

**“Like the fragments of coloured glass
in a kaleidoscope”:
Andrew Lang Mixes Up
Richard Doyle’s *In Fairyland***

George Cruikshank’s comic, black-and-white illustrations to Edgar Taylor’s *German Popular Stories* (1823–26), the first English translation of Grimms’ fairy tales, are considered pivotal in making fairy tales an acceptable form of children’s literature. The fairy tale and its companion literary form, the *kunstmärchen*, quickly became popular, and, one could argue, the folk tale and the literary fairy tale became the dominant forms of children’s literature in England during the second half of the nineteenth century. “What Children Like to Read,” the poll conducted in 1898 by the *Pall Mall Gazette* to form a list of books best suited for ten-year-old children, concluded, “the most obvious point is the victory of the fairy tale” (1). Innovative nineteenth-century illustrators and book designers skillfully moved beyond the crude chapbook artists of the eighteenth century and, in doing so, helped the literary-fairy-tale form reach prominence among both children and adult Victorian audiences. Along with the triumph of the fairy tale, the Victorian age ushered in one of the great periods of book illustration. Nineteenth-century Britain was simultaneously a golden age of children’s literature and a period of innovative book design, with the two fields frequently united. In *The Illustrator and the Book in England from 1790 to 1914* Gordon Ray created a list of “One Hundred Outstanding Illustrated Books

Published in England between 1790 and 1914,” and ten percent of the texts mentioned are children’s books (313–35).

The greatest illustrated Victorian book of fairies is Richard Doyle’s *In Fairyland: A Series of Pictures From the Elf-World* (1870). His illustrations provide a fanciful, personal, exuberant fairy world that is still the visual reference point for contemporary images of fairies. Doyle’s sixteen large color plates, engraved and printed by Edmund Evans, one of the most accomplished printers of the era, are stunning. In *Sing a Song for Sixpence: The English Picture Book Tradition and Randolph Caldecott*, Brian Alderson has called *In Fairyland* “one of the most majestic examples of trade colour-printing in the Victorian times” (105), and the art historian Jeremy Maas in *Victorian Painting* considers *In Fairyland* to be “the loveliest colour plate book of the Victorian age” (155). The book historian John Harthan, in *The History of the Illustrated Book*, considers *In Fairyland* “the most magical of Victorian fairy books” (198), while the book collector Eric Quale simply calls it “one of the finest books ever produced for children” (41).

Doyle’s *In Fairyland* illustrations are complete in themselves and should be understood as part of the Victorian narrative-art movement.¹ Nevertheless, publishers have consistently felt the need to couple Doyle’s illustrations with a verbal text, beginning with Richard Allingham’s poem “A Forest in Fairyland” in 1870, and continuing with Andrew Lang’s fairy tale *Princess Nobody* in 1884. But neither the poem or the fairy tale, which was written specifically around Doyle’s illustrations, do justice to these spectacular images. Considerable tension remains between the text and illustration, with the prose detracting from rather than adding to the illustrations. Doyle’s illustrations stand alone as a powerful visual statement that resists verbal attempts to control them or render them into a coherent narrative. Like Doyle’s fairies, his resilient illustrations to *In Fairyland* have the ability to break free and transcend the text.

Andrew Lang, the authoritative Victorian folklorist and champion of fairy tales, seems the ideal writer to provide a frame for Doyle’s idiosyncratic, yet enduring images.² Even Lang fell under the spell of Doyle’s artful, but artificial magic and was willing to suspend his scholarly approach to folklore for the pleasures of Doyle’s version of the fairy world in composing *Princess Nobody*. The results highlight the tension between text and image and the split between Lang’s scholarly knowledge of the structure and elements of a fairy tale and Doyle’s fanciful vision of fairies that owes as much to Victorian pantomime and the ballet as to traditional folklore.

Doyle’s career as a book illustrator can be seen as one long preparation for the illustration of *In Fairyland*. Writing in *The Morning Chronicle* on December 26, 1845, William Thackeray reviewed a series of Christmas

books, including *The Fairy Ring* (1846), a new translation of Grimms' fairy tales by John Edward Taylor, a relative of Edgar Taylor, the first English translator of the Grimms. Although Thackeray mildly praised Taylor's translation, what captured his fancy and earned his praise were the clever illustrations by the young Richard Doyle, or as he was better known, Dicky Doyle. Thackeray enthusiastically wrote: "We read every now and then in these legends of certain princes and princesses who are carried away by the little people for a while and kept in fairy land. This must have been surely Mr. Doyle's case, and he must have had the advantage of pencil and paper during his banishment. If any man knows the people and country, he does" ("Christmas Books" 98).

Thackeray became one of Doyle's closest companions and a strong promoter of his artwork. The two men worked together on the staff of *Punch*. Doyle designed the *Punch* cover, which first appeared in January 1849 and remained unchanged until 1956. The image featured Punch and his dog Toby surrounded by a swirl of fairies.

