

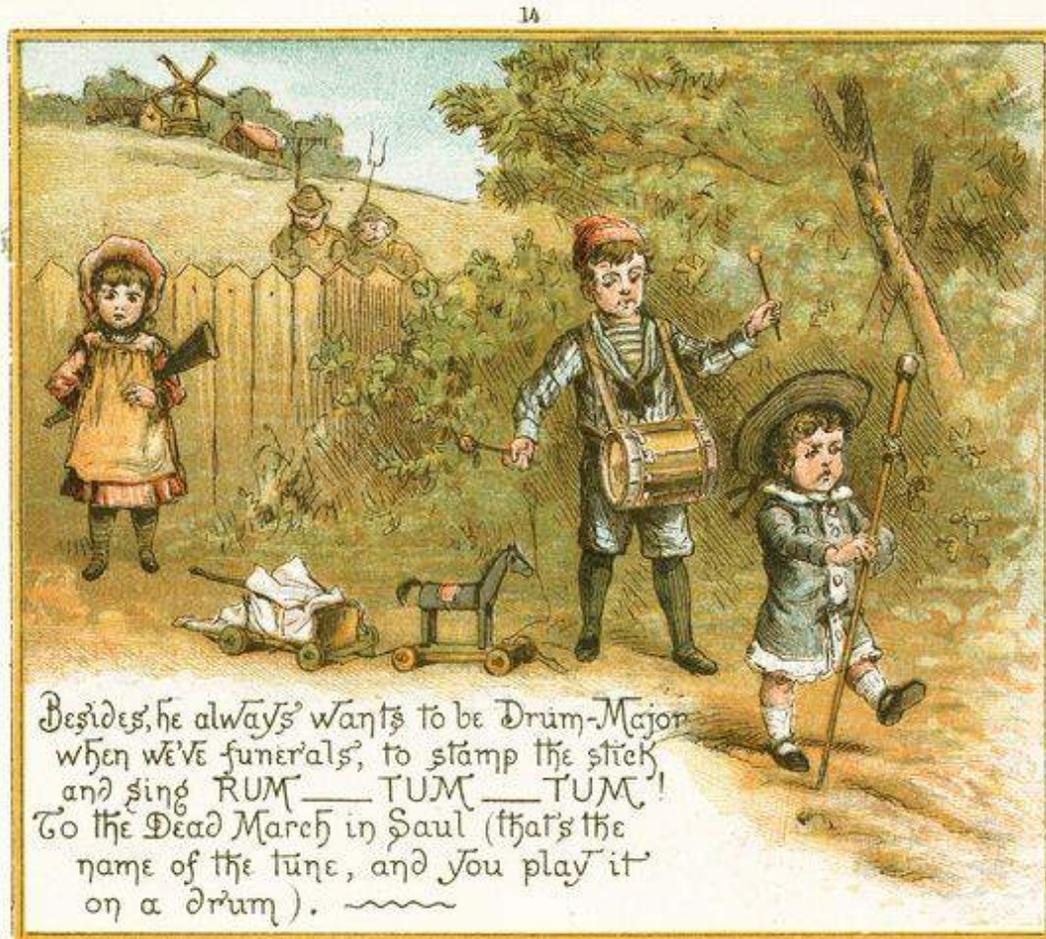
Selection of Five Victorian Fairy Tales

All five of the works I wish to have in my collection are very different; some are short works, some are novels, some are fantastical, some are realistic, some are poetry, and some are prose. What connects all of these works together are that they are produced by female authors. However, it was no easy task to find female authors in comparison to males and, while this was not surprising, it was disappointing. The works listed below all offered something different, including a passion for nature, the ability to teach sympathy, and offering new perspectives for readers. Beyond this, all of the works are thoroughly entertaining and incredibly well written, giving validation through the success of these women to other female Victorian writers who were dismissed for their gender.

