The first translation into English of a selection of stories from the Grimms’ *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (=*KHM*) appeared in 1823 as the first volume of Edgar Taylor’s *German popular stories* (=*GPS*). For the next twenty to thirty years these translations and adaptations (a second volume appeared in 1826) were the most important source of the Grimms’ tales and the bench-mark for subsequent collections published in both England and America. John Edward Taylor was the next translator and editor to create a significantly new English collection of the *KHM*, *The fairy ring* (1846), which, though providing a different selection of stories, was still clearly modelled on his cousin’s earlier editions.¹

Before then, however, the publisher James Burns of London had issued two volumes – one in 1843 and another in 1845. No dates are given in the volumes themselves, but Low’s *The English catalogue of books from 1835 to 1863* cites the above years.² The preface by the unnamed editor to the first of these volumes, *Popular tales and legends*, is an apt description of the nature of both of them:

To return once more to the present compilation, I must bespeak indulgence for the heterogeneous manner in which its materials are put together, and for what will be thought by many, the strange jumble of subjects and styles which it displays. Child’s Fairy Tales – Ancient Traditions of the North – Irish Legends – Tales of Chivalry – Popular Household Stories, as told at the firesides of England, Germany, and Scotland – all will be found mingled together without any pretension to arrangement.³

² (London: Sampson, Low, Son and Marston, 1864), 613 and 878.
³ viii–ix.
This first volume contains, among its thirty-four stories, eight from the Grimms' *KHM*. Seven of these are adaptations of stories from Edgar Taylor's *GPS*, possibly adapted in order to disguise their source, while the eighth story is the first English translation of *KHM* 208, 'Das alte Mütterchen'. The second volume, *Household tales and traditions of England, Germany, France, Scotland, etc. etc.* is part of the Burns Fireside Library series which began in 1845 and included such other titles as *Evenings with the old story tellers* and *Twelve nights' entertainments; or Tales of various lands*. The volume contains fifty-one tales, of which nearly two-thirds – thirty-two in all – are from the Grimms' collection. Once again, with one exception, all these are versions of stories which Edgar Taylor had included in his two volumes of *GPS*: many of them are once more obviously adaptations of Taylor's versions, with improvements and corrections, while others are quite new translations of the same stories, e.g. 'Dame Holle', 'The robber bridegroom', and 'The seven ravens'. The one exception to this pattern is 'Little Red Cap; or, Little Red Riding-hood'. Not being one of the tales translated in *GPS*, it would consequently appear to be the first English version of the Grimms' *KHM* 26, 'Rotkäppchen'.

These two Burns volumes are not well known. Bayard Quincy Morgan lists the 1845 edition as no. 3423 in his bibliography with the remark 'Many from Grimm, retold' and includes it in his section devoted to 'Adaptations': 'Here are listed . . . publications in which the wording of the Grimms' tales is seriously modified, or perhaps only the subject matter borrowed.' Although there is much in this remark that applies to the Burns edition of 1845, it remains nevertheless an over-generalization, as it is by no means applicable to all of the stories in this volume. Some of the versions are reasonably faithful translations of the Grimms' originals, e.g. 'Hansel and Grettel' is the first accurate and complete English rendering of *KHM* 15, and 'Snow-flake' is vastly superior to Taylor's version of *KHM* 53, 'Snow-drop', being bold enough to include at the end, for instance, the stepmother's punishment, though it still balks, as Taylor had done, at her earlier attempt at cannibalism.

The only other commentator to refer to the Burns volume is Brian Alderson in his 1985 British Library exhibition notes, 'Grimm tales in English', where he describes it briefly as a 'little-known compendium'.

Despite its obscurity and lack of durability (no further editions

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4 Taylor will probably have ruled out the story from consideration for the reason outlined in his Preface to *GPS* (London: C. Baldwyn, 1823), xi: 'With a view to variety, they [the Translators] have wished rather to avoid than to select those [stories], the leading incidents of which are already familiar to the English reader, and have therefore often deprived themselves of the interest which comparison would afford'.


6 (London: British Library, 1985), [4].
seem to have been published), *Household tales and traditions* is a fascinating and puzzling collection in that it contains a mixture of, on the one hand, relatively accurate and faithful translations of Grimm and, on the other, some inexplicably corrupt and contaminated texts. There seems to have been little consistency in the editorial policy behind its compilation. As in the case of *GPS*, the translators remain anonymous, and there is no indication of the sources drawn upon. The occasional footnotes are not particularly helpful or illuminating in this respect, as we shall see in the case of 'Little Red Cap'. A close examination of the texts of the stories reveals that the translators had access to the third edition of the *KHM* published in 1837, though there is no evidence that they knew of the existence of the fourth and fifth editions of 1840 and 1843.7 At the same time however, it is clear that they did not always turn to this more recent edition of the German original and instead often relied on Taylor's first translation. A good example is the story 'Snow-flake' where Taylor's text is corrected on many occasions. These corrections were evidently made on the basis of the German text that Taylor had worked from originally, that is, the second edition of 1819, not the third or any later edition. One example will suffice, namely the queen's response to the mirror when it informs her that she is no longer the most beautiful woman in the land. In the second edition of the *KHM* the text runs 'Als die Königin das hörte, erschrak sie und ward blaß vor Zorn und Neid',8 later replaced in the third and subsequent editions by 'Da erschrak die Königin und ward gelb und grün vor Neid.'9 The version in the Burns edition of 1845 renders the queen's response in this manner: 'When she heard this, she started and turned pale with rage and envy'10 and thus clearly has the earlier German edition as its source.