Doyle quickly advanced among the ranks of *Punch* artists and within a year shared the weekly political cartoon with John Leech. During his seven years on the *Punch* staff (1843–50), Doyle produced about a third of the big cartoons for the journal, in addition to numerous small comic initials and insert drawings as well as drawings for the annual *Punch Almanack* (Engen 52). He resigned from *Punch* because of the magazine's harsh anti-Catholic stance; he subsequently worked as a book illustrator and painter. His departure opened up a position on *Punch* for John Tenniel, whose cartoons in the journal helped secure him the assignment as illustrator of Lewis Carroll's two *Alice* books. While he was at *Punch*, Doyle also illustrated several popular books, including three of Charles Dickens's Christmas books: *The Chimes* (1844), *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845), and *The Battle of Life* (1846). He also illustrated Thackeray's Christmas book *Rebecca and Rowena* (1849) and his novel *The Newcomes* (1854). But it was fairies and fantasy that were Doyle's field of expertise, and many of the books he illustrated prominently featured fairies. These included Anthony R. Montalba's fairy-tale collection *Fairy Tales of All Nations* (1849); fairy tales such as *The Story of Jack and the Giants* (1850); J. R. Planché's *An Old Fairy Tale Told Anew in Picture and Verse* (1865); and literary fairy tales such as Mark Lemon's *The Enchanted Doll* (1850), John Ruskin's *The King of the Golden River* (1851), and E. H. Knatchbull-Hugessen's *Higgledy-Piggledy* (1876).

Doyle's best work appeared during the Victorian vogue of fairy painting which lasted from 1840 to 1870. Christopher Wood, in *Fairies in Victorian Art*, considers Doyle along with Robert Huskisson and John Anster Fitzgerald as the three major Victorian painters specializing in fairies (16). Many

artists of the period—including J. M. Turner, Edwin Landseer, and John Everett Millais—painted at least one fairy painting. Painters associated with fairies—such as Noel Paton, or the infamous and mentally troubled Richard Dadd—only painted a few fairy paintings. Although the subject matter is frequently similar, Doyle's book illustrations were far more popular than his paintings. The watercolor *The Fairy Tree*, which is reproduced in *Victorian Fairy Painting* (133), features a young Doyle gazing at tree covered with nearly two hundred figures and is remarkably similar to the richly detailed plate 4, *The Triumphal March of the Elf-King*, of *In Fairyland*.

By the 1860s, Doyle's work, along with that of other self-taught artists, such as Leech and Cruickshank, seemed to be passé and crude and was being replaced by the more academically trained Sixties School of Illustration. Joseph Pennell, in *Modern Illustration* (1895), wrote "that among artists and people of any artistic appreciation, it is generally admitted by this time that the greatest bulk of the works of 'Phiz,' Cruickshank [sic], Doyle, and even many of Leech's designs are simply rubbish" (83). Forrest Reid's *Illustrators of the Eighteen Sixties* (1928) failed to even mention Doyle. In 1867 when Tenniel had refused to work with Lewis Carroll, the writer was searching for another illustrator for *Through the Looking-Glass*. Carroll considered using Doyle on Tenniel's recommendation and even visited him to discuss the possibility. In a letter dated May 19, 1868, written to Mrs. Louisa MacDonald, the wife of George MacDonald, the well-known fantasy writer, Carroll expressed disappointment in Doyle's illustration: "Doyle isn't good enough (look at any of his later pictures) and Arthur Hughes has not, so far as I know, any turn for grotesque" (Cohen, *Letters* I: 120). Given the author's and illustrator's fascination with fairies, a *Looking-Glass* illustrated by Doyle would have been a fascinating text. Although Richard Doyle never illustrated a book by Carroll, his brother Charles did illustrate Jean Jambon's *Our Trip to Blunderland* (1877), one of the more clever and certainly one of the most graphically innovative of the many imitations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

In Fairyland (1870) was published in time for the 1869 Christmas season, but dated 1870. It is an immense book with the page size of 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches to amply display Doyle's sixteen colored plates, which were printed on wood blocks by Edmund Evans. The book is immense, both in its physical size and in its influence. More than those of any other book, its illustrations helped to define the Victorian iconography of fairies, which still dominates our contemporary imagery of the fairy world. Through borrowings by other artists and by the frequent republication of its illustrations in various forms, *In Fairyland* remains the visual archetype of fairies.³ In a note

to the English translation of Bettina Hurlimann's *Three Centuries of Children's Books in Europe*, Brian Alderson suggests that much of the imagery of the flower fairies found in the popular *Flower Fairy Books*, illustrated by Cicely Mary Barker, owe a great debt to *In Fairyland* (207). Doyle's fairy illustrations consistently resisted verbal attempts to limit them. Like his fairies, Doyle's illustrations manage to break free and transcend the text.

Discussing Doyle's *In Fairyland* illustrations, the distinguished twentieth-century picture-book illustrator Maurice Sendak has said: "Well, what are you going to say about Doyle? He's probably the best of them all. He's sensational. He has all the accouterments of the Victorian illustrator—the girls look right, for example—but he's one of the better draftsmen, he had the cleverest mind, the most gorgeous sense of color, and a fantastic imagination. . . . He is just one of the super artists, and you don't have to know what it is he's doing. It doesn't have to be spelled out, it really doesn't. The fact that it works and that it conveys itself instantly to you—that's what illustration is all about" ("Dialogue" xvii).