Craik, Dinah Maria Mulock. *The adventures of a brownie, as told by my children*. Boston, L. C. Page, 1897. Call # PZ6 1897.C724. Permalink <http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=2031076>

Dinah Craik's *The adventures of a brownie, as told by my children* is a perfect example of a Victorian fairy tale. It features a mythical creature, the brownie, who delights in mischief and serves to teach the audience about sloppiness, laziness, and cruelty through the punishment the Brownie doles out for those who exhibit these traits. The characters are easily recognizable as good and bad, keeping it simple enough for children to follow, and the work creates an entire lore around the Brownie and all of its magical capabilities. The story is comprised of several adventures, with each chapter titled "ADVENTURE THE FIRST" all the way through to "ADVENTURE THE SIXTH AND THE LAST" with each section as an independent story featuring the same characters. It is this easily separated and well paced style that drew me to this work, as it can be read as a family, either in one sitting for a longer period spent together or in pieces read each night before bed. Overall, this work is the quintessential fairy tale.

Ewing, Juliana Hodgson. *A Soldier's Children*. Illustrated by R. André, London, G. Bell & Sons, 1841-1885. Call # PZ6 1883.E946b. Permalink <http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=3613688>



Juliana Hodgson Ewing's work *A Soldier's Children* is the least fanciful of the works and it is also the shortest. I chose this specific work because it encourages sympathy in the reader and gives a deeper insight into the psyche of children to show them as just as emotionally complex as adults even if they do not express this in socially acceptable ways. Because it is a children's story, it is told through the perspective of the children as their father is at war so as to not show the violence of battle while still offering a comprehensive narrative of its effects. This work puts an emphasis on children using play as a form of understanding the world and coping with it. As shown through the prayers offered by Dick, the audience can see that children have a deeper understanding of the tragedy of war than what adults believe. This work, with its colourful illustrations and fun rhyming, can be read to entertain children but it can also be read by adults both as a way to process tragedy and as a way of understanding children, particularly in difficult times.

Ingelow, Jean. *Stories Told to a Child*. London, Darton Gardener, 1900. Call # PZ61900.I534.
Permalink <http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=2186756>