The Burns volume is also remarkable in that it follows a practice seen first of all in Taylor's 'The frog-prince', his version of *KHM* 1, 'Der Froschkönig'. This practice is one of deliberate contamination of the original text with a version of it taken from another source.11 An obvious example of contamination in

7 E.g. the translation of *KHM* 50, 'Thorn-rose', refers to 'a rusty key' used by the heroine to open the door to the chamber in which the old woman sits spinning. The phrase 'ein verrosteter Schlüssel' does not appear until the 1837 *KHM* edition. In the same story, at the moment when the curse is enacted and the castle and its contents fall asleep along with the princess, there is no mention of the wind dying down or the leaves on the tree outside also ceasing to move, as occurs in the original from the fourth edition of 1840 onwards.


10 *Household tales and traditions*, 134.

Household tales and traditions is the story of ‘Cinderella’. A footnote on the first page alerts the reader to the fact that this is another hybrid story: ‘This version is taken, in some of its incidents, from the German’. What might seem to be a useful footnote turns out to be less than helpful in that it does not inform the reader exactly which incidents are German and which are not. The text itself begins in an identical manner to Taylor’s version of the story, ‘Ashputtel’, except that the Burns edition cannot bring itself to bury the heroine’s mother ‘in the garden’ (which presumably would be contrary to all decency and religious norms) and instead places her ‘in the church-yard’. As the story proceeds, the episodes owe increasingly less to the Grimms’ version and conspicuously more to Charles Perrault’s ‘Cendrillon’. Instead of the helpful birds of the Grimms’ version, a ‘good old fairy’ appears who tells Cinderella ‘what to do’. This is always a sure sign that the better known French version of the story is being drawn upon in order to replace Aschenputtel, the refreshingly independent and active heroine of the Grimm brothers’ tale, with the more traditional figure of Cinderella, a character singularly lacking in spirit and initiative. The Burns edition appears to favour heroines who are ‘modest’. When Cinderella is presented by her prince to the king, his father, the latter ‘received her with great kindness, and praised her modesty and beauty’. Similarly, in ‘Thorn-rose’, the twelve fairies bestow their gifts on the new-born child in this way: ‘One gave her virtue, a second beauty, a third riches, a fourth modesty, and so on with every thing that is good and valuable in the whole world’. The Grimms in all of their versions list at most only the first three gifts – obviously the editor/translator of Household tales and traditions felt that they had omitted an important fourth which needed adding!

The one other contaminated version of a Grimm story in the Burns edition is ‘Little Red Cap’. It too is furnished on its first page with a footnote: ‘In the whole of the latter part, as well as in some other points, this well-known story, as we here give it, is indebted to the German version. We may just remark, once for all, how much more imaginative and ingenious the foreign editions are than our English ones. The Wolf’s conversation with Red Cap, &c. p.16, is

12 Household tales and traditions, 37.
14 Household tales and traditions, 39.
15 For a trenchant criticism of Perrault’s heroine, see Bruno Bettelheim, The uses of enchantment (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 236–77, esp. 251 ff.
16 Household tales and traditions, 42.
17 Ibid., 80.
inimitable'. Once again the footnote is defective. The assessment of the comparative quality of English and 'foreign' editions may well be accurate, though it is clearly a gross over-generalization in that it does not specify precisely which editions are being referred to. Much more gravely misleading though is the first sentence of the footnote because it fails to show exactly how much the text of the story before us is indebted to the Grimms' 'German version'. As the following analysis will show, not only the 'latter part' but in fact by far the greater part of 'Red Cap' in the Burns edition is taken directly from KHM 26, 'Rotkäppchen'. Only at the climactic moment of resolution of the story's conflict does the translator depart markedly from the Grimms' original. In almost all other respects, the story is pure Grimm.

The Grimms' version of the story given below is taken from their third edition of the KHM. It is difficult to be sure exactly which edition the English version is based on, the second of 1819 or the third of 1837. The differences between the two are mainly ones of punctuation, though occasionally individual words and phrases are also altered. There is nothing in these alterations though that points definitively to the earlier or to the later edition of the original as being the source of the story 'Red Cap'. The 1837 version has been chosen because it was used as the basis for at least one other story in the collection and seems to have been the most recent edition of the KHM used by the translators of the Burns edition. This fact alone gives the book historical value, as it is the only edition of the Grimms' tales in English to draw on this third edition of 1837 as a source.

For the purpose of easy reference, line numbers will be given for the two columns. References both to the German original in the left-hand column and to the English translation in the right-hand one will be made using these numbers, ignoring the inevitable discrepancies that result from the differing lengths of the two parallel texts.