Alan Morley has observed that when scholars refer to Randolph Caldecott, Walter Crane, and Kate Greenaway as the triumvirate of golden-age children illustrators, they underestimate the importance and skill of Doyle (83). While these illustrators all worked closely with Edmund Evans, Percy Muir in *Victorian Illustrated Books* argues that of all the books that Evans printed, *In Fairyland* was his stunning achievement and one of the high points of Victorian illustration (102). It was also one of the most elaborate books that Evans produced, requiring eight to twelve colors, each printed on a separate wood block. Gordon Ray agrees with Muir's assessment and included *In Fairyland* as one the top one hundred illustrated books published in England in the nineteenth century (*Illustrator* 315). Brian Alderson, in *Sing a Song for Sixpence*, considers *In Fairyland* "a triumph of graphic craftsmanship" (267) and adds, "There can be little doubt that Doyle had it in him to become the great picture-book artist of the nineteenth century" (68).

But several events prevented this. Doyle came from a family of artists and was primarily self-taught by his father, John Doyle, a political cartoonist.⁴ Doyle's difficulty at meeting deadlines, as suggested by the Dalziel Brothers in their memoirs (Alderson 69), caused difficulties for both his printers and publishers. The most extreme example was the eighteen illustrations of *Sleeping Beauty* that Doyle was commissioned to do for the Dalziels in 1850 that were only completed in 1865 for J. R. Planché's *An Old Fairy Tale Told Anew in Pictures and Verse*. While Doyle developed his visual skill early in life, the consistency and repetition of his artistic style helped to date Doyle's work and make it seem repetitive.

Doyle began *In Fairyland* in 1868, shortly after his father died. The book began as pencil-and-ink drawings, which were transferred to water-colors. Initially he conceived it as a fairy album of his favorite figures, and he planned to call the series “Fairyland—Pictures from the World of Fairies, Elves & Goblins, Dwarfs, Sprites” (Engen 155). When the drawings were submitted to Longmans, the publisher felt that the series of illustrations needed an accompanying text to connect the images in a more cohesive manner. Richard Allingham was contacted in July 1869 by Longmans on the recommendation of Tom Taylor to write a set of verses to accompany Doyle’s fairy drawings. A friend of Alfred Lord Tennyson as well as of several Pre-Raphaelite artists and writers, Allingham had gained some popularity as a fairy poet with the publication “The Fairies,” which first appeared in his collection *The Music Master* (1855) where the poem was illustrated by Arthur Hughes. He recorded in his diary while writing “A Forest in Fairyland”: “A job of this kind likes me not, yet I accepted the offer, and have found some pleasure in trying, chiefly during rambles in the Forest, to bring the unconnected designs within the compass of a little story in dialogue with some lyrics intersperse. Both artist and publisher have left me entirely to myself in the matter, and it remains to be seen how they will like ‘Prince Brightkin’” (199–200).

Allingham’s long narrative poem for *In Fairyland* tells the story of the courtship of Prince Brightkin who wins the love of “the lovely lady of Elfin-Mere” (Doyle, *In Fairyland* 19) over three other suitors during the course of a day in Fairyland. After its publication, Allingham expressed his disappointment with *In Fairyland*, calling it “a muddle, no consultation having been made or proposed between artist and poet. The former (in a huff probably) has put his own prose description to the pictures” (Allingham 201). Doyle felt if a narrative was needed for his illustrations, he was more qualified to provide it than Allingham. Bryan Holme reports that contemporary reviewers were also unimpressed with Allingham’s poem and asked “Did he look at Dicky’s pictures, or was he so carried away with his own rhyming that he quite forgot?” (Doyle 1979 7). *In Fairyland* was financially successful, even at the high price of a guinea and a half—which suggested it was being marketed primarily as an art book rather than a children’s book—and went into a second edition in 1875.

Perhaps unsatisfied with Allingham’s poem, Charles Longman asked Andrew Lang if he might be able to compose a prose fairy tale using Doyle’s illustrations in 1884, a year after Doyle’s death. More than any other author of the late Victorian period, Lang helped to popularize the fairy tale as appropriate reading material for children. An astonishingly productive man of letters, even by Victorian standards, Lang influenced children’s literature

in two important ways: as the editor of the immensely popular twelve-volume, color fairy-book series begun with the publication of *The Blue Fairy Book* (1889), and as the author of five literary fairy tales for children. In the “Preface” to *The Grey Fairy Book* (1900), Lang suggested that fairy tales are essentially composed of “a certain number of incidents,” that can then be shaken “into many various combinations of incidents, like the fragments of coloured glass in a kaleidoscope” (vii). He added that, “Probably, the possible combinations, like musical combinations, are not unlimited in number” (vii). This description, which he wrote six years after his revision of *In Fairyland*, seems the closest that Lang came to describing his composition process for *The Princess Nobody: A Tale of Fairy Land* (1884), which he based on the details of Doyle’s illustrations.

