

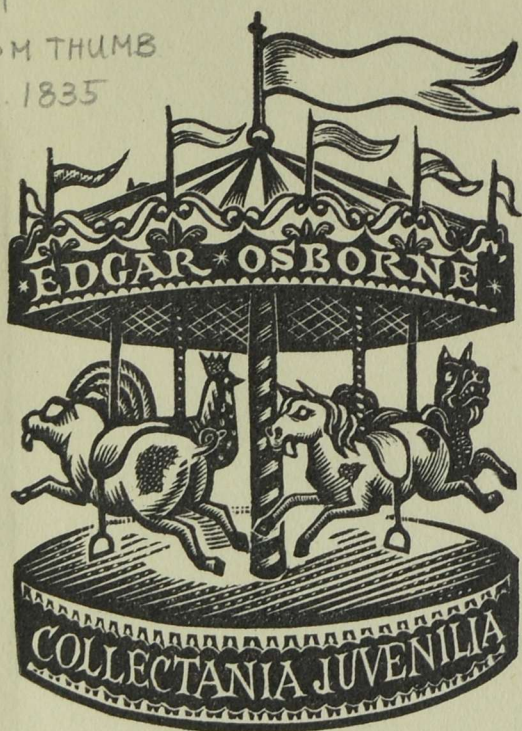
THE
DIVERTING HISTORY
OF
**T O M
T H U M B.**

WITH A
COLOURED ENGRAVING.

DERBY:
THOMAS RICHARDSON.

Price Two-pence.

FT
TOM THUMB
ca. 1835



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Tom escaping out of the Pudding.



Tom and his Hunter in danger.

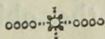
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DERBY:
THOMAS RICHARDSON;
ROBERT SEARS AND CO.,
53, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

TOM THUMB.



IN the days of King Arthur, Merlin, the most celebrated enchanter of his time, was one day on a journey, when, feeling fatigued, he stopped at a cottage to refresh himself; and the cotter's wife, very civilly, brought him a large bowl of bread and milk.

Merlin soon perceived, that though the cotter and his wife seemed to be tolerably well off, yet something seemed to prey upon their spirits; he therefore enquired the reason, and they told him they could not make themselves happy, because they had no children, the woman adding, with tears in her eyes, that she should be the happiest woman in the world, if she had but a son, even if he were no bigger than her husband's thumb.

Merlin was very much amused with the idea of a boy no bigger than a man's thumb; and as soon as he got home, he sent for the Queen of the Fairies, who was an intimate

friend of his, and telling her the circumstance, she relished the joke so highly, that, by the aid of her power, the cottager's wife was very shortly after brought to bed, and gave birth to a son just of that very size.

No sooner was the child born, than the Queen of the Fairies came in at the window, and kissing him, gave him the name of TOM THUMB, after which she furnished him with apparel made in Fairy Land, which she had taken care to bring with her.

An oak-leaf he had for his crown,
His shirt it was by spiders spun,
With jacket wove of thistle's down,
His trowsers up with tags were done.

His stockings of apple rind, they tie
With lash pluck'd from his mother's eye ;
His shoes were made of mouse's skin
Nicely tanned, with the hair within.

Tom never grew any bigger ; but as he got older he became very sly and cunning, which his mother not curing him of, by sufficiently correcting him in proper time, made him, as soon as he got old enough to play with other

boys, when he had lost all his own cherry-stones, creep into their bags and pockets, and help himself, and then come out again to play. But one day, just as he was creeping out of a bag of cherry-stones, the owner chanced to spy him, when crying, "So, master Tom, I have caught you at last!" he popped him into the bag again, and giving the stones a hearty shake, bruised poor Tom from head to foot; when, begging for mercy, he promised never to be guilty of such dirty tricks again.