18 Ibid., 15.
19 Clues in favour of the 1819 edition being the source are the renderings of (i) 1.77 (see below) as 'Ah! if I could . . .' where only the 1819 ed. includes the exclamation 'ei! wenn ich . . .'; (ii) 1.90 as 'open the door to me' where the 1819 ed. is 'mach mir auf', and (iii) ll.111-12 as 'When she got to the house she could not help wondering that the door stood open' where the 1819 ed. has a more similar syntactical structure than that of 1837: 'Wie es ankam, stand die Thüre auf, darüber verwunderte es sich'. On the other hand, evidence of use of the 1837 edition can be found in (i) ll.83-4, changed from 1819 ('ständ noch eine schöner') and translated as 'there was a still prettier one beyond it' and (ii) ll.191-2 changed from 1819 ('daß es den Wolf gesehen') and translated as 'that she had met the wolf'. On the basis of the translation's line 89, 'farther and deeper into the wood', one could argue that the translator has used both the 1819 and the 1837 editions: 1819 gives 'immer weiter in den Wald hinein' and 1837 gives 'immer tiefer in den Wald hinein'!
Es war einmal eine kleine süße Dirne, die hatte jedermann lieb, der sie nur ansah, am allerliebstesten aber ihre Großmutter, die wußte gar nicht, was sie alles dem Kinde geben sollte. Einmal schenkte sie ihm ein Käppchen von rotem Sammet, und weil ihm das so wohl stand, und es nichts anders mehr tragen wollte, hieß es nur das Rotkäppchen. Da sagte einmal seine Mutter zu ihm ‘komm, Rotkäppchen, da hast du ein Stück Kuchen und eine Flasche Wein, die bring der Großmutter hinaus: weil sie krank und schwach ist, wird sie sich daran laben; sei aber hübsch artig und grüß sie von mir, geh auch ordentlich, und lauf nicht vom Weg ab, sonst fällst du, und zerbrichst das Glas, dann hat die kranke Großmutter nichts.


There was once upon a time a sweet little maid who was beloved by every one who saw her; but she was loved most of all by her grandmother, who knew not what to give her, she was so fond of her. Once she presented her with a cap of red velvet, and, as it became her so well, and she hardly ever wore any other afterwards, she was called by everybody, LITTLE RED CAP.

Her mother said to her one day, ‘Come, Red Cap, here are a piece of cake and a flask of wine, carry them to your grandmother; she is ill and weak, and they will help to make her strong; and be sure you behave yourself prettily and civilly, and salute her kindly from me; take care too that you walk on in an orderly way, and run not off the road, else you will fall and break the glass, and then your grandmother will get nothing.’

Red Cap said, ‘All that I will do quite right;’ and she kissed her mother, and set off on her journey.

Now her grandmother’s house was in the middle of a wood, some miles distant from the village where Red Cap’s mother lived; and just when Red Cap had got to the wood the wolf came up to her: but Red Cap did not know what a wicked animal he was, so she was not at all afraid of him.

‘Good day to you, Little Red Cap,’ said he.

‘Many thanks to you, Mr. Wolf,’ answered the little maid.

‘And where are you going so early in the morning, Red Cap?’

‘To my grandmother.’

‘What are you carrying under your apron, Red Cap?’

‘Wine and cake, for my sick grandmother; we baked the cakes yesterday, that they might be nice and firm.’

‘But, Red Cap, where does your grandmother live?’

20 KHM 1837, 133-7.
21 Household tales and traditions, 15-18.
‘LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD’

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kriegst?’ Da ging er ein Weilchen neben Rotkäppchen, sieh einmal die schönen Blumen, die im Walde stehen, warum guckst du nicht um dich? ich glaube du hörst gar nicht darauf, wie die Vöglein so lieblich singen? du gehst ja für dich hin als wenn du zur Schule gingst, und ist so lustig haufen in dem Wald’.


‘A good way farther on, in the wood,’ answered the little maid; – ‘there you will see the house, and you may know it by the tall tree which grows up to the chimney-top.’

When he heard this the wolf said to himself, ‘This nice young maid will be a sweet morsel for me, if I can only catch her.’ But he was afraid to touch her just then, lest the woodcutters or the hunters should see him; so he thought of a scheme. He went on a little way by Red Cap’s side, and talked to her again. ‘Red Cap, only look at these beautiful flowers which grow all about in the wood; – why don’t you look round you? I believe, too, you are not listening to the birds, – as they sing so sweetly? You walk along just as if you were going to school; and yet it is pleasant out here, in the wood!’

Red Cap raised her eyes, and when she saw how the bright sun darted his rays here and there through the trees, and how beautifully the flowers bloomed all around her, she thought to herself, ‘Ah! if I could bring a nosegay to my grandmother; – this would indeed please her much; it is still early, and I shall be sure to get there by the right time.’ So she set down her cakes and wine, sprang into the wood, and sought all about for the prettiest flowers. And when she had pulled one, it seemed as if there was a still prettier one beyond it; so she ran and ran, first after one and then after another, farther and deeper into the wood.

But the wolf went as straight as his legs would carry him to the grandmother’s house, and tapped at the door.