It is surprising that Doyle’s fanciful fairy illustrations would have such a strong appeal for such a serious folklorist as Lang. While Doyle sought inspiration from pioneering scholarly works on folklore, such as Thomas Keightley’s *Fairy Mythology* (1828) and Thomas Croker’s *Fairy Legends and Traditions of South of Ireland* (1825), his detailed and imaginative book illustrations are more part of the Victorian literary and artistic fairylore than of traditional folklore. His fairies are closer in spirit to those found in literary fairy tales or pantomime than to those found in traditional folktales. Like most fairy artists of the period, Doyle based his images on literary sources, and the most common sources for English artists and illustrators were William Shakespeare’s *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *The Tempest*, and the “Queen Mab” speech from *Romeo and Juliet* (Jackson 39). Doyle’s fairy painting *The Enchanted Fairy Tree* (1845), reproduced in *Victorian Fairy Painting* (Martineau 128), is based on *The Tempest* and was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1868 shortly before he began work on the *In Fairyland* illustrations. Doyle’s illustrations are what Richard Dorson would later term “fakelore” rather than folklore. In particular, plate 13 of *In Fairyland*, which Doyle captioned *The Fairy Queen Takes an Airy Drive* (24), would irritate many folklorists. The plate’s artificiality is perhaps the reason Lang did not use it in creating *Princess Nobody*, despite its artistic charm (fig. 1).

Lang’s extensive cut-and-paste-and-rearrange approach to composing literary fairy tales is fairly unorthodox. In discussing the art of the picture book, Maurice Sendak has suggested that “an illustration is an enlargement, an interpretation of the text” (Lanes 109) and that as an illustrator, “you are always serving the words” (Lanes 110). Sendak adds that in the texts he illustrated as well as in the composition of his own picture books, he always considers the words first, and doesn’t initially consider the images (“Conversation” 176). Frequently in illustrated texts, the visual is subordinated to the verbal, which is reversed in *In Fairyland*. Gillian Avery notes



Fig. 1. Andrew Lang omitted plate 13, *The Fairy Queen Takes an Airy Drive*, while composing *Princess Nobody* (1884) based on Richard Doyle's illustrations from *In Fairyland* (1870). Doyle 1870.

that Juliana Ewing wrote several short stories around preexisting German woodcuts, including “Dandelion Clocks” and “Our Lord,” although no other children’s text is “so elaborate as Lang’s contrivance of this story to fit some fifty illustrations by Richard Doyle” (9). Lang’s inverted writing process, in which the prose follows the illustrations, seems well suited for Doyle’s images which Rodney Engen describes as “jig-saw like compositions” (143). Lang’s reappropriation and reordering of Doyle’s illustrations into a new text were done a hundred years before Donald Bartheleme’s *The Slightly Irregular Fire Engine* (1971) and other postmodern literary fairy tales, which involve a self-conscious reordering of previous images and characters from children’s literature.

Lang was a tireless recycler of preexisting material, and *Princess Nobody* is a typical example of his tendency to reuse previous material. *Princess Nobody* was the first of five literary fairy tales that Lang wrote and significantly the only one that he chose not to include in his *My Own Fairy Book* (1896), the anthology of literary fairy tales that he mentioned were “made up altogether in his own head” (vii).⁵ Indeed Lang could point to his study of fairy tales to confirm his passion for reusing material. In his “Introduction” to Margaret Hunt’s translation of Grimms’ *Household Tales* (1884), published in the same year as *Princess Nobody*, Lang argues: “In the first place the incidents, plots, and characters of the tales are, in every Aryan country, almost identical. . . . everywhere there is the story about the wife who is forced by some mysterious cause to leave her husband, or of the husband driven from his wife, a story which sometimes ends in the reunion of the pair. The coincidences of this kind are very numerous, and it soon becomes plain that most Aryan Household Tales are the common possession of the peoples which speak an Aryan language. It is also manifest that the tales consist of but few incidents, grouped together in a kaleidoscopic variety of arrangements” (257). The plot of *In Fairyland* is that of a wife who is forced to leave her husband once he discovers her name, but is reunited by the help of the fairies. In addition to using this well-established plot in *In Fairyland*, he would also reuse the metaphor of the elements of fairy tales, like the glass of a kaleidoscope, in his “Preface” to *The Grey Fairy Book* (1900), six years later.

In his “Introduction” to the English translation by Clara Bell of Frederik Van Eeden’s Dutch literary fairy tales *Little Johannes* (1895), which Lang uses as a history of the literary fairy tale, he writes: “There may possibly be critics or rather there are certain to be critics, who will deny that the modern and literary fairy tale is a legitimate *genre*, or a proper theme of discussion. The Folklorist is not unnaturally jealous of what, in some degrees, looks like Folk-lore” (xvi). But to this strict folklorist

approach, Lang adds: "There is very little real danger of this result. I speak, however, not without sympathy, there was a time when I regarded all *contes* except *contes populaires* as frivolous and vexatious. This, however, is the fanaticism of pedantry" (xvi).

Lang maintains that one could be a serious folklorist, as he was, and still enjoy literary or modern fairy tales, such as Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*, or Doyle's illustrations to *In Fairyland*. Lang could embrace both genres, much to the irritation of his fellow members of the Folk-Lore Society, of which he served as president in 1888 and 1889 as well as serving on its executive council. This attitude justified Lang's inclusion of both folktales and literary fairy tales in his anthologies, such as *The Blue Fairy Book*.

