

Schaller & Kirn: A Short History and List of Movable Books

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a comprehensive catalog and historical reconstruction of Schaller & Kirn, a short-lived but prolific nineteenth-century German publisher of movable picture books. Founded in Fürth, Bavaria, by Carl Schaller and Hugo Kirn in 1883, the firm produced a wide range of mechanical picture books in multiple languages before dissolving their partnership in 1885. Afterward, Carl Schaller continued publishing under his own name into the early twentieth century. The article documents over 40 known titles produced by Schaller & Kirn or Carl Schaller, with particular attention to their international editions in English, French, and Dutch. The study is grounded in extensive research across nineteenth-century trade bibliographies, book catalogs, and auction records, as well as firsthand examination of surviving copies in private collections. It begins with a historical overview of the company's origins and the biographies of its founders. While some books were fully produced and published by Schaller & Kirn, others were collaborative projects where illustrations or mechanical components were printed in Fürth and distributed internationally under other publishers' imprints. This research highlights the role Schaller & Kirn played in the wider European network of interactive book production. Their work exemplifies the mechanical innovation, chromolithographic skill, and cross-border publishing partnerships that defined the golden age of movable books. It also provides a resource for collectors and historians seeking to identify and contextualize these rare and often undocumented titles.

KEYWORDS

Antiquarian children's books; Carl Schaller; Schaller & Kirn.

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My research began over 30 years ago when I first encountered *The Golden Book* by Schaller & Kirn in my mother's collection of movable books, a stunning volume with rare gold foil backgrounds. This article presents a catalog of books published by Schaller & Kirn from 1883 to 1885, along with later titles by Carl Schaller. It also includes a historical reconstruction of the firm's origins, drawing on nineteenth-century bibliographies, trade catalogs, and other printed sources from the period (coeval sources). Readers should note that many of the books discussed include illustrations printed by Schaller & Kirn for international publishers, not only titles entirely produced by the firm.

Karl Friedrich Schaller was born in Otisheim, Wurttemberg, Germany, on 17 August 1846 to Johann Wilhelm Schaller (1816-1899) and Johanna Susanna Jourdan (1822-1876).

Karl (more commonly spelled Carl), a merchant from Fürth, cofounded the Lithographic Art Institute and Storybook Factory (Lithographische Kunstanstalt und Bilderbuchfabrik) in Fürth, Bavaria, with Hugo (not Gregor) Kirn. Hugo and Carl entered this significant partnership on April 1, 1884. This collaboration, structured as a general partnership, capitalized on Kirn's expertise in lithography and Schaller's business acumen. The enterprise specialized in producing lithographic prints, movable picture books, and other visual art forms that were gaining popularity in Germany and beyond.

While both names were associated with the company, Carl Schaller was the sole authorized signatory for the firm. This suggests that while Kirn contributed significantly to the creative and technical aspects of the business, Schaller may have handled the administrative and financial management. Together, their firm became known for producing high-quality lithographic works, including the intricate movable picture books that were a hallmark of the era.¹

Late in 1885, Kirn departed from the business, leaving Schaller as the sole proprietor. Schaller then officially registered the enterprise under his name on December 23, 1885, renaming it Bilderbogenfabrik Carl Schaller and situating it at Königswarterstraße 8a. The early imprints from the publisher after that were marked "Carl Schaller Bilderbücherfabrik Fürth O. J".

The movable books bearing the imprint Schaller & Kirn (or SK) are believed to have been published between 1883 and 1885. Given the brief lifespan of this collaboration, there was scant opportunity for issuing second editions, making existing Schaller & Kirn movable books exceedingly rare today. Despite their short operation period, the output of movable books by Schaller and Kirn was remarkably prolific.²

Before dwelling on books issued by S&K and Carl Schaller, in the following section we briefly trace Hugo Kirn's activity after leaving Schaller.

1 "The merchant Carl Schaller in Fürth and the lithographer Hugo Kirn in Nuremberg have been operating since yesterday under the company name: Schaller & Kirn, a lithographic art institution and picture printing business as a general partnership with headquarters in Fürth. For drawing, however, only Carl Schaller is authorized to sign". Fürth, April 1, 1884. Royal District Court in *Bayerische Landeszeitung und Münchener Handelsblatt*: 1884.

2 While we have uncovered some details about his history and business partnerships, we have yet to identify a single book or toy directly attributed to him.