‘Who is there?’ said she.

‘Little Red Cap,’ answered he. ‘I have brought you some cakes and a flask of wine – open the door to me.’

‘Pull the latch,’ cried the grandmother, ‘I am ill, and cannot get up.’ The wolf pulled the latch, and without speaking a word, went straight to the bed, and swallowed the poor grandmother up. Then he took her clothes and put them on, placed her great cap on his head, and lay down in the bed and drew the curtains before it.
The double title is, like the footnote quoted above, an indication that the story is a hybrid version. 'Little Red Cap' is of course a translation of 'Rotkäppchen', while the alternative title and name (which is never used in the text of the story that follows), 'Little Red Riding-hood', is borrowed from the first English translation of Perrault's tale 'Le Petit Chaperon Rouge': 'The Little Red Riding-hood' in Robert Samber's *Histories, or Tales of past times* (1729). This book introduced Perrault's tales to English readers and would have been responsible for making the French version of 'Little Red Riding-hood' the one most familiar to the English-speaking world of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. This familiarity was, as we have seen, the likely reason why Edgar Taylor excluded it from his collection.

The opening paragraphs of the English text are in their style typical of the whole story. There is a woodenness about them that is in marked contrast to the easy-flowing rhythms of the German original. Some phrases are translated poorly, e.g. 'and she hardly ever wore any other afterwards' (ll.8–9) is inaccurate; 'be sure you behave yourself prettily and civilly' (ll.17–18) comically misconstrues the adverbial use of 'hübsch'; and one wonders what on earth is meant by taking care to walk 'in an orderly way'! Red Cap's reply to her mother, 'All that I will do quite right', is a good example of the stiff unidiomatic style of this version of the story, a story which in the original is notable for its constant employment of direct speech and dialogue (a feature remarked upon in the Burns edition's footnote). Red Cap's expression of thanks to the wolf for his initial greeting is also unidiomatic, and the reason she then gives for having baked the cakes 'yesterday', viz. 'that they may be nice and firm' (ll.47–8), is either a complete misreading of the original or an interpolation made in order to provide a rational explanation for the fact that the cakes were not exactly fresh but had been baked the day before.

In a translation which, as we shall see, is in fact unique in its attempts to make the events it is recording seem rational, it is then

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23 It is interesting to note that the Grimms' version also has an element of familiarity built into the text. The use of the definite article before the two male characters, 'der Wolf' (l.31) and 'der Jäger' (below, l.150), is a sign that these figures need no introduction and will already be familiar to the narrator's audience.

24 David Blamires has kindly drawn my attention to a story 'Anna and her dog' in Maria Joseph Crabb's *Tales for children in a familiar style*, originally published by Darton & Harvey in 1805 and then going through several editions in the nineteenth century. In this story there is a comment on a child eating stale plum-cake, which would explain the Burns edition's interpolation: 'for she [the child's governess] never allowed her to eat any buns, or plum-cake, till they had been a day and a night from the pastry cook's; for new bread, and new buns, are not good for the stomachs of little children' (1828 edn, 125).
odd that the grandmother's house should be moved to a distance of 'some miles' from the village in which Red Cap lives. One assumes from the original's 'eine halbe Stunde' that grandma resides no more than a mile away, given that the heroine is a very young girl with comparatively short legs! However, the English translation here provides her with an unnecessarily long journey to make, and one that she would be unlikely to be expected to walk in the dark (see below, l.216).

The wolf who is the villain of the piece has a very human streak to him and the reader cannot but admire his clever tactic of distracting the heroine from her duties and enticing her to break her original promise to her mother. Certainly the English editor must have warmed to the wolf: witness, in his footnote, the approving comment on the conversation between the villain and the heroine. He is also prepared to render correctly the wolf's relishing of the prospect of eating the heroine, signalled by the words 'das ist ein guter Bissen für dich' (ll.49–50), whereas Edgar Taylor had omitted the equivalent phrase from his story of 'Roland and May-Bird' (GPS 1826).

The next departure from the original is to be found in the description of the whereabouts of Grandma's house. The English version reduces the number of trees shading her house from three to one, while failing to mention the species of tree and omitting the 'Nußhecken' altogether. That the one tree remaining 'grows up to the chimney-top' might be a feature added to provide a useful link with the final episode where a second wolf jumps on the roof of the house (and we are not told precisely how he manages this in the Grimm's original), but the English version then fails to make this link explicit when it arrives at this episode. More intriguing is the reason then given by the English text for the wolf's delay in laying his paws on the heroine. A question left unanswered by the Grimm's version of the story is why the wolf should not eat up Red Cap immediately he sees her. Perrault's version depicts the wolf as not daring to devour her at this time because of the presence of woodcutters in the forest ('... mais il n'osa, à cause de quelques Bûcherons qui étaient dans la Forêt'). The English translator had evidently decided that this was a reasonable explanation and one conspicuously lacking in the Grimm's version. Accordingly (s)he added the woodcutters, along with some hunters because the presence of the latter would prepare the reader for the fact that, as in 'Rotkäppchen', it is later a hunter who rescues the heroine from the jaws of the wolf. This is the first indication that this English version of the story is a contaminated one. In the added presence of the woodcutters we see the presence of Perrault. It is the first
indication as well that the English translator is intent on making this version of the story as logical and as rational as possible.

