AN EXCEPTIONAL PRESENTATION COPY

Grimm’s Fairy Tales

Jacob Grimm · Wilhelm Grimm

Kinder- und Hausmärchen [Children’s and Household Tales]. Göttingen: Dieterichsche Buchhandlung, 1837. Inscribed and signed presentation copy.

> Dem lieben Malchen Hassenpflug von seinem treuen Freunde Wilhelm Grimm.
>
> *(“To dear Malchen Hassenpflug, from her true friend, Wilhelm Grimm.”)*

The recipient, Amalie “Malchen” Hassenpflug, was one of the women whose storytelling helped create the collection, credited with contributing approximately ten tales. Her own signature in Volume II places her name in a book to which she contributed but in which she is not credited.



Wilhelm Grimm’s presentation inscription in the first volume, dated Göttingen, 23 October 1837. Two volumes, small octavo. Third edition overall; first enlarged “Grosse Ausgabe.”

THE INSCRIPTION

Wilhelm Grimm inscribed the first volume to “dear Malchen Hassenpflug, from her true friend”: an association that reaches directly into the origins of one of the foundational works of world literature. Amalie Hassenpflug (1800–1871) and her sisters Marie and Jeanette belonged to the circle of women who supplied the Grimms with stories that entered the Kinder- und Hausmärchen, and Amalie herself is credited with contributing approximately ten tales. Their role illuminates a larger story about women, authorship, and the construction of the literary canon: the familiar image of the brothers gathering ancient stories directly from anonymous peasants obscures the collaborative networks through which many tales actually reached them.

Later scholarship has recovered just how thoroughly the identities of these women could disappear from the record. The mysterious “Alte Marie” (“Old Marie”), long believed an elderly servant, was eventually identified as Amalie’s sister Marie Hassenpflug, now recognized as the source of more than twenty tales, including versions of Little Red Riding Hood and Sleeping Beauty. Wilhelm Grimm, who played the principal editorial role in shaping these narratives, presented this copy to one of the storytellers who supplied his material: a contributor whose own name appears nowhere in the printed attribution, but who would place it in this copy herself.

THE EDITION

The first “Grosse Ausgabe”

The 1837 edition marks an important stage in the evolution of the Kinder- und Hausmärchen. Newly enlarged to 167 fairy tales and nine Kinderlegenden, it was the first edition designated the “Grosse Ausgabe,” and the first published by Dieterich in Göttingen rather than Reimer in Berlin, distinguishing the complete collection from the smaller selection intended for children.

THE BINDINGS



Original publisher’s decorative colored lithographed boards by H. Asmus, Berlin, printed by J. Storch. Blue endpapers; all edges sprinkled.

PROVENANCE

Her name in a book she helped create

Amalie Hassenpflug’s ownership signature gives this copy a further dimension. Although credited by later scholarship with contributing approximately ten tales to the Kinder- und Hausmärchen, she is nowhere named as a contributor in the published work. Here, in her own copy, her name appears in her own hand. Together with Wilhelm Grimm’s presentation inscription, the signature makes unusually tangible the collaborative origins of the collection: the printed book names the Grimms; this copy also preserves the name of one of the women whose storytelling helped create it.

AMALIE HASSENPFLUG’S OWNERSHIP SIGNATURE, VOLUME II



Amalie Hassenpflug’s signature, verso of the frontispiece, Volume II.

THE DATE

Wilhelm presented the volumes on 23 October 1837, during the Göttingen Seven crisis that culminated in the dismissal of Jacob and Wilhelm from the university that December.

THE OBJECT

TITLE	Kinder- und Hausmärchen [Children’s and Household Tales]
AUTHOR	Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm
IMPRINT	Göttingen: Dieterichsche Buchhandlung, 1837
EDITION	Third edition overall; first enlarged “Grosse Ausgabe”
FORMAT	Two volumes, small octavo
ASSOCIATION	Presentation copy, Wilhelm Grimm to Amalie Hassenpflug, Göttingen, 23 October 1837; signed by Hassenpflug in Volume II
EDITION NOTE	The collection continued evolving to 211 tales by the seventh and final edition of 1857; the 1837 edition is apparently unrecorded in Rümann, Hauswedell, and Wegehaupt
CONDITION	Bindings scuffed and rubbed, corners bumped, wear at spine ends and joints. Internally clean with occasional minor foxing; pagination irregularities in Volume I are printing errors, text complete by signatures.

IN SUMMARY

An extraordinary presentation copy

A remarkable survival connecting the published Grimm canon directly to one of the women who helped create it, this copy bears both Wilhelm Grimm’s presentation inscription to Amalie Hassenpflug and her own ownership signature: her stories entered the collection without her name, while here, in her own hand, it survives. The copy thus materially preserves the collaborative, and often obscured, role of women behind one of the most influential works in the history of children’s literature.

This copy was in the collection of Justin G. Schiller, widely recognized as the leading authority on rare children’s books. Schiller has noted that in his fifty-plus years active in the rare book world, this was only the second time he had handled an inscribed volume of Grimm’s tales, both of which were inscribed to Amalie Hassenpflug.