Hugo Kirn: A Short Bio

Hugo Kirn, a talented lithographer from Nuremberg, was an influential figure in the late 19th-century German printing and toy manufacturing industries. While much about his early life remains undocumented, Kirn's professional trajectory reveals his innovative contributions to lithography, movable picture books, and the burgeoning toy industry of the time.

At some point after the partnership with Schaller dissolved, Hugo Kirn established his own enterprise, Hugo Kirn & Company, in Nuremberg. This firm continued the production of movable picture books, cardboard games, and other related products. These items were not just artistic but also interactive, appealing to the growing demand for engaging and visually captivating children's products.

On August 15, 1888, Kirn made a pivotal decision to transfer the business to Wilhelm Volkhardt, a merchant based in Darmstadt. This marked the end of Kirn's direct involvement with his firm Hugo Kirn & Company, which continued operations under its original name with Volkhardt at the helm.

An 1892 entry in "Adreßbuch von Nürnberg" 1891 – Page 128 states: "Volthardt, Wilh., formerly Hugo Kirn & Co. (movable picture books, cardboard games, etc.), Schanzäckerstraße 30". This indicates that by 1891, Wilhelm Volkhardt was managing the business formerly known as Hugo Kirn & Company, specializing in movable picture books and cardboard games, with its address at Schanzäckerstraße 30. Note: we can find no trace of movable books published by Wilhelm Volkhardt. Collectors? Please chime in if you have info.

The transfer suggests that Kirn may have been seeking new opportunities or was possibly influenced by personal or professional considerations. By this time, the company had established a strong reputation, with its products distributed across Nuremberg and beyond.

Following the sale of his previous company, Hugo Kirn embarked on a new venture. On December 24, 1892, he partnered with Richard Jautschus, a merchant, to establish Kirn & Jautschus, a toy factory based in Nuremberg. This general partnership focused on producing toys.

Kirn & Jautschus likely leveraged Kirn's expertise in design and lithography, while Jautschus brought commercial skills to the enterprise. Together, they contributed to Nuremberg's reputation as a hub for toy manufacturing during the late 19th century.

Amid his professional endeavors, Hugo Kirn also found time to settle down. He married Maria Fellner, a native of Thalmässing, a small town in Bavaria. Little more is known about their personal life.

Historical catalogs list numerous movable titles (thus far, we have discovered over 40 titles by either S&K or Carl Schaller - all listed herein), yet few have surfaced in libraries or online in recent times. Schaller & Kirn produced high-quality books, some of which offered an optional gold gilt application at an additional cost.

Post-1885, books published by Schaller

were identified as Carl Schaller or C. Schaller, featuring a distinct logo. Schaller continued producing movable books under this new branding until at least 1890, albeit in lesser quantities than during the Schaller & Kirn era.

Carl Schaller was active from 1884 to 1933 as a manufacturer in Fürth, running a lithographic art institute and a picture book and games factory. He passed away in 1919, and his son Johann Friedrich Schaller (1880-1949) took over the business. Friedrich became a partner in 1912 and, following his father's death, assumed the role of sole proprietor. By 1926, the Carl Schaller Art Institute had relocated to Finkenstrasse 6.

The firm appears to have lost the Schaller family's control between 1932 and 1934, possibly influenced by the Nazi regime in Germany, since Friedrich's wife, Mina, was of partial Jewish descent.

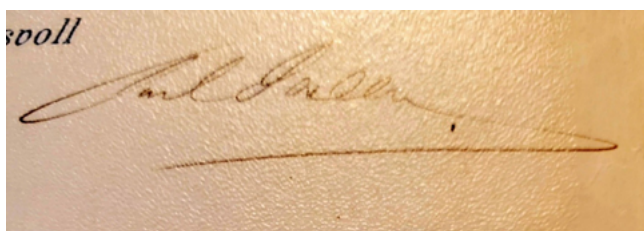


Fig. 1 || Carl Schaller Original Signature
(Collection of vintagepopupbooks.com).