The second indication of this concern for rationality is to be found in another addition provided by the English translation. In lines 82–3 Red Cap is portrayed setting down the cakes and wine she is carrying in order, presumably, that she may have her hands free to pick flowers. This makes very good sense of course, but such reasonableness is not germane to the Grimms' version, as we shall see again later. It is perhaps surprising that the English version, in its desire for logical consistency, does not proceed to explain how the wolf manages to swallow Grandma and then put on the clothes she was wearing. Did he take time and care to undress her first?! 26

Red Cap all this time was running about gathering flowers in the wood, and looking at the little birds which were perched upon the bushes around her; and when she had got as many in her lap as she could carry, she remembered her grandmother, and hastened back to the road. When she got to the house she could not help wondering that the door stood open, and when she came into the room, everything seemed so strange that she said to herself, 'Oh dear, how dull I feel to-day, when before I used to be so glad with my grandmother!' Then she went to the bed and drew back the curtains, and there was her grandmother (as she thought), with her cap pulled deep over her face, and looking so strange. 'Ah, grandmother, what great ears you have!' 'That is that I may hear you better, child.'

'Ah, grandmother, what large eyes you have!' 'That is to see you the better.'

'Ah, grandmother, what great hands you have!' 'That is that I may lay hold of you the better.'

'Ah, grandmother, what a dreadfully large mouth you have!'

'That is that I may the better eat you.' And as the wolf said these words

Wie der Wolf den fetten Bissen im Leibe hatte, legte er sich wieder ins Bett, schlief ein, und fing an überlaut zu schnarchen. Der Jäger ging eben vorbei, und dachte bei sich 'wie kann die alte Frau so schnarchen, du müßt einmal nachsehen ob ihr etwas fehlt'. Da trat er in die Stube, und wie er vor das Bett kam, so lag der Wolf darin, den er lange gesucht hatte. Nun wollte er seine Büchse anlegen, da fiel ihm ein 'vielleicht hat er die Großmutter gefressen, und ich kann sie noch retten', und schoß nicht, sondern nahm eine Schere, und schnitt dem schlafenden Wolf den Bauch auf. Wie er ein paar Schnitte getan, da sah er das rote Kappchen leuchten, und wie er noch ein wenig geschnitten, da sprang das Mädchen heraus, und rief 'ach, wie war ich erschrocken, was wars so dunkel in dem Wolf seinem Leib!' Und dann kam die alte Großmutter auch lebendig heraus. Rotkappchen aber holte große Steine, damit fielen sie dem Wolf den Leib, und wie er aufwachte, wollte er fort springen, aber die Steine waren so schwer, daß er gleich niedersank und sich tot fiel.

Da waren alle drei vergnügt; der Jäger nahm den Pelz vom Wolf, die Großmutter aß den Kuchen und trank den Wein den Rotkäppchen gebracht hatte, und Rotkäppchen dachte bei sich 'du willst dein Lebtag nicht wieder allein vom Wege ab in den Wald laufen, wenn dirs die Mutter verboten hat'.

A huntsman had been going by; and when he saw the door of the old grandmother's cottage standing open, he thought he would look in and see what was the matter. So he slipped in quietly behind the door, and heard all that the wolf said to Red Cap; and just when he saw that he was going to devour her, he aimed a shot at the wicked animal and killed him; so little Red Cap was saved. The good huntsman then led her home to her mother, and she told him all the story by the way; and as he left her at the door, he said to her, 'See that you never run away from the road again, all your life, nor do what your mother has forbidden you.'

A further addition made by the English translator is the sight of 'little birds' perched on the bushes (l.109-10) and it seems an unnecessary one, as Red Cap would already appear to have enough to distract her. The next addition though is another rationalized interpolation: Red Cap enters her grandmother's room 'and there was her grandmother (as she thought), with her cap pulled deep over her face'(ll.123–5). At this point in the story, just before the climax is reached, the Grimms' original draws the audience into the events by adopting the heroine's perspective: 'da lag die Großmutter, und
hatte die Haube tief ins Gesicht gesetzt' (ll.118–20). The English version, on the other hand, maintains a narrative distance by standing back and making an aside for the purpose of explaining the reality behind the appearance of what Red Cap sees. In fact, the English translator has missed an important element in the tale here, viz. the heroine's confusion about, and at the same time fascination for, what is happening. The exact nature of her emotional response is completely undermined by the English version's rendering of this sequence of events.

First, Red Cap's state of mind is described as 'dull' (l.119), hardly an adequate translation of 'ängstlich'. None of the possible meanings suggested by the word 'dull' – sad, downcast, gloomy, drowsy, obtuse – are right in this context, even though they, especially the last, might give a reason for Red Cap's perceptual inability to distinguish the features of the wolf hidden in her grandmother's clothing. In the original though, hers is a heightened state of mind brought on by inexplicable apprehension. She is alerted and fascinated by what she sees and what she cannot explain.

