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March 14th, 2020

English 362

Dr. Pamela Dalziel

Five Fairy Tales Collection

To approach this assignment, I knew I would have to have some sort of common trait between my tale selections to be able to choose only five from Rare Books. This common trait is based upon my own fascination with witches and the magic that surrounds them. In searching for and eventually choosing these images, I wanted to investigate how witches were portrayed in these tales, particularly in the images associated with them. In the end, I settled on five fairy tales that contained witches in some capacity which I will describe below.

To start off, I'd like to look at the first tale I came across from Andrew Lang's *Pink Fairy Book*, called "The White Dove." The witch in this story is quite obviously evil, and H.J. Hughes had no problem portraying her as such; from her hunched figure, mischievous expression, or the shadow perpetually enveloping her depiction, her moral leanings are not difficult to extrapolate. When we compare this imaging to that of the two lovers, we can see the contrast starkly. The two protagonists are always shown to be light and bright and are never in shadow. When the witch turns to flint at the end of the tale, she is shown as white, which could potentially signal purity achieved through death or through being burned alive. The way the witch appears in these images seems to take over the frame, and may parallel her hold on the protagonists throughout the story.

The next tale I've chosen is *The Zankiwank and the Bletherwitch*. I originally chose this tale because I saw a witch in its title, so you can understand my confusion when I found there to be no depictions of this "Bletherwitch." After having flipped through many pages of this tale, I found out that the "Bletherwitch" wouldn't actually be making an appearance in this tale. With or without her, there

are still many beautiful images, which meant I still had to include it in my collection. I love these images particularly because they seem to convey both a sense of motion and a suspension of time. Figures' gestures and expressions allow us to understand the emotion behind a certain depicted scene, whether we read the text or not. I would like to highlight the fourth image I've chosen, as I feel you really get a sense of a moment having been extracted from time. Colouring the negative space in the image as black as well also allows us to gain a sense of otherworldliness.

Wymps and Other Fairy Tales contains the only coloured images I've chosen. The tale I focused on here is "The Little Witch of the Plain," which follows a young "witch-girl" named Blarnie. Her mother was also a witch, but a much nastier one than she is; apparently, Blarnie is only mischievous and plays tricks on people to make them careful what they wish for. This spirit comes across in the image I've chosen, as we see Blarnie and her eventual king and husband (here transformed into a black cat) travel the land together. I like the warm tones in the image because they make me feel comfortable in the unfamiliar landscape depicted, and I also like how the use of black forces our eyes to be drawn to the principal figures. The choice to make Blarnie's skin the colour of the moon and stars, and her hair the colour of certain parts of the landscape may be have been because there were only limited colours available; however, I choose to see it as a way of connecting her to the things she sees, while also making the image more cohesive.

This next book of tales is interesting because while reading them, you realize they're not really tales at all, but scientific teachings with allusions to fairy tale conventions. *Fairy Tales of Science* was an interesting choice for me, but I saw its cover, spine, and a wonderful witch image, so I knew I had to have it. In the image I'm referring to, we see a smiling witch riding a telescope through space, with the moon and sun both smiling at her as well. I like this depiction because I feel like it gives us another side of witch imagery different from the typical hag. In this image, although we don't get to see her true character through a tale particularly, we do get to see her happy. The telescope is also a point of interest

here, as witches typically ride on broomsticks, which may signal female domesticity. Instead, by riding on a telescope, this witch seems to be taking on the role of scientist, in a way that I would say challenges our typical assumption of how a witch is to be portrayed. I also just really like how the book itself is bound and gilded in a way that makes it look like an alchemist's tome, harkening back to early forms of science.

The final tale I've chosen is from *Japanese Fairy World*, titled "Kiyohime, or the Power of Love." This tale doesn't contain a witch exactly, but a sorceress instead. I liked this tale because instead of painting the sorceress as the villain the whole time, we get to see her descent into evil which I would say humanizes her at least a little bit. The image associated with the tale shows her as above everyone else, on top of the bell, and holding a t-shaped wand, which illustrates the scenario well as she's used demonic forces to get revenge on her forbidden lover. What stuck out to me in this image is how light is depicted. In a moment so dark and full of evil, there is light from above which gives the image a heavenly quality. What's more, the light seems to fall from the top left of the illustration to the bottom right, drawing our eyes to Kiyohime first, and then to the priests, seeing first her melting the bell and then the priests' terror. In this way, we are able to understand a sort of cause and effect at this point in the story.

In all, I hope that I may have shed a little light on how these images operate within these tales. The representation of witches seems to be most often of an old, evil crone, so in choosing some more diverse depictions, we may begin to alter our perspective. I hope my choices have made sense, and I hope to continue searching for more witch's tales in the future.