Financial difficulties emerged by 1933, and an entry on the commercial card of Carl Schaller's firm indicates that, around 1933/34, Vereinigte Kunstanstalten took over the company. By 1935, it became known as Vereinigte Kunstanstalten Ludwig Senkeisen, G. Geck & Co., H. Dibbern & Schneller AG. In 1951, it was referred to as L. SenkeisenKG and continued operating until at least 1968, producing picture and coloring books, card games, and other games. However, only a few books from the Vereinigte Kunstanstalten Senkeisen are listed in the catalog of the German National Library. The Vereinigte Kunstanstalten was deregistered in 1970, marking the end of an era for the company. The last advertisement we've seen for "Carl Schaller BilderBücher Und SpieleFabrik" dates back to 1931. It can be found in the book *Deutsche Spielwaren-Zeitung: ...: für die Spielwaren-Industrie und den Export nach allen Landen*, Volumes 23-24, 1931, on p. 29 (Fig. 2). This ad, in German reads:

Malbücher Reklameartikel Gesellschaftsspiele Beschäftigungsspiele Bilderbücher Mosaikspiele, Carl Schaller BILDERBÜCHER- UND SPIELEFABRIK Fürth in Bayern. ZUR MESSE IN LEIPZIG: PETERSHOF V KOJE 552, Hela- BASTELKÄSTEN, 'PROPELLER-WAGEN' KASTEN NR.36.³



Fig. 2 | Advertisement insert 'Carl Schaller BilderBücher Und SpieleFabrik', 1931. (Collection of vintagepopupbooks.com).

1. The Books

Following Kirn's departure in 1885, several movables were published with only the Carl Schaller imprint, marked by an interlaced C and S logo (Fig. 3 a, b).

The listed movable books below originated both from the original company, Schaller and Kirn, and hence were published between 1883 and 1885 and Carl Schaller titles published solely under Schaller's name. Our research has identified over 40 movable titles by Schaller and Kirn or Carl Schaller, featuring editions in German, English, French, Dutch and Italian. Identifying these books can be challenging, as the firms often employed only their logo for publishing information.



Fig. 3 a, b | Logo for Schaller & Kirn: (stylized "S" and "K" intertwined in an elegant manner), 1883-1885.
 Logo for Carl Schaller (without Kirn) (intertwined capital letters S and C = Carl Schaller), 1886-1932.

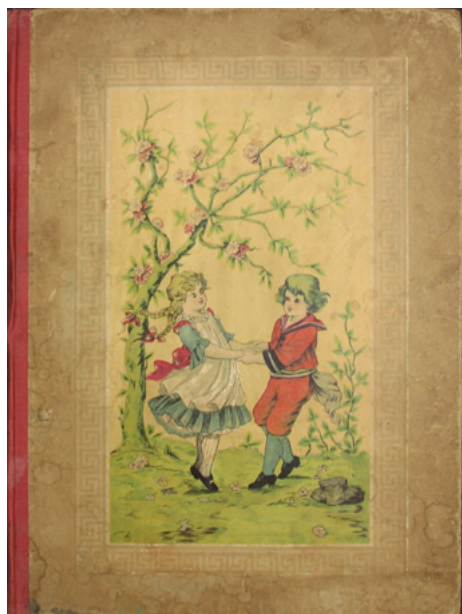
³ Translated into English, it states: "Coloring books Promotional items Board games Activity games Picture books Mosaic games, Carl Schaller PICTURE BOOK AND GAME FACTORY Fürth in Bavaria, AT THE FAIR IN LEIPZIG: PETERSHOF V BOOTH 552, Hela- CRAFT BOXES, "PROPELLER CAR' BOX NO.36".

1.1 Titles that have been found in English or French as well as German or Dutch

German Edition: *Glückliche Kinder: ein unterhaltsames Bilderbuch mit beweglichen Tableaux für die liebe Jugend...*, [Fürth], Schaller & Kirn, 1885.⁴

Note: 5 movables.

English Edition: *Happy Children*, Dean & Son, 160a Fleet Street, E.C., London, [1886?].⁵



⁴ Vintagepopupbooks.com has two copies, one in German and one in English. The German edition was published by Schaller & Kirn. The English edition was published by Dean & Son.

⁵ Publication date obtained from a copy at Bodleian Library – University of Oxford UK, annotated Dean & Son edition.

Dutch Edition: *Draai maar verder! Prettig prentenboek voor groot en klein met veranderlijke Figu-ren, genomen uit het dagelijks leven*, [1890?].

English Translation [titles translated by the author]: *Turn Further! Pleasant picture book for big and small with changeable figures, taken from daily life*.



Gulliver: A Miraculous Voyage to Lilliput: Six Moving Pictures for Well-bred Children 10 and 1/2, [1890 ca.]. Two movable illustrations on each of 6 movable pages.