To any would-be author of literary fairy tales, Lang subsequently warns in the preface to *The Lilac Fairy Book* (1910), "They think that to write a new fairy tale is easy work. They are mistaken; the thing is impossible. Nobody can write a new fairy tale; you can only mix up and dress up the old, old stories and put the characters into new dresses" (viii). Here Lang seems to be indirectly commenting on his composition of *Princess Nobody*: in order to construct his own fairy tale, he manipulated Doyle's previously published sixteen full-color plates, by rearranging them, cutting them up, and omitting others to create a different pattern for his new fairy tale. As in the metaphor of the kaleidoscope, Lang combines elements from the fairy-tale formula, but the lasting impression of *Princess Nobody* is not the plot, but the swirl of colorful images that Doyle's illustrations provide. The story functions as a map to the illustrations. Even in their distorted form, Doyle's illustrations overpower Lang's text.

Lang tried a variety of techniques in reusing Doyle's original plates. In some cases, he simply included the entire plate from *In Fairyland*, as is the case with plate 2, *The Fairy Prince in Love* (2); plate 14, *An Elfin Dance By Night* (26); and plate 16, *Asleep in the Moonlight* (30). Other plates, such as the previously mentioned plate 13, *The Fairy Queen Takes an Airy Drive* (24), Lang omitted completely. Usually Lang only used sections of a plate, especially if it contained multiple images. For instance, in the case of plate 5, three of the four images were used, but *A Dancing Butterfly* (8) was omitted. The reverse happens with plate 12 in that only one of the three images, *Intruder* (22), was used by Lang.

Lang frequently took a large plate, such as plate 4, *Triumphal March of the Elf-King* (6), and cut it up and placed the various sections on different pages to illustrate his story (fig. 2). Plate 4 is the most extreme example in that Lang divides the one large plate into nine separate drawings. While all of Doyle's illustrations in *In Fairyland* are in color, after dividing them, Lang often only reproduced them in sepia. The dwarf on the frog who makes the

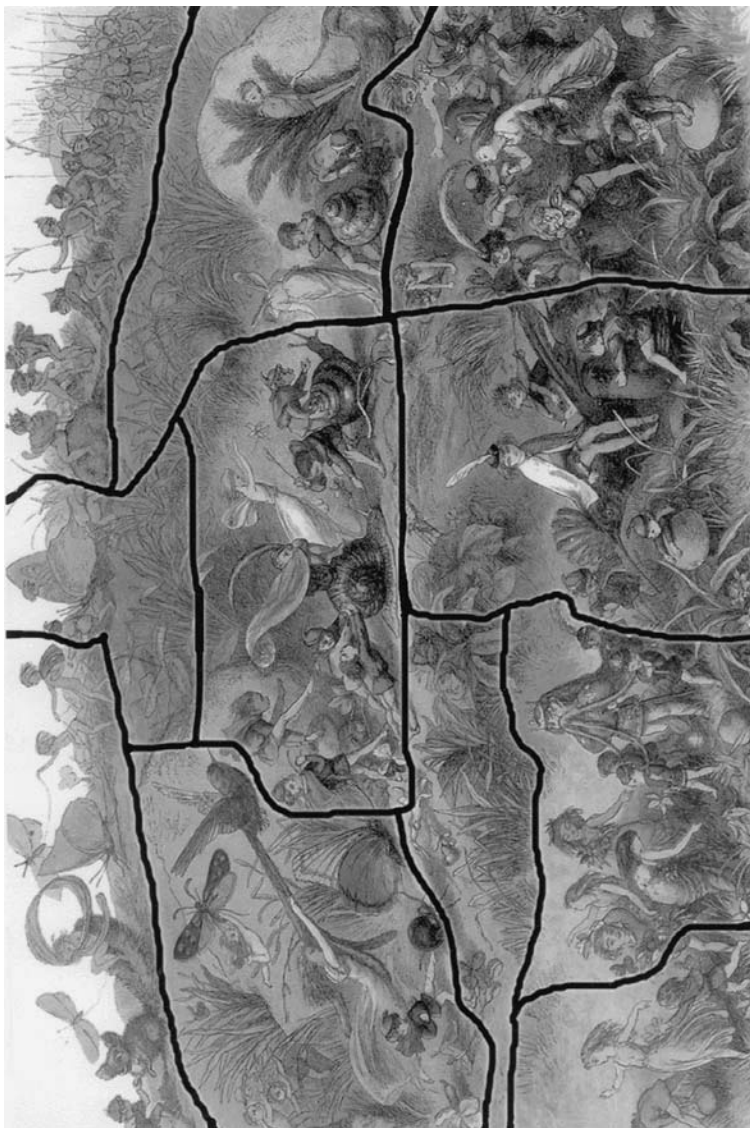


Fig. 2. Andrew Lang divided plate 4, *Triumphant March of the Elf-King*, from Richard Doyle's *In Fairyland* (1870) into eleven separate images, using nine of them that appear throughout *Princess Nobody* (1884). The marks on the plate approximate where Lang divided the single image. Doyle 1870.

offer of a child to the king and queen first appears in color in plate 10, *Water-Lillies and Water Fairies* (18), in *In Fairyland*, but in *Princess Nobody* he appears in sepia (19), although Lang's text mentioned that he is wearing "a red cap, and a red cloak, riding a green Frog" (16). Even when Doyle provided three images on a single plate that are intended to read sequentially—as he does in plate 8, *A Little Play, In Three Acts*, (14)—Lang rearranges them. Doyle captioned plate 8 *This Is a Little Play in Three Acts: Scene: A Toadstool. Characters: A Sentimental Elf and a Wayward Fairy* (14). Doyle provided individual captions for each of the three images: "Enter, an Elf in Search of a Fairy," which is followed by "He Finds Her, and This Is the Consequence," and concluding with "She Runs Away, and This Is His Condition" (14). In *Princess Nobody*, Lang reorders the series so that the third and final image from plate 8 appears first (44), followed by *Rejected*, an image from plate 9 (50), followed by the first image from plate 8 (51), and concluding with the second image from plate 9 (52). This reordering dramatically reverses Doyle's little play from a tragedy to a comedy.