Secondly, the famous dialogue between her and the wolf, which is even more 'inimitable' than the earlier one between the two, is translated into such lame English that the emotional tension of the situation is quite lost and the modern-day reader feels justifiably disappointed. As Anne Wilson aptly puts it:

Reading any version of Little Red Riding-hood, we can still sense through the written words, the oral story as it was passed down through the ages, chanted as if it were a rite. The words, known by heart, will only have varied slightly with each telling. They led each audience on through each well-known and well-beloved incident, until the crescendo was reached:

"Oh grandmother, what big teeth you have!"
"All the better to eat you with, my dear!"

The words vary slightly in English versions, and naturally they are different in the versions of Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, but their purport is exactly the same. In the oral situation, the members of the audience will correct the teller, if they consider that he has diverged unsatisfactorily from either the chanted words which they love, or from the progression of events.27

How the nineteenth-century reader of Burns edition of Household tales and traditions would have felt about this rendering of the now famous conversation can only be conjectured. A precedent had been set by Robert Samber's translation of Perrault's version (1729) and it was better, though perhaps only marginally so, than that of the Burns edition of 1845.

So she said to her, *Gradmamma, what great arms you have got!* It is the better to embrace thee my pretty child. *Gradmamma, what great legs you have got!* It is to run the better my child. *Gradmamma, what great ears you have got!* It is to hear the better my child. *Gradmamma, what great eyes you have got!* It is to see the better my child. *Gradmamma, what great teeth you have got!* It is to eat thee up.\(^{28}\)

A modern reader would of course find the now almost obsolete use of the word ‘great’, especially in Samber’s phrase ‘What great legs you have got!’, highly comical. This aside, the failure in the version of 1845 to capture any recognizable rhythm, brought about by its clumsy repetition of ‘that’, and its lack of effective assonance and alliteration – the sibilants of the original, ‘Daß ich dich besser fressen kann’ are especially striking – make it sound as if the wolf is now having difficulty speaking fluent English, whereas earlier his use of language, especially in order to deceive others, was masterly. It comes as an unexpected and almost comic relief that the hunter, by his swift action at this point, puts both the wolf and the reader out of their misery!\(^{29}\)

This is the obvious climax of the story and, oddly enough, the point where the text completely abandons its German source and opts for an abrupt *deus ex machina* solution to the crisis. The interjection ‘behold’ (1.143) sounds distinctly biblical, as if an angel had entered the scene, and certainly the huntsman must seem to the heroine at this moment of her imminent death like some force of divine intervention. True to this rôle, the hunter guides the heroine back home to her mother and, like the good father figure that she evidently lacks, admonishes her for her disobedience, and brings this first part of the story to its happy conclusion.

Of course, much of the Grimms’ version is missing here in this contamination from some other source. The present author has been unable to find a version of the tale prior to 1845 where the wolf is dispatched with an arrow. This resolution may well be an invention on the part of the first English translator of the Grimms’ story. If so, then (s)he set a precedent to others for altering the original ending of the story. The Opies’ comment, in referring to Perrault’s tale where the heroine succumbs to the wolf’s greed and is not rescued, is an appropriate one here:

Subsequent tellers of the tale, however, have disagreed about whether Red Ridinghood should be killed or saved, and if saved by whom, and if swallowed whether she alone, or her grandmother as well, should be allowed to survive the ordeal. Thus Mrs. Craik, author of *John Halifax, Gentleman*, a mother of much

\(^{28}\) Quoted in Peter and Iona Opie, *The classic fairy tales*, 96–7.

\(^{29}\) It was not until the next English version of ‘Rotkäppchen’, in *Household stories collected by the Brothers Grimm*, 2 vols (London: Addey, 1853), that the translators thought to invert the verb and the adverbial phrase and thereby achieve a greater rhythmical effect: ‘The better to hear/see/touch/eat you with’ (*Household stories*, i. 130). This pattern was then adopted by subsequent translators.
good sense, who rendered the fairy tales ‘anew’ in 1863, did not feel the tale required a happy ending. In Madame de Chateaule’s *Merry Tales for Little Folk*, 1868, on the other hand, the wolf was just about to spring at Little Red Ridinghood when a wasp stung his nostril, which gave a signal to a tomtit, which warned a huntsman, who let fly an arrow ‘that struck the wolf right through the ear and killed him on the spot’. In Felix Summerly’s edition, in the early 1840s, in which the story is set firmly on English soil ‘near the forest in Hampshire, which is called the New Forest’, Little Red Ridinghood screamed as loudly as she could, ‘and in rushed her father and some other faggot makers, who, seeing the wolf, killed him at once’. 30