Notes: Ketterer & Kunst⁶ this English S&K edition. Gulliver was shipwrecked, shackled by the dwarves, as a giant statue, and finally, the escape in a rowboat on the rocking sea.

ABC - illustrated with instructive questions and answers for good children, [1890].

Notes: Ketterer & Kunst auctioned this English edition titled. It had nineteen shutter-type moveables on ten sheets. Again, auctioned by Ketterer & Kunst.

⁶ Ketterer Kunst is a well-known German auction house specializing in fine art and rare books. We find several S&K titles pictured from their "Ketterer Kunst Auction Catalog, Sale 523, Munich, 2019".

German Edition: *Fabeln u. Lehren der Thiere. Unterhaltendes Bilderbuch f. artige Kinder*, enth. 6 belegt. (chromolith.) Tafeln. qu. 4. (6 Bl. Text.) Schreiber & Kirm. geb. baar 2. – ; m. Goldschnitt. 2.50. Fürth: Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Edition: *Fables and Anecdotes of Animals. An amusing picture book for good children*: 6 movable pages.

Notes: 5 movables: rat and elephant, hare and tortoise, fox and stork, raven and fox, grasshopper and ant, and wolf and the lamb (Found in English).⁷

Pleasant Hours: An entertaining picture book with movable pictures for young people, Schaller & Kirn, Fürth, 1883.

Notes: Unrecorded movable book. 12.5 x 8.2 in. (31 x 21.5 cm). This English-language edition has not been identified in German, and no corresponding German title has been located to date. The book contains five tab-operated movable scenes: a dancer, a fisherman, sledding boys, two boys sawing wood, and a chick emerging from an egg.

German Edition: *Grosse Wasche Ein unterhaltendes Bilderbuch für artige Mädchen, Mit 5 farblich-graphierten Tafeln mit Ziehmechanismus*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

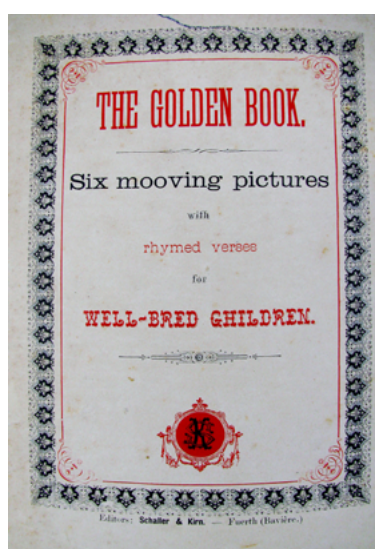
English Edition: *The big wash: An Entertaining Picture Book for Well-Behaved Girls*. With 5 Color Lithographed Plates with Pull Mechanism, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

Notes: This book, aimed at teaching young girls about housekeeping, features a series of movable images that depict two small girls engaging in various laundry-related activities. The scenes include washing the laundry, hanging it to dry, flattening and ironing the clothes, a dispute over a doll, and going to bed, among others. The book contains 5 movable images and measures approximately 7.5" x 9".⁸

German Edition: *Das goldene Buch: sechs bewegliche Bilder mit passenden Versen für artige Kinder*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Edition: *The Golden Book: Six Movable Pictures with Appropriate Verses for Well-Behaved Children*.

Notes: The copy shown came with gold gilt; Schaller & Kirn offered this as a more expensive edition on some of their movable books.



⁷ Auctioned by Ketterer & Kunst.

⁸ We also found this title online via Alphabet Books catalog #102 page 57 in French - Grande Lessive. Livre d'images mobiles pour l'amusement des fillettes bien sages. Another image can be seen from the ANTIQUARIAT WINFRIED GEISENHEYNER KATALOG 77 Winter 2009 .

Lively People an Amusing Picture Book

Notes: Hardcover Pagination: 6 movable pages, 10.5x14.25 cm. Found in old reference books dated 1893 with only the Carl Schaller logo. In 1893 it cost 1.30 or you could get it by mail for \$1.46.

English edition: *Droll Fellows: Six Moving Pictures with Rhymes for Well-bred Children*.⁹

A Variety Show: Revolving Pictures for Young People, Carl Schaller (The only Schaller softcover?), [1885-1890].

