

Fairy Tales in the Nineteenth Century

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Introduction

This project functions as a pilot for a larger digital archive and research resource on fairy tale Print Culture in the long nineteenth century, featuring materials from the Special Collections in the Robinson Library. This was achieved by utilising the open-source archiving program Streetprint.

The initial aims of the project were:

- To enable the student to pursue a research interest in the fairy tale in the nineteenth century.
- To develop the student's transferable skills in working with digital technology.
- To give the student training in reporting research in the digital medium
- To create a research resource on the topic of nineteenth-century fairy tales.

The C19th heralded the emergence of a new model of literary fairy tale in Britain, as Victorian authors censored and manipulated the decidedly adult themes of the Brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault, and the oral-folk tales which preceded them.

Introduced for the first time into the nursery, the C19th fairy tale was applied to children's moral education; furthermore, fairy tales intended for an adult readership challenged and reconstructed the attitudes of the burgeoning middle-class.

In many cases, the C19th literary fairy tale engaged with and encouraged social reform, responding to the changes which were instigated on a national scale by both the era of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution of 1830-90.

Their resurgence in this period was linked to concerns over regional and national identity; to interests in folklore; to scepticism about scientific knowledge and rationalism; and to the developing discipline of anthropology.

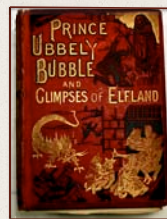
Using the Streetprint site's 'Narrative' section, the student aimed to research and group texts within the broad-based archive into specific sub-sets. These would be linked by themes such as those listed above, subject matter or author.



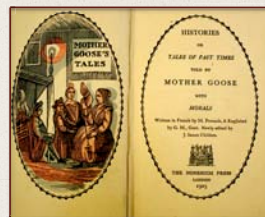
Title: *The Surprising History of Jack and The Beanstalk*
Category: Chapbook
Location: Newcastle University: The Robinson Library, Special Collections
Year: c.1860
Publisher: Watton and Price
Pagination: pp.11
Dimensions: 10cm x 17cm
City: Birmingham



Title: *Fairy Tales in Verse*
Authors: Unknown; source C. Perrault
Category: Poetry/Verse
Year: 1851
Location: Newcastle University: Robinson Library, Special Collections
Publisher: Dutton and Clark
Pagination: pp.34
Dimensions: 17cm x 20.5cm
Illustrations: Unknown
City: Holborn Hill, London



Title: *Prince Ubbely Bubble and Glimpses of Elfland*
Author: J. Templeton Lucas
Category: Anthology of Fairy Tale Novellas
Year: 1890
Location: Newcastle University: The Robinson Library, Special Collections
Publisher: Frederick Warne & Co
Pagination: pp.467
Dimensions: 14cm x 19cm
Illustrations: Barnes; Brunton; Barnard; Concanen; W. Lucas; Matt; Morgan; Phiz; J.E. Soden; Gordon Thomson; J. Templeton Lucas & Ellen Edwards
City: Bedford Street, Strand: London



Title: *Histories or Tales of Past Times told by Mother Goose, with Morals*
Authors: Charles & M. Perrault
Category: Anthology of Fairy Tales
Year: 1925
Location: Newcastle University: The Robinson Library, Special Collections
Publisher: The Nonesuch Press
Pagination: pp.127
Dimensions: 10cm x 16cm
City: London

Methodology

Having surveyed the fairy tale material in Special Collections, the student identified particular areas of interest which structured the organization of texts to be photographed and mounted in the digital archive.

After creating a custom Streetprint template entitled Nineteenth Century Fairy Tales, the student ensured she had the correct bibliographical information for over 60 relevant texts in order to create an academic, searchable database.

The student then photographed the material in the controlled environment of Special Collections, resulting in an archive of 969 high-resolution images. These were uploaded to Streetprint to illustrate the appropriate bibliography, in many cases allowing the user to read the entire body of text.

Once the online archive had been completed, the student identified several themes around which to structure narratives. These included **Little Red Riding Hood**, **The Victorian 'Woman Question'** and **Christianity and Moral Didacticism**. Each narrative includes a number of texts, poems or individual fairy tales from anthologies, with an accompanying critical response identifying the material's significance in relation to its particular narrative.

Presented below are examples of archive entries, including chapbooks, collections of fairy tales and verse:

Conclusion

Upon completion of the tenure the pilot digital archive contains entries which span the breadth of C19th fairy tale literature available in Special Collections. The database is easily searchable by author, title, illustrator and publisher, and in around 40% of the entries the user is able to read the entirety of the text.

The narratives the student has created are varied, academic and engaging, and offer further insight to the material beyond bibliographical information; she will continue to develop these narratives as well as creating further entries, and as the Streetprint opensource software supports user interaction, other students are invited to do the same.

Although the photographing and digitisation procedure was lengthy and posed various difficulties, the time and effort taken to ensure that the images were of the highest quality and clarity has rendered the archive both user-friendly and professional.

The student hopes for the project to be developed in the future by undergraduate and postgraduate students, according to their research interests, through projects and module assignments.

The student has also liaised with Seven Stories, the national centre for children's literature, and identified further C19th material which is relevant to the archive; she hopes to add these to the database once the website is live and copyright details are finalised.

Finally, the student is confident that this archive showcases the wealth and diversity of material available to researchers in Special Collections, which it promotes as a valuable and accessible resource. By encouraging students and researchers to engage with the Robinson Library in this manner, she feels that the archive will be an asset to both Special Collections and Newcastle University.



Title: *Fairy Tales*
Author: Henry Morley
Category: Anthology of Fairy Tales
Year: 1893
Location: Newcastle University: The Robinson Library, Special Collections
Publisher: George Routledge & Sons
Pagination: pp.362
Dimensions: 13cm x 19.5cm
Illustrations: C.H. Bennett
City: London



Title: *Grimm's Household Stories*
Authors: The Brothers Grimm
Category: Anthology of Fairy Tales
Year: 1864
Location: Newcastle University: Robinson Library, Special Collections
Publisher: Routledge, Warne & Routledge
Pagination: pp.552
Dimensions: 13.5cm x 20cm
Illustrations: E.H. Wehnert
City: Broadway, Ludgate Hill: London; 129 Grand Street: New York