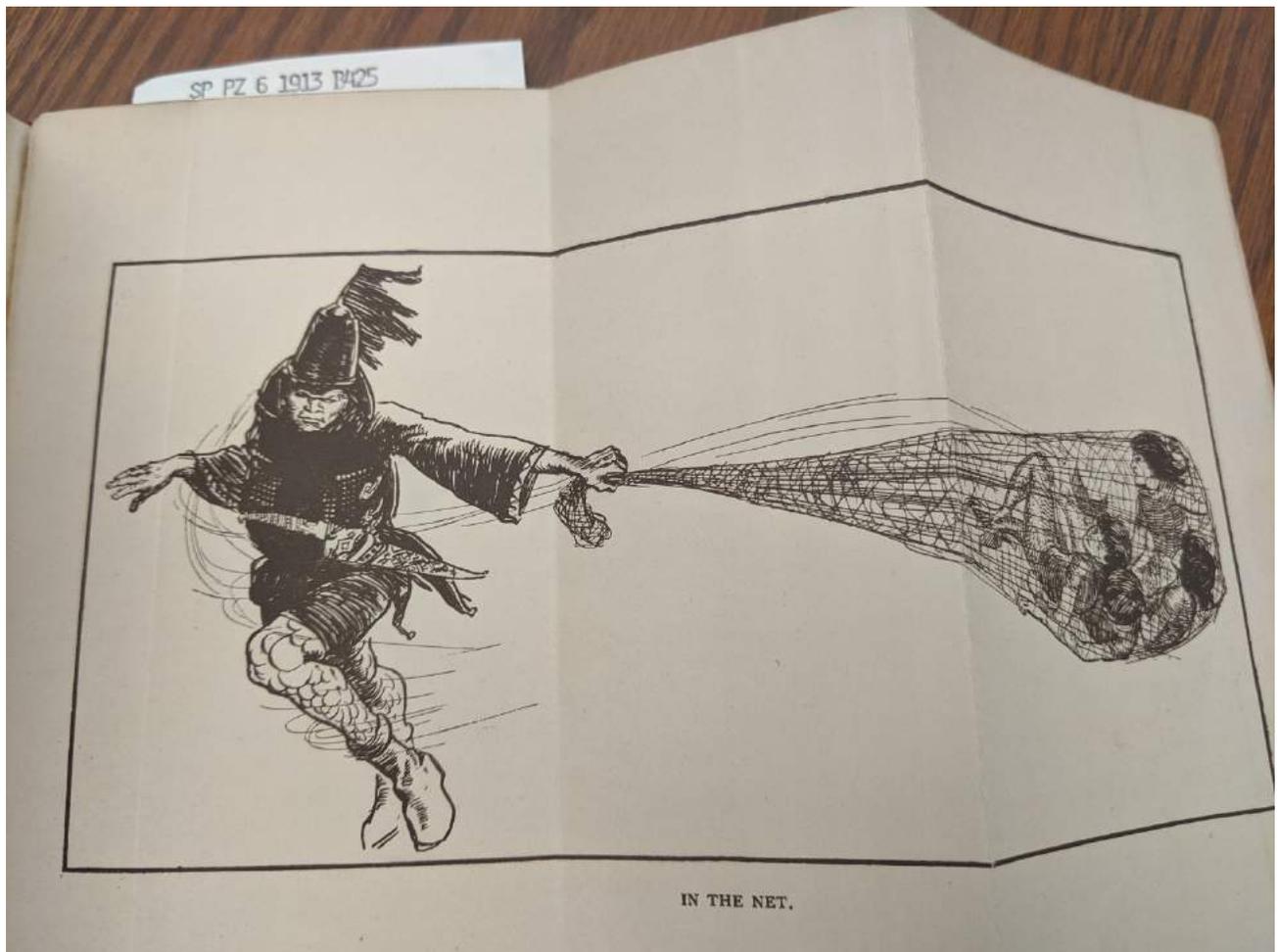


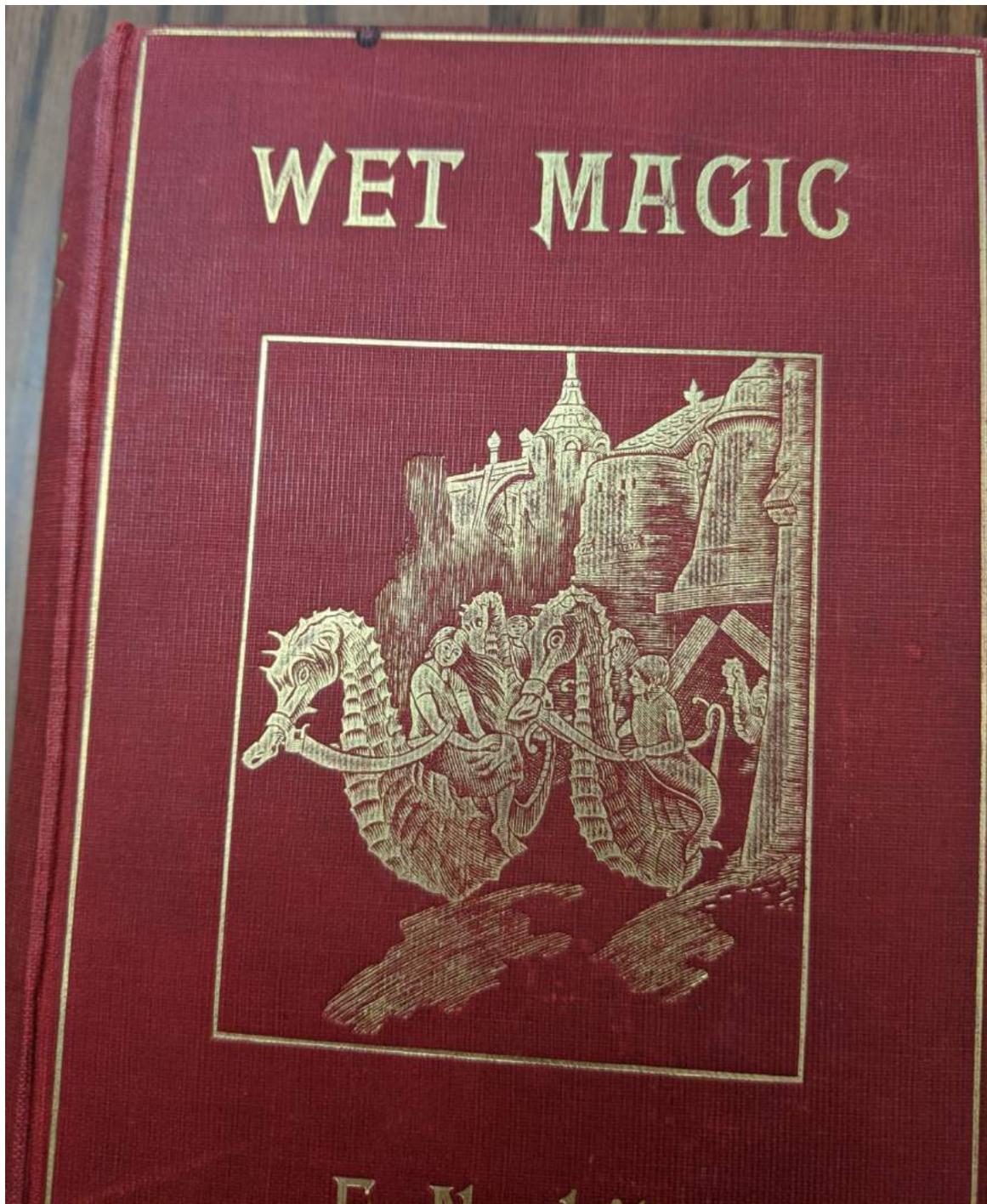
THE GRANDMOTHER'S SHOE.