Notes: Format: Softcover Dimensions: 14x14cm. Features: 4 movable pictures via a volvelle turning wheel with printed story text to versos. It contains four color-printed leaves with cut-out windows that display revolving images. Each image is printed on circular paper plates, affixed with rivets. The plates are mounted within the leaves. A story in English is printed on the verso of each movable. Notably, the publisher's logo, Carl Schaller, adorns the bottom of each movable. The image on the far left is the front cover. It can be viewed in the Virtual Museum at vintagepopupbooks.com.¹⁰



1.2 - Lists of movable books that we have not found in English

These are additional titles that we've found exclusively in German or Dutch, English translations of the German titles are provided, though they may not reflect the exact titles if English editions exist. Most of these works can only be located in old nineteenth-century book reference catalogs.

Original in German: *Wer weiß? Bilderbuch*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1883.

English Translation: *Who Knows? Picture Book*.

Notes: This book published in 1883, is an interactive and movable picture book featuring six chromolithographic illustrations.

Original in German: *Muh! Muh! Muh!*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1883.

English Translation: *Moo! Moo! Moo!*

Notes: *Moo! Moo! Moo!* is a playful movable picture book for children published in 1883. Three chromolithographic movable images.

Original in German: *Kindergeschichte von Gubitz*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Children's Story by Gubitz*.

Notes: Featuring six chromolithographic illustrations, this movable picture book showcases a story by Gubitz.

Original in German: *Jugendfreuden*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Youth's Joy*.

Notes: *Youth's Joy*, published in 1885, is a vibrant movable picture book celebrating the happiness and liveliness of youth. With six movable chromolithographic images.

⁹ See it online.

¹⁰ <https://www.vintagepopupbooks.com/category-s/1838.htm>

Original in German: *Lachende Geschichten*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1886.

English Translation: *Laughing Tales*.

Notes: *Laughing Tales* published in 1886, is a humorous movable picture book with six chromolithographic images.

Original in German: *Kinderbuch. Bilderbuch mit 9 Chromo-Bildern*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Children's Picture Book with 9 Movable Images*.

Notes: This movable picture book, published in 1885, contains nine chromolithographic illustrations. The vivid and detailed images offer an interactive experience, captivating young readers with its delightful storytelling.

Original in German: *Kinder der Welt*. Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Children of the World*.

Notes: *Children of the World*, published in 1885, is a movable book showcasing children from different cultures through six chromolithographic illustrations.

Original in German: *Großmutter erzählt*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn 1885.

English Translation: *Grandmother's Tales*.

Notes: Featuring six movable illustrations, It depicts a grandmother narrating stories.

Original in German: *Nimm mich mit. Ein Bilderbuch mit drei beweglichen Chromo-Bildern*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1889.

English Translation: *Come with Me. A Picture Book with Three Movable Chromolithographs*.

Notes: This movable book, published in 1889, features three chromolithographic illustrations with interactive elements.

Original in German: *Der Naschkatze. Ein Bilderbuch mit beweglichen Bildern*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *The Sweet Tooth. A Movable Picture Book*.

Notes: This 1885 picture book, with movable chromolithographs, humorously illustrates the adventures of a sweet tooth.

Original in German: *Zwei und Zwei. Ein Bilderbuch mit beweglichen Bildern*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn 1885.

English Translation: *Two and Two. A Movable Picture Book*.

Notes: Published in 1885, *Two and Two* features five movable illustrations.

Original in German: *Schmetterlingssage*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Butterfly Tales*.

Notes: This charming book, published in 1885, narrates a story about butterflies with five movable chromolithographic images. The book's large format, indicated by the "4" in the description, suggests it was a substantial, hands-on item, ideal for a young audience.

Original in German: *Der Seiltänzer. Ein moralisches Bilderbuch mit 6 bewegl. Bildern. Chromolithogr.*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1888.

English Translation: *The Ropewalker. A moral picture book with six movable images*. Chromolithographed.

Notes: *The Ropewalker* is an interactive moral tale illustrated with six movable chromolithographs, hardcover price: 1.50 Marks.

Original in German: *Tantenmärchen. Ein Bilderbuch für Kinder mit 6 bewegl. chromolithogr. Bildern. gr. 4*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Aunt's Stories. A picture book for children with six movable chromolithographed pictures*.

Notes: Large quarto, hardcover price: 1.30 Marks.

Original in German: *Großmuttergeschichten. Ein Bilderbuch mit bewegl. chromolithogr. Bildern und Versen für Kinder.* gr. 4, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Grandmother's Tales. A picture book with movable chromolithographs and verses for children.*

Notes: Large quarto, hardcover. Price: 1.50 Marks; with gold embossing: 2 Marks.

