or make your own paper grid to write your own secret messages.

The app for iPad can be found by searching ABCipher, or at:

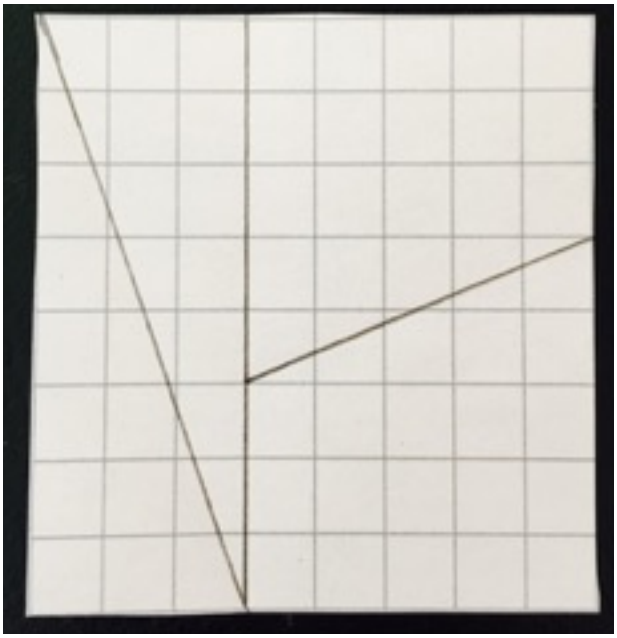
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/abcipher/id959421422?mt=8

Ransom Center visitors can get the app for free by using this promotional code:
WKRAEPTFW4H6

-Courtesy of "Blue from Tricochet[.com]", a talented Austin area coder who created ABCipher specifically for this exhibit and generally to celebrate 150 years of Alice in Wonderland

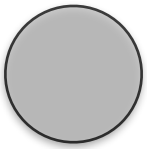
64=65

Lewis Carroll had no patience for dull questions so this one must be interesting. Its our job to figure out why. He made the pieces on display in the gallery entirely by hand, but you can make your own puzzle by cutting this image or by copying these cuts on some graph paper. The pieces can be joined to make an 8 x 8 square or a 5 x 13 rectangle. Can this be right?



Out of curiosity: Are there other ways to cut this grid so that you could get other areas? Why is there a discrepancy in areas depending on how the pieces are arranged?

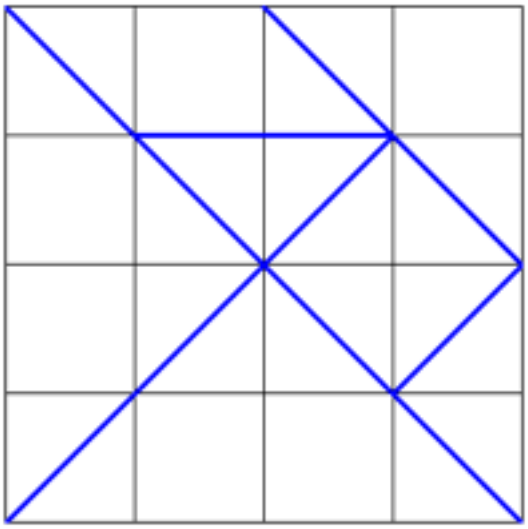
A favorite Lewis Carroll Coin Trick



Using coins of the day, a sixpence (dime sized) and a halfpenny (quarter sized) Carroll would engage his acquaintances with this amusement. Trace the small coin on a piece of paper. Cut out the hole. Try to fit the large coin through that hole without tearing the paper.

Next, challenge yourself to understand why these two coins were chosen for this game. Consider what would you have to measure on the quarter and on the dime to know if the task is possible if you couldn't just try it and see?

Tangrams



While not invented by Lewis Carroll, but he definitely took an interest in Tangrams. The same pieces can be rearranged into many distinct designs and there are even pairs of puzzles called Tangram Paradoxes. Tangrams were popularized during Lewis Carroll's lifetime and its speculated that Napoleon puzzled over them while in exile. In this excerpt from Henry Dudeney, a well known author of mathematical puzzles, he shows several with Alice connections and attributes the Hatter design on the lower left to Carroll himself.

Result 1 of 1 in this book for dudeney tangram alice in wonderland Clear search

Chapter 2

ALICE in WONDERLAND

40 The March Hare

41 The Hatter

From "Amusements in Mathematics" by Henry E. Dudeney

"As I have referred to the author of Alice in Wonderland, I give also my designs of March Hare and the Hatter."

42 The Hatter, as attributed to Lewis Carroll himself

43 The Queen of Hearts

"The Queen had only one way of settling all difficulties, great or small. 'Off with his head!' she said, without even looking round."