The variety of endings found in English adaptations of the story since the Burns edition of 1845 is indeed astonishing. The next English translation of the story in the Addey edition of *Household stories* (1853) has an ending which is even more abrupt and violent than that of the earlier translation. Here the wolf devours both Grandma and the heroine, Little Red-Cap, and then falls asleep on the bed. The hunter enters the room ‘and when he came to the bed, he saw the wolf lying in it. “What! do I find you here, you old sinner? I have long sought you,” exclaimed he; and taking aim with his gun, he shot the old Wolf dead’ (*Household stories*, i, 131). This change, which leaves the heroine and her grandmother irretrievably dead, necessarily involves an amendment to the last section which accordingly begins: ‘Some folks say that the last story is not the true one, but that one day . . .’ (ibid., i, 131). Many more recent versions, especially those intended for young children, avoid the wolf’s swallowing of the heroine and her grandmother. One, the author recalls, even has the two of them escape the wolf’s jaws by hiding in a cupboard, from which they wait to be released by the hunter. It can be assumed from this variety of resolutions of the story’s climax that the English have taken exception to the original Grimm version. On what precise grounds is not immediately clear. Is it the violence of the original bedroom scene that was thought to be too much for an English audience to accept? Or the violence of the subsequent rescue, with its surgical removal of the two female figures unharmed from the wolf and the calculated disposal of the villain? Or was the whole conclusion deemed too unrealistic and fanciful to be believed? The Burns edition’s translator, being moved, as we have seen, by a desire to have the events (s)he is narrating, make rational sense, may well have thought the latter. The Burns version, after all, does not shrink from the violent end met by Grandma. It simply refuses to resurrect her. Her death is final, an alteration that entails the translator having to make a further adjustment to the final section of the story.

30 *The classic fairy tales*, 94.
Es wird auch erzählt, daß einmal, als Rotkäppchen der alten Großmutter wieder Gebakenes brachte, ein anderer Wolf ihm zugesprochen, und es vom Wege habe ableiten wollen. Rotkäppchen aber hüttete sich, und ging gerade fort seines Wegs, und sagte der Großmutter daß es dem Wolf begegnet wäre, der ihm guten Tag gewünscht, aber so böß aus den Augen geguckt habe: 'wenns nicht auf offener Straße gewesen wäre, er hätte mich gefressen'.

'Komm', sagte die Großmutter, 'wir wollen die Türe verschließen, das er nicht herein kann.' Bald darnach klopfte der Wolf an, und rief 'mach auf, Großmutter, ich bin das Rotkäppchen, ich bring dir Gebakenes'. Sie schwiegen aber still, und machten die Türe nicht auf, da ging der Bose etlichemal um das Haus, und sprang endlich aufs Dach, und wollte warten bis Rotkappchen Abends nach Haus ginge, dann wollte er ihm nachschleichen, und wollt's in der Dunkelheit fressen. Aber die Großmutter merkte was er im Sinn hatte. Nun stand vor dem Haus ein großer Steintrog; da sprach sie zu dem Kind 'nimm den Eimer, Rotkappchen, gestern hab ich Wiirste gekocht, da trag das Wasser, worin sie gekocht sind, in den Trog'. Rotka'ppchen trug so lange, bis der grofie grofie Trog ganz voll war. Da stieg der Geruch von den Wiirsten dem Wolf in die Nase, er schnupperte und guckte hinab, endlich machte er den Hals so lang, daß er sich nicht mehr halten konnte, und anfing zu rutschen: so rutschte er vom Dach herab, und gerade in den großen Trog hinein, und ertrank. Rotkappchen aber ging fröhlich nach Haus, und tat ihm niemand etwas zu Leid.
that he lost his balance, and began to slip; so he slipped down from the roof, straight into the great trough, and was drowned. Red Cap and her aunt, who had now ventured to look out at the door, saw how well their plan had succeeded, and that the wicked wolf was dead. Then Red Cap walked joyfully home, and no one did her any harm.

This final section of the story is also often omitted from English versions, probably because it is thought to be an unnecessary appendix to a tale that already has a sufficiently conclusive end. The first English translation returns to the source text though and gives a thorough and, for the most part, accurate account of the subsequent adventures of the Grimms' heroine. Naturally, in the English version, she no longer has a grandmother, so a suitable substitute has to be found in the form of 'one of her aunts' (l.186). This aunt is much more circumspect than her German counterpart. She makes sure that not only the door but also the windows are fastened (l.199–201) and that, before she and her granddaughter go outside to view the wolf's demise, they check out the situation by looking firstly through the window (ll.233–5) and then through the door (ll.244–5). Her caution is eminently reasonable and no doubt sets a good example to the young girl in her charge. The aunt's cooking exploits too are treated by the English narrator a little more realistically than in the Grimms' version where Grandma has been cooking up sausages in such a massive amount of water that it easily fills the huge stone trough outside the house! Red Cap's aunt has only enough cooking water to top up the trough that has already been filled with fresh water (though the question may still be asked: where was this fresh water obtained?!).

The English translation has, apart from its small additions and its one central departure from the original, kept close to the basic structure of the source story. A young girl is sent by her mother on an errand to her grandmother's house and on the way encounters a wolf. She is rescued from its clutches by a hunter and learns as a consequence of her ordeal how to cope with any future encounters with wolves. These are the bare bones of the story, which is of course a 'Kindermärchen' and concentrates 'on a test where children are opposed to frightful monsters, but the dimensions of

31 The 'pudding' she has cooked has presumably the original meaning (now extant perhaps only in 'black pudding') of a kind of sausage boiled in the stomach or entrails of an animal, rather than that of a sweet farinaceous dish, which would obviously not have appealed to the wolf's appetite nearly so much.
sexuality and social opposition are absent.' There is no growth to adult maturity as in the true 'Zaubermaerchen'.