Original in German: *Lang u. Lustig in komischen Bildern, m. Versen für Groß u. Klein.* 6 Chromolith. zum Aufklappen mit 8 Bl. Text, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Long and Funny in Comical Pictures, with Verses for Big and Small.*

Notes: 6 Chromolithographs to Unfold with 8 Pages of Text. This book features six chromolithographs that unfold, accompanied by verses suitable for both adults and children.

Original in German: *Große Menagerie blutdürstiger Tiere. Ein unterhaltendes Bilderbuch mit ziehbaren Bildern,* Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Magnitude Menagerie of Bloodthirsty Beasts: An amusing picture book with movable images.*

Notes: This is an entertaining picture book featuring drawable images.

Original in German: *Sneewittchen. Ein Märchenbuch für artige Kinder.* Fürth: Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Snow White. A Fairy Tale Book for Well-Behaved Children.*

Notes: This book, *Snow White. A Fairy Tale Book for Well-Behaved Children*, features four hinged pages that unfold into ten scenes, reflecting the 19th-century emphasis on moral and educational values.

Original in German: *Spiel u. Scherz. Bilderbuch mit 5 bewegl.* Fürth, Schaller und Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Play and Jokes.* Picture book with 5 movable plates.

Original in German: *Kasperle, lustige. Schwänke Allerlei in Bewegung,* Schaller and Kirn, 1887.

English Translation: *Punch and Judy, funny. Various skits in motion.*

Original in German: *Ferienfreuden. Ein Bilderbuch m. 10 bewegl. chromolith. Bildern,* Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Holiday Fun. A picture book with ten movable chromolithographs.*

Original in German: *Überraschungspack, Die. Ein unterhalt. Bilderbuch m. 5 ziehbaren chromolith. Bildern f. artige Knaben,* Fürth, Schaller and Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *The Surprise Pack. An entertaining picture book with 5 pull-out chromolithographs for well-behaved boys.*

Original in German: *Zwerghähne, die. Bilderbuch mit 4 bewegl. chromolith,* Fürth, Schaller & Kirn. 1885.

English Translation: *The Dwarf Roosters. Picture book with 4 movable chromolithographs.*

Original in German: *Weiterdrehen, es ist schön anzusehen! Bilderbuch mit 4 drehbaren Scheibenbildern,* Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Keep turning, it's beautiful to watch! Picture book with 4 turnable disk images.*

Original in German: *Jetzt geht's los! Bilderbuch. Casperl-Theater mit 6 ziehbaren Bildern,* Carl Schaller, Fürth, 1890.

English Translation: *Now it starts! Picture book. Casperl-Theater with 6 pull-out images.*

Original in German: *Was kommt nun? Bilderbuch mit 4 drehenden Scheibenbildern. Lustige und komische Bilder mit Versen.* (Chromodruck.), Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1888.

English Translation: *What comes next? Picture book with 4 rotating discs! Funny in comic images, with verses depicted.*

Original in German: *Los geht's! Bilderbuch. Casperl-Theater mit 6 ausziehbaren Bildern (Chromodruck.)*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1890.

English Translation: *Here we go! Picture book. Casperl-Theater with 6 movable images*, 1890.

Original in German: *Kinder, dreht fröhlich weiter, ich wette, es wird euch gefallen!*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, s.d. [1890 ca.].

English Translation: *Children, keep spinning happily, I bet you'll love it! A picture book with spinning plates and nice verses for sweet children.*

Original in German: *Happy. Bilderbuch mit 5 beweglichen Bildern*, Fürth: Carl Schaller, sd.

English Translation: *Happy. Picture book with 5 movable parts.*

Notes: This book features five movable chromolithographs, offering dynamic and engaging visual storytelling.

Original in German: *Bibel u. Gebets. Bilderbuch m. 5 bewegl. (chromolith.) Taf.*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1870.

English Translation: *Bible and Prayers. Picture book with 5 movable plates.*

Notes: A religious-themed book with movable chromolithographed illustrations, blending spirituality with interactivity.

Original in German: *Auf! Auf! zum Jahrmarkt! Drei perspektiv. (chromolith.) Bilder m. bewegl. Fig.* Fürth, Carl Schaller, [1880].