Lang used the majority of Doyle's *In Fairyland* illustrations; he only omitted five images. The images are reconstructed in such a way that they become almost new illustrations for the fairy tale. None of Allingham's poem "A Forest in Fairy Land" is retained in *Princess Nobody*, although Lang composed two poems that frame his fairy tale. The "Ballade of Dedication" acknowledges and praises Doyle's illustration (7), and the concluding poem "Erant Olim Rex Quidam Et Regina" situates *Princess Nobody* in the literary fairy tradition of the French fairy court (55).

Lang uses the characters and details present in Doyle's illustrations as well, relying on established folktale motifs to construct *Princess Nobody*. In ten passages in his three-chapter fairy tale, Lang specifically draws the readers' attention to Doyle's illustration, as in the opening page where he writes, "Here you may see all the Fairies making themselves merry at a picnic on a fuchsia, and an angry little Dwarf climbing up the stalk" (*Princess Nobody* 9), which is an image taken from plate 15, *Feasting and Fun among the Fuschia* (*In Fairyland* 28). Lang's narrative method of addressing the illustrations within his text is reminiscent of the authorial asides in Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in which the narrator writes, "(If you don't know what a Gryphon is, look at the picture)" (81), only Lang uses the device much more frequently.

What Lang lacks in originality as an author in *Princess Nobody* is compensated by his clever eye for detail in reusing Doyle's illustrations. In his fairy tale, the king and queen of the kingdom next to Fairy Land are childless, but desire a baby. A dwarf riding a frog overhears their request and grants it under the condition that he is given "NIENTE" in return (*Princess Nobody*

11). The king mistakenly assumes that he is obligated to give nothing in return, “niente” being the Italian term for “nothing,” as the text of *Princess Nobody* explains (14). Arriving home from the war between the Ghosts and the Giants, the king learns that he and the queen do have a baby girl who was christened “Niente,” or “Nothing” in his absence. When Niente is fourteen, the Dwarf returns to make his claims. The Queen of the Water Fairies, who is the girl’s godmother, cannot reverse the promise, but she can make the princess vanish instead. The king and queen offer to hold a tournament and promise to give their daughter in marriage to the prince who can find her and bring her home. The ugly Prince Comical, who has a kind heart through the assistance of various animal helpers—a Daddy Long Legs, a Black Beetle, and Blue Bird—is able to locate Niente in Mushroom Land. The Queen of Mushroom Land transforms the ugly Prince Comical into handsome Prince Charming so that his features are not a hindrance to the courtship. The transformation of Prince Comical into Prince Charming is a neat trick on Lang’s part in that it allows him to use two different Doyle figures as the hero of his tale. The transformation of Prince Comical into Prince Charming also reproduces the plot device of the transformation scene in Christmas pantomimes, the popular Victorian family entertainment, which often used fairy tales as the narrative frame for the play. The transformation scene of pantomimes involved elaborate costume changes and special effects. Lang recognized that Doyle’s illustrations to *In Fairyland*, with their highly elaborate and theatrical stylizing, borrow from the pantomime tradition.

Lang provides a final complication for the lovers. Niente refuses to tell Charming her name, for according to fairy law, it must never be mentioned, or she will vanish again. The curious Charming overhears his wife singing her real name, which turns out to be Gwendoline, while she thinks he is asleep. Because her name has been discovered, Niente vanishes for a second time, and Charming returns to his former Comical self. Thanks to the intervention of a final animal helper, the bat, who is the favorite of Puck, sees to it that Oberon and Titania (*Princess Nobody* 46–47) are able to make things right and reunite the lovers.

Once Comical and Niente are reunited, their kiss across a mushroom leads to the final transformation, and the two lovers become the new king and queen of the land next to Fairy Land (figs. 3 and 4). Lang concludes his fairy tale “‘Journeys end in lovers meetings’ and so do Stories” (*Princess Nobody* 52). Lang quotes Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*: “Journeys end in lovers meeting / Every wise man’s son doth know” (II, iii, 46), which brilliantly completes the circle and unites the two primary influences of *Princess Nobody*: William Thackeray’s *The Rose and the Ring* and Richard Doyle’s *In Fairyland*.



Figs. 3 and 4. By rearranging the sequence of the three images that appear on plate 8, *A Little Play, in Three Acts* from Richard Doyle's *In Fairyland* (1870), Andrew Lang transformed Doyle's tragedy into a comedy. The relationship concludes with illustration 3 in *In Fairyland*, which features a weeping Elf and a departing Fairy, but in Lang's *Princess Nobody* (1884) the relationship ends with illustration 4, which features two creatures kissing over the mushroom. Doyle 1870.

Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring* featured the description on the title page of "A Fireside Pantomime for Great and Small Children" (vi). It was Lang's favorite fairy tale and the model for *Princess Nobody*. Lang frequently recommended *The Rose and the Ring* to his readers, as he did in the "Preface" to *The Yellow Fairy Book* (1894), in which he concludes his introduction with: "The editor cannot say 'good-bye' without advising them, as they pursue their studies, to read *The Rose and the Ring*, by the late Mr. Thackeray, with pictures by the author. This book he thinks quite indispensable in every children's library, and parents should be urged to purchase it at the first opportunity, as without it no education is complete" (xiii).

There is an important and frequently overlooked connection between Doyle and *The Rose and the Ring*. In 1853, Thackeray, because of his ill health, had reluctantly assigned the illustration of his novel *The Newcomes* to Doyle, and as Gordon Ray suggests, "thereby gave up the part of the work from which he derived the most pleasure" (Introduction v). Not only did Doyle illustrate *The Newcomes*, but he was the model for one of the major characters, J. J. Ridley, a fairy painter. The frontispiece of the first volume of Thackeray's *The Newcomes* features Doyle's illustration *J. J. in Dreamland* (1), which features the artist surrounded by the hallow of fairies. John Harvey, in *Victorian Novelists and Their Illustrators*, has noted the similarities between Doyle and J. J. Ridley, an artist who achieved modest success by exhibiting the fairy painting *Oberon and Titania* at the Royal Academy (95). Ridley provides the moral counterpoint to the novel's protagonist, Clive Newcome (95). At the same time that Thackeray was

deprived of the pleasure of illustrating *The Newcomes*, he was living in Rome with his two daughters, Amy and Minny; he had the idea of celebrating Twelfth Night with a party complete with a cake and drawings of the traditional Twelfth-Night characters. Discovering that the local shops did not stock Twelfth-Night figures, Thackeray writes in the “Prelude” to *The Rose and the Ring* that he drew his own “funny painted pictures of the King, the Queen, the Lover, the Lady, the Dandy, the Captain and so on—with which our young ones are wont to recreate themselves at this festive time” (v). Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, is usually celebrated on January 6 and honors the arrival of the Magi with gifts. It is a folk tradition that concludes the twelve days of Christmas with a rowdy festival of eating and drinking. The event was Catholic in background and disliked by extreme Protestants who attempted to end its extravagant celebrations. After the Twelfth-Night party, Thackeray found his drawings and decided to create a story around the preexisting illustrations (Ray, Introduction vi). One of his daughters’ friends, Edith Story, was recovering from illness and unable to attend the Twelfth-Night party, so Thackeray visited her and began composing the story that would eventually become *The Rose and The Ring*. Ten years after the publication of *The Rose and the Ring*, Doyle published a drawing titled *The Rose and the Ring*, which features Thackeray reading his fairy tale to Edith Story (Ray, Introduction vii). In composing *Princess Nobody* Lang used not only Thackeray’s fairy tale as his model, but Thackeray’s process of creating a story around pre-existing visual images. It seems clear that Lang had Thackeray’s own form of composition in mind when he created *Princess Nobody* out of Doyle’s *In Fairyland* illustrations. *Princess Nobody* can be read as an elaborate homage to Lang’s favorite literary fairy tale.

Princess Nobody was the least successful of Lang’s literary fairy tales and only went through one edition. When compiling his fairy tales for *My Own Fairy Book* (1896), Lang chose not to include it, perhaps sensing that the tale owed more to Doyle’s illustrations than his own prose. After cutting apart, rearranging the order, and removing the color from Doyle’s masterpiece, as Lang did with *Princess Nobody*, perhaps no greater indignities could be inflicted on the illustrations. However Roger Lancelyn Green, the biographer of Andrew Lang, argued that *Princess Nobody* was “so good that it can stand alone without the pictures which inspired it, or at least gave Lang the pretext of writing it” (60). Green subsequently republished *Princess Nobody* without Doyle’s illustrations, but included three dull illustrations by E. H. Shepard, in his collection *Modern Fairy Stories* (1955). Gillian Avery also chose to reprint *Princess Nobody* without illustrations in *The Gold of Fairnilee and Other Stories by Andrew Lang* (1967). Avery main-

tained that “the text stands well by itself, uncluttered by the Doyle decoration which I myself find repetitious and fussy” (9–10). In a similar fashion, Jack Zipes’s *Victorian Fairy Tales* (1987) features a color illustration from *In Fairyland* on the front cover of the collection, but when he reprinted *Princess Nobody*, only five of Doyle’s illustrations in black and white were included. Still that is an improvement over Peter Hunt’s *Children’s Literature: An Anthology 1801–1902* (2001), which also features an illustration from *In Fairyland* on the front cover, but doesn’t include *Princess Nobody* in the collection. Doyle’s brilliant illustrations, which are the inspiration from which Lang created *Princess Nobody*, have, in several cases, been replaced by Lang’s ingenious, but flimsy text.

