

Literature Synopsis

The Seven Schwabians

A German Folktale (Retold)

Purpose

This book is an example of a digital approach to philatelic literature which deviates from the normal stamp or postcard studies. A series of folktales are illustrated with the images found on postcards. Pages are text heavy by design as that's what a story consists of - generally.

Theme

The Seven Schwabians is a series of German folktales. First recited by Hans Sachs in 1545, the fables relate the many misguided adventures of seven Schwabian would-be heroes who are oft portrayed as innocent or foolish. This type of stereotyping occurs in all cultures, with stories following of course.

A few of the Seven Schwabian folk tales were collected by the Brothers Grimm and included in the second volume of the Grimm Fairy Tales. The brothers did not write all the stories in their works, but rather consolidated many tales commonly told historically by any number of storytellers.

Scope

This book attempts to include every Seen Schwabian folktale I can find a reference for and one that is strictly part of my imagination. I thought it was a rather sad ending in the original, so now include an unexpected twist as the ending.

Challenge

First, a number of post cards depict scenes from the folktales, most with similar designs for the more popular 'hare' story. To complete this story, unrelated cards were found to depict people, animals or events in the story line. The challenge is to find those items which relate the story and keep the same overall feel of the display constant, in this case simple and colorful illustrations. This was the tough part!

Second, such tales have been told and retold over many, many years with the teller adding or subtracting events, people or monsters as the creative mood strikes them. This version is loosely based on the original (as original as may be determined from sources available.) In the tradition of previous storytellers, I've embellished the story, made substitutions or added details as the creative mood moved me.

Elements

Elements are limited to picture postcards, tea, chocolate and tobacco cards as they best depict scenes from these tales. As this is a narrative work, traditional philatelic descriptions and information relating to the cards are not included, relying on the images to speak to the reader.

References

The Seven Swabians

University of Florida Digital Collections - <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/UF00026229/00001/1j>

The Seven Swabians

Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Seven_Swabians

The Seven Swabians

University of Pittsburgh - <https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm119.html>