English Translation: *Up! Up! to the Fair! Three perspective (chromolithographed) pictures with movable figures.*

Original in German: *Stunden frohlich*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, [1880].

English Translation: *Merry Hours*

Notes: This book contains five movable chromolithographs, providing lively and entertaining content for children.

Original in German: *Jahre, Glückliche. Bilderbuch mit 5 bewegl. (chromolith.) Bild*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1888.

English Translation: *Happy Years. Picture book with 5 movable images.*

Original in German: *Kopfsalat, fröhliche. Schabernack Allerlei in 6 bewegl. chromolithogr. Bildern.* Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1885.

English Translation: *Lettuce Head, cheerful. Various Pranks in 6 movable chromolithographs.*

Original in German: *Fabeln von Jean de Lafontaine: Unterhaltendes Bilderbuch für artige Kinder, enthaltend sechs bewegliche Tafeln.* Fürth, Schaller & Kirn, 1885.

English Translation: *Fables of Jean de La Fontaine: Amusing picture book for children, containing six moving tableaux.*

Original in German: *Fahrten Abenteuerlustige. Spielwerk m. 4 bewegl. (chromolith.) Taf.*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1885.

English Translation: *Travel Adventures. Playbook with 4 movable (chromolithographed) plates.*

Original in German: *Scherz, Bilderbuch m. 5 bewegl. (chromolith.) Taf.*, Fürth, Carl Schaller, 1885.

English Translation: *Joke. Picture book with 5 movable (chromolithographed) plates.*

Original in German: *Lustige Streiche. Ein Bilderbuch mit 6 bewegl. chromolithogr. Bildern*, Fürth, Schaller & Kirn.

English Translation: *Merry Pranks. A picture book with six movable chromolithographs.*

Notes: Price: 1.75 Marks.

Original in Dutch: *Kindren, draait maar lustig voort, stellig wed ik, dat 't u bekoort! Een prentenboek met draaiende platen en aardige verzen voor lieve kinderen*. Fürth: Carl Schaller, s.d. [1890 ca.]
 English Translation: *Children, spin cheerfully forward, I bet you'll enjoy it! A picture book with rotating plates and amusing verses for sweet children*.

Notes: Large quarto, featuring 4 color lithographs with rotating discs that reveal various heads through small cut-out windows.

2. Global Networks of Nineteenth-Century Movable Book Publishing: The Influence of Carl Schaller and European Collaboration¹¹

Movable books often involved collaboration between publishers, printers, and manufacturers across different countries, as these projects required specialized skills and technologies (e.g., chromolithography, die-cutting, and riveted mechanisms). Publishers often relied on specialized printers for chromolithographs and die-cutting technologies unavailable in-house. Cross-border partnerships allowed publishers to adapt books for different languages and markets efficiently. Identifying a shared producer sheds some light the connections between publishers (e.g., Capendu, Carl Schaller) and their supply chain. It also highlights the interconnected networks of the book trade in Europe.



Fig. 5 || *Favole con Figure Animate Libro dilettevole ed istruttivo per buoni bambini con sei tavole dipinte e figure mobili. Libro II, Milan, Vallardi, [ante 1885]. Italian version with Carl Schaller logo on the title page.*

Example 1

We note the presence of Carl Schaller's monogram 'CS' on an Italian book, *Favole con Figure Animate Libro II* (Fig. 5). This book has no stated publisher. It is a companion sequel to *Favole con Figure Animate Libro I* which has the stated publisher Antonio Vallardi of Milan¹² (Fig. 6).

The monogram indicating that *Libro II* was produced in Germany by Carl Schaller for export to Italy suggests that *Libro I* was also manufactured by Schaller in Germany, with a distribution agreement likely arranged with Vallardi. Moreover, *Libro I* was also published by A. Capendu in Paris, with a French text and a slightly changed cover artwork titled *Fables de La Fontaine* (Fig. 7). This implies that Schaller also had a distribution agreement with Capendu covering France. An English version, *Fables of La Fontaine* (Fig. 8), was also published by Carl Schaller or Schaller

¹¹ Many thanks to Dr Ian Alcock for drawing my attention to some of the books produced by Carl Schaller and for his help on identifying connections between movable book publishers. Images taken from the collection of vintage-popupbooks.

¹² Cfr. POP-APP. *Scienza, arte e gioco nella storia dei libri animati dalla carta alle app. Guida alla mostra*. 2019. Edited by Pompeo Vagliani. Turin: Fondazione Tancredi di Barolo, p. 20.