But there has been a renewed interest in Victorian fairy painting following the popular *Victorian Fairy Painting* exhibition organized in 1998 by the University of Iowa Museum of Art and the Royal Academy of Arts London. Two scholarly studies, Jane Martineau’s *Victorian Fairy Painting* (1997) and Christopher Wood’s *Fairies in Victorian Art* (2000), have been published on the subject, and both volumes prominently feature Doyle and his illustrations. Dover Publications has recently reprinted *A Tale of Fairyland (The Princess Nobody)* (2000) which includes *Princess Nobody* and the plates from *In Fairyland* that Lang did not use in his tale. The Dover republication joins four other reprints of *In Fairyland* illustrations, the first edited by Cary Wilkins (1977), followed by Bryan Holme’s edition (1979), which includes both Lang’s fairy tale and Allingham’s poem as well as Doyle’s illustrations. The most accurate reproduction of *In Fairyland* and the only reproduction in its original format is part of the facsimile editions from the Osborne Collection of Early Children’s Books printed by Holp Shuppan Publishers of Tokyo in 1981. The most accurate reproduction of *Princess Nobody* appears in Jonathan Cott’s *Victorian Color Picture Books* (1983), which was published as volume seven of the eight volume *Masterworks of Children’s Literature* published by Stonehill Publishing. These various republications of Doyle’s *In Fairyland* images suggest that a modest Doyle revival is underway.

The illustrations of *In Fairyland* transcend any author’s attempts to control them, be it the captions by Doyle, Allingham’s poem, Lang’s fairy tale, or various editors’ attempts to abridge them. Doyle’s landmark book illustrations combine the Victorian interest in narrative paintings with the fascination for the fairy world. His brilliant series of illustrations anticipates the increasing importance of the visual in the contemporary culture and form a significant transitional text that bridges the gap from Victorian narrative painting to contemporary wordless picture books. While Doyle is also a fairy painter, his more successful images remain his book illustrations. His

images thrive within the structure, sequence, and pacing of a book, which is more ambitious than a single narrative painting, and anticipates the popularity of the wordless picture book. Doyle's *In Fairyland* remains a triumph of the visual.

Notes

1. Other Victorian narrative art paintings include William Powell Frith's sweeping *Derby Day* (1858) and *The Railway Station* (1862); Augustus Egg's three-part painting *Past and Present* (1858); and sequential print illustrations such as George Cruikshank's *The Bottle* (1848) or *The Drunkard's Children* (1847).
2. After earning a first-class rank in the Classics at Oxford, Lang moved to London and rapidly established himself as the leading spokesman for the anthropological school of folklore, building on the pioneering work of Edward B. Tylor in anthropology. Lang's essay "Mythology and Fairy Tales," published in the May 1873 issue of the *Fortnightly Review*, successfully refuted Max Muller's claims of solar mythology and "the disease of language" as an explanation for a common source of myth and fairy tale. Through his many publications and his work with the Folk-lore Society, Lang established himself as one of the leading Victorian folklorists of the day. He promoted his theory that fairy tales evolved in various cultures as the result of societies undergoing the same process of cultural evolution in works such as *Custom and Myth* (1884) and *Myth, Ritual, and Religion* (1887) and contributed the entry on "Tales" to the eleventh edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911) where he acknowledged the importance of cultural diffusion in the transmission of fairy tales.
3. Two recent volumes that reprint Doyle's illustrations are *Fairyland in Art and Poetry* (2001), an anthology of fairy poetry edited by William Lach for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which uses only Doyle's illustrations, and Lori Eisenkraft-Palazzola's *Faeries: Doorways to the Enchanted Realm* (1999), a coffee-table study of fairies, which features Doyle's illustrations on the cover and the frontispiece. Reproductions of Doyle's *In Fairyland* illustrations can also be found on calendars, post cards, coffee mugs, baby bibs, and countless other nonbook items that confirm their popularity.
4. John Doyle's "Political Sketches" appeared under the initials HB. The Doyles were a large artistic family of five brother and two sisters who were trained at home in art by the father. James Doyle tried his hand as a historical painter, but found more success with his *Historical Baronage of England* (1866). Henry Doyle also worked as a painter and illustrator, but eventually became the director of the National Gallery of Ireland. Charles Altamont Doyle—father of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the author of the Sherlock Holmes detective series—had some success as both a painter and a book illustrator, but suffered a mental breakdown and was admitted to the Monrose Royal Lunatic Asylum. There Charles, like his more successful brother Dicky Doyle, continued to paint fairies. Charles Doyle's diary was discovered and published as *Doyle Diary* (1978); his illustrations provide an eerie nightmare version that mirrors the more light-hearted fairy world created by his brother Dicky.
5. Of his four other literary fairy tales, Lang's *The Gold of Fairmilee* (1888) owes the most to folk tradition. It is set on the Scottish borders and involves a child

who is stolen away by the fairies. His other three comic fairy tales—*Prince Prigio* (1889) and *Prince Ricardo of Pantouflia* (1893) and *Tales of the Fairy Court* (1906)—all borrow heavily from the fairy-court tradition established by Marie-Catherine d'Aulnoy. Gordon Browne illustrated *Prince Prigio* and *Prince Ricardo*, while A. A. Dixon illustrated *Tales of the Fairy Court*. In Lang's literary fairy tales, the illustrations are clearly secondary to the text and add little to the tone of the books, unlike *In Fairyland* where the illustrations dominate Lang's text.

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