Because of the extra additions and the division of the different voices of the dialogue into separate paragraphs, the English text is — despite its earlier omissions — considerably longer than the German original. The additions, as we have seen, are made chiefly out of a concern for maintaining credibility. However, this concern unwittingly defeats its own purpose. There is a hidden and not very pleasant undertone to this English version of the story, and one that was probably overlooked by the translator. The events of the altered English version, if taken realistically, would no doubt have instilled in its heroine a hideous and lasting feeling of guilt for the fact that she was indirectly responsible for the death of her innocent grandmother. That she manages to escape such feelings of guilt is evident from her ‘joyfully’ walking home at the very end (ll.247–8). But this is hardly realistic. She would have to be a very ‘dull’ child indeed to forget the dire consequences of her earlier actions so easily! In altering the story in order to keep the events as credible and realistic as possible, the translator ignores the emotional realities and consequently undermines the whole purpose of these alterations.

The departure of the translation from the central episode of the original (where both grandmother and granddaughter are devoured by the wolf and then extricated from it by the hunter) obscures another important feature of the German source: its element of fantasy. FJ. Harvey Darton was one of the first commentators to draw attention to the English resistance to fantasy throughout the history of children's literature in this country.

The fear or dislike of fairy-tales, in fact, was not and is not dependent to a marked extent on the feeling of any one period. It is a habit of mind which has often been dominant in the history of children's books without much aid from contemporary circumstances. It is a manifestation, in England, of a deep-rooted sin-complex. It involves the belief that anything fantastic on the one hand, or anything primitive on the other, is inherently noxious, or at least so void of good as to be actively dangerous.

This mistrust of the ‘fantastic’ and the ‘primitive’ is clearly evident here in this version of KHM 26. Reason and common sense ultimately prevail. Only one ‘fantasy’ element remains from the original, viz. the unrealistic figure of the talking wolf. It is perhaps surprising that this figure was not also altered or removed by the

32 Bengt Holbek, Interpretation of fairy tales: Danish folklore in a European perspective (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 1987), 422. Interpretations of KHM 26 which claim that the story is about the problems of puberty and ‘budding sexuality’ (see esp. Bettelheim, The uses of enchantment, 166–83) show a blatant disregard for the Grimms' text.

translator, but such a drastic act of censorship would obviously have destroyed the one remaining distinguishing mark of this famous story. In going so far as to omit the episode in which the heroine and her grandmother are devoured by the wolf and then cut out of its stomach, the English translation ignores much of the imaginative and emotional intensity of the original, and, as a consequence, misses an important dimension of the story.

The Grimms' original tale shows how Rotkäppchen loses and then regains control over herself and her life. The audience of the narrative lives through her experience vicariously and experiences the same sense of excitement and fear and, at the end, the same sense of satisfaction and security as the heroine does.

The first English translation of it, though, does not furnish nearly so satisfying an experience. Just as it is lacking in natural speech rhythms, so also in its omission of the thrilling climax it fails to fulfil the need for fantasy. This last failure is due to the translator's persistent attempts to transform the fantastic and unrealistic features of the German original into something that would seem more acceptable and reasonable to an English audience. In this endeavour the translator would without doubt have found staunch support in the over-anxious comments made some forty years earlier by the aptly named Mrs Sarah Kirby Trimmer (author of Sacred history, an expurgated version of the Bible):

Though we well remember, the interest with which, in our childish days, when books of amusement for children were scarce, we read, or listened to the history of Little Red Riding Hood and Blue Beard, etc. we do not wish to have such sensations awakened in the hearts of our grandchildren by the same means; for the terrific images which tales of this nature present to the imagination, usually make deep impressions, and injure the tender minds of children, by exciting unreasonable and groundless fears.34

One further, quite small but crucial alteration serves to highlight the attitude of the English translator to the purport of the story. In the original story, at the end of her terrifying experience, the Grimms' heroine is shown to be capable of drawing her own conclusions from what she has undergone: 'Rotkäppchen dachte bei sich "du willst dein Lebtag nicht wieder allein vom Wege ab in den Wald laufen, wenn dirs die Mutter verboten hat"' (l.181-3). The heroine of the English version is not nearly so capable. Not only does she have to be 'led home to her mother'; she also requires a brief lecture from the hunter (l.160-4): 'and as he left her at the door, he said to her, "See that you never run away from the road again, all your life, nor do what your mother has forbidden you"'.

The English version would thus seem to adopt a different approach to the learning processes of children. It suggests that children are not able to draw their own conclusions from their experiences (as clearly Rotkäppchen in the Grimms’ version of the story is), but need to have the correct attitudes inculcated into them by adult authority figures. Only when children have been repeatedly subjected to the rational and moral admonitions of grown-ups, only then are they deemed capable of learning and internalizing the important lessons of life.