Jean Ingelow's *Stories Told to a Child* is the only work on my list that uses first-person narration. This is not something that is particularly common in fairy tales and it allows readers to position themselves as adults reflecting on childhood, as is the voice of the narrator. The tone at

the beginning of this story, with typhus fever mentioned in the first sentence, followed by the disappointment of a ten-year-old girl at not being contacted by or able to see her family, sets a tone unlike the other works in this list. There is an over-proprity imposed upon the children, thus creating a restrictive and unpleasant space set upon both the children and the reader. This surprisingly dark tone is reflected in the illustration above, with one girl hiding her face in the shadows and the other with eyes of concern glancing to the side. This work is less fantastical than others and, despite my love of fantasy, feels quite grounded and personal through the first-person narration, thus offering a good contrast to other works in this list.

Nesbit, E. *Wet Magic*. Illustrated by Millar, H.R., London, T. W. Laurie, 1913. Call # PZ6 1913.B425. Permalink <http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=135462>





I chose E. Nesbit's *Wet Magic* partially for a strange reason; the page shape. Several of the illustrations are on large pages that have to be pulled out in order to see the full image. In the photo included, it can be seen how the extended page, along with the lines to indicate movement, showcases a sense of motion. There are several other extended pages, all containing illustrations, and it adds a fun interactive element to the story which would help draw children in. The story itself is fun and whimsical, with lots of action and magic throughout and, as a lover of fun fast paced fantasy novels, I want to own this work to reread several times over. This work is

significantly longer than other works selected, but the plot is interesting and Nesbit's wit is felt throughout, making it easy to quickly get through the work. This is an excellent work to own, as it would be a good quick novel to lift the spirits.

Potter, Beatrix. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. London, Warne, F., 1902. Call # PZ61902 P687.

Permalink <http://resolve.library.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/catsearch?bid=25726>





I thought to add Beatrix Potter because I had heard of Peter Rabbit since my childhood, yet I had never read a Beatrix Potter book. As I researched Beatrix Potter, I discovered she was much more than an author and illustrator, she was also a conservationist and a naturalist who ended up becoming a scientific illustrator. By reading Peter Rabbit, I ended up learning about a Victorian woman who made her own living through her art as well as through her passion for science. Beyond this, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* is a fun and whimsical journey that elicits excitement, fear, and sympathy in a very short number of pages. Peter is shown as mischievous, yet the reader ends up hoping for his safe return as apposed to seeing him pay for his disobedience. This is partially achieved through Potter's illustrations that show Peter as a cute little rabbit who a is small and helpless, perhaps foolish, creature not unlike a child.