Soon after this, his mother was making a batter-pudding, when Tom climbed up to the edge of the bowl, to see her mix it; but, his foot slipping, he fell over head and ears into it, which his mother, not seeing, tied up the pudding and put it into the pot to boil. The heat soon made Tom kick the pudding about in so strange a manner, that, thinking it bewitched, she gave it to a tinker who was passing, who put it into his wallet, and trudged on. Tom now began to roar out lustily, which so frightened the tinker, that he threw the pudding over the hedge, and ran off as fast as his fear would let him. The pudding, broken by the fall, set Tom free, who walked home, when his mother kissed him, and put him to bed.

Tom's mother took him with her one day when she went to milk the cow, and it being very windy, she tied him to a thistle. The cow soon after took him and the thistle up at one mouthful, on which, whilst the cow was chewing, Tom roared out "Mother! mother!" as loud as he could. His mother now began to cry; but the cow, hearing such odd sounds, opened her mouth, and let Tom drop, when his mother snatched him up, and clapping him into her apron, ran home with him.

Tom's father having made him a whip of barley-straw, to drive the cattle with, Tom one day, being in the field, slipped into a deep furrow, when a raven picked him up, and flew with him to the top of a giant's castle, by the seaside, where he left him; and old Grumbo, the giant, coming soon after, to walk on the terrace, saw him, and swallowed him, clothes and all. But Tom soon made the giant so ill, that he threw him up again into the sea, when a great fish swallowed him. This fish was soon after caught, and sent as a present to King Arthur, who, when the fish was cut open, at dinner, finding Tom, was so delighted with him, that he made him his dwarf; and he soon became the favourite of the whole court, by

his amusing tricks, frequently playing on the table before the queen and princesses, and the Knights of the Round Table. When the king rode out on horseback, he used to take Tom in his hand, when, if a shower of rain came on, he would creep into the king's waistcoat-pocket, and sleep there till the rain was over. The king asked Tom about his father and mother, and learning they were very poor, he took Tom to his strong chest, and told him to take as much money as he could carry, as a present to his parents. Tom got a little purse, and putting a silver threepence into it, with much ado lifted it on his back, and after walking two days and nights, reached his father's cottage, almost tired to death, having, in that time walked nearly half a mile! His parents were overjoyed to see him, and he remained with them for several days, when he returned to the court of King Arthur, where he played before the king and queen, and lords of the court, at many warlike games; and so eager was he to divert them in this way, that he fell sick, and his life was despaired of.

Just at this time, the Queen of the Fairies came to see him, and finding him poorly, she took him with her to her palace, and soon re-

storing him to health, she let him enjoy the festivities of Fairy Land for several weeks, after which, causing a fair wind to blow, she, with one puff of her breath, blew him into the court of King Arthur. But just as Tom was descending into the court-yard of the palace, the king's cook happening to pass that way with his royal master's great bowl of furmenty, (for King Arther dearly loved furmenty,) poor Tom fell plump into it, splashing the hot stuff into the cook's eyes, and roaring out ten thousand murders, whilst down went the bowl, and all the king's nice hot furmenty with it!

The cook, who was a cross red-faced fellow, told the king he was sure Tom had done it out of pure mischief; on which Tom was taken up, tried, and condemned to lose his head. Tom, hearing this dreadful sentence pronounced, and seeing a miller stand by, with his mouth wide open, took a good spring, and jumped down the miller's throat, without any body, even the miller himself, seeing him go or knowing it.

Tom being missing, the court broke up, and away went the miller to his mill. But Tom did not long leave him at rest; for he began to kick up such an unmerciful capering in the

millers' belly, that he thought himself half bewitched, and sent for a doctor. When the doctor came, Tom began to sing, which so terrified and puzzled the doctor, that he sent off post haste for five more doctors, and twenty physicians. Whilst these were humming and ha'ing, the miller happened to yawn, when Tom gave another jump, and came down on his feet in the middle of the table, and so settled the doubts of the grave personages whom his frolics had assembled. The miller, mad with the torment caused by so little a creature, in a great rage, caught hold of Tom, and opening the window, flung him into the river, when a large salmon swimming by, snapped him up