Fig. 6 | *Favole con Figure Animate Libro dilettevole ed istruttivo pei buoni bambini con sei tavole dipinte e figure mobili. Libro I, Milan, Vallardi, [ante 1885]. (Archive FTB, Turin).*



Fig. 7 | *Front board of The English edition, Fables of la Fontaine, London, [ante 1885]. The features cover art is similar to Libro I (Fig. 6), but the movable elements are identical to those in Libro II (Fig. 5).*



Fig. 8 | *Front board of the French edition Fables de la Fontaine, Paris, Capendu, sd.*



Fig. 9 | *Favole con Figure Animate [...] Libro II with the "S&K" mark.*

& Kirn, as indicated by the cover logo and the red 'S&K' letters on the sack. The cover artwork in this version is the same as in the Italian *Libro I* and French Capendu editions, with some apparent differences in coloring. However, the movables in the English version are not identical to those in *Libro I* or the Capendu edition, whose cover art it shares, but rather to those found in *Libro II*. *Libro II* features different cover artwork than the other three editions but, like the English version, also includes the "S&K" mark on the sack (Fig. 9).

This intricate web of shared and differing features - cover artwork, movable elements, and publisher logos - illustrates Schaller's complex international production and distribution network, highlighting their pivotal role in disseminating these books across Italy, France, and England.

The English edition, *Fables of La Fontaine*, features cover art similar to *Favole I*, but the movable elements are identical to those in *Favole II*.

Example 2

We note the presence of Carl Schaller's CS monogram on the German movable book *Glückliche Kinder : ein unterhaltsames Bilderbuch mit beweglichen Tableaux für die liebe Jugend*. This book has five tab-activated interactive plates, three with articulated moving parts and two with sliding parts which change what is revealed through 'window holes'. The three articulated plates also

appear in *Happy Children*, published in London by Dean & Son. This book, whose title is a direct translation of *Glückliche Kinder*, has two further articulated moving pictures in the same style, and has cover artwork adapted from that seen on *Glückliche Kinder*. The Dean book does not include Schaller's CS monogram (The images of both books are visible on p. 21 of this article). Furthermore, a Dutch title *Spel en Scherts*, which has no stated publisher but does include the CS mark on the title page (Fig. 9), has six tab-activate articulated plates constructed in the same way with round headed metal rivets. None of the plates appear in *Glückliche Kinder*; however, two of them are replications of the plates which appear in Dean's *Happy Children* but not in *Glückliche Kinder*. It is clear that *Glückliche Kinder*, *Happy Children* and *Spel en Scherts* were produced by the same maker, and we take this to be Carl Schaller.

These examples show commercial arrangements between Schaller in Germany and children's book publishers and distributors in Italy, France, Great Britain and Holland. It may be fair to view the design and production of the mechanical illustrations as the 'hard part' of children's movable book production, and the authorship of appropriate foreign language text as the 'easy part': by collaborating with foreign firms who had their own national distribution networks, production and profit were maximized. The examples also suggest a 'mix and match' approach, where specific plates included in foreign language issues of titles were selected from a wider stock. (One can imagine Schaller representatives at international book trade fairs negotiating with company representatives and considering together what would work best in local markets).

Another aspect of adaptability to local versions is seen in one of the plates which occurs in both *Happy Children* and *Spel en Scherts*. In the English book, a movable of a rowing boat has three articulations, with the boat rocking, the boy oarsman's arm moving, and an oar cutting through the water. In the Dutch book, this is simplified to just the boat rocking. Here, the boy's arm is not separately printed from his body, and the oar visible in the English version is not printed at all: the picture is adapted to make it appear that the boat is being propelled with one oar only which is on the other side of the boat. These versions of the plate would have had different production costs, and one can imagine this playing into negotiations with company representatives from foreign distributors.



Fig. 9 || The cover of *Spel en Scherts* on which the 'CS' trademark is visible.

Conclusion

The interconnected networks of 19th century movable book publishers, exemplified here by the work of Carl Schaller, Capendu, and Dean & Son, reflect the collaborative spirit of European bookmaking during this period. These partnerships not only allowed for cost-effective production and global distribution but also left a lasting legacy of innovation in publishing. By tracing shared designs and mechanisms across languages and regions, we gain a deeper appreciation for the ingenuity and cooperation that defined the golden age of movable books.

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