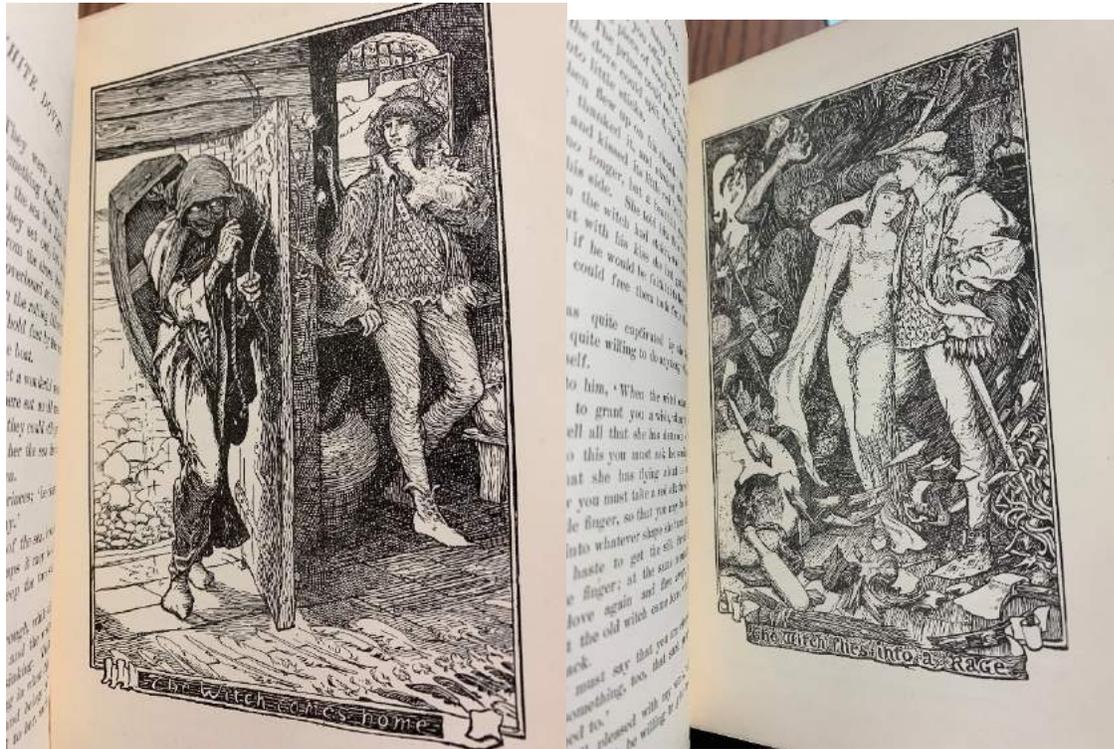
The Pink Fairy Book

Andrew Lang, Illustrated by H.J. Hughes

Published: London : Longmans, Green, 1897.

PZ6 1897 .L353

<http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=13779>



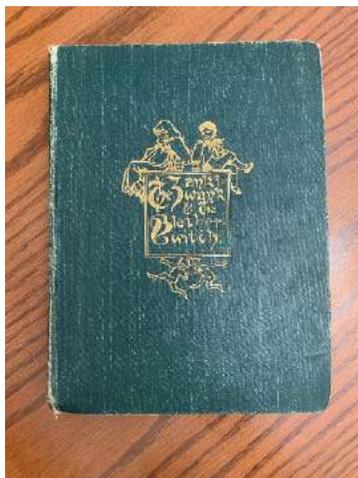
The Zankiwank and the Bletherwitch

Shafto Justin Adair Fitz-Gerald, Illustrated by Arthur Rackham

Published: London : J.M. Dent, 1896.

Call # PZ6 1896 .F589

<http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=224186>



Wymps and other fairy tales

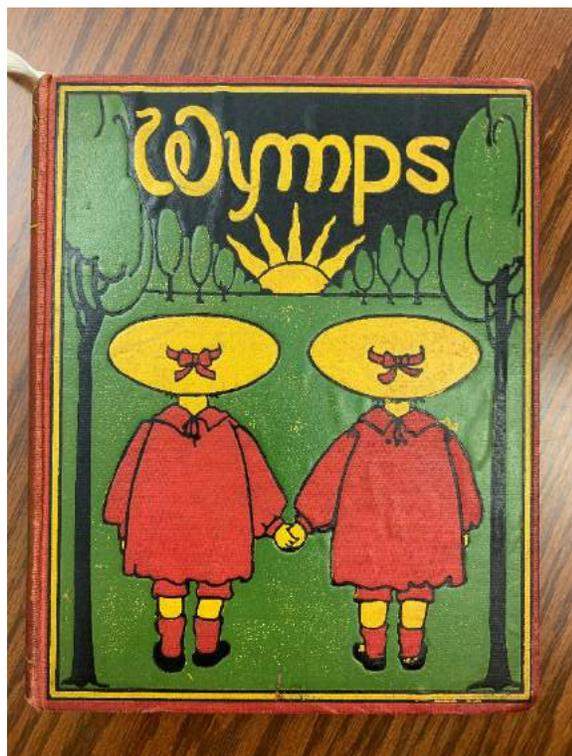
Evelyn Sharp, Illustrated by Mrs. Percy Dearmer

Published: London ; New York : John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1897.

printed by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.

Call # PZ6 1897 .S537

<http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=9850411>



The Fairy Tales of Science: A Book for Youth
Jon Car Brough, Illustrated by Charles H. Bennett
Published: London : Griffith and Farran, 1866.

Call # PZ6 1866. B76

<http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=2171234>



Japanese Fairy World

William Elliot Griffis, Illustrated by Ozawa, of "Tokio"

Published: London : Trubner, 1887.

Call # PZ6 1887 .G753

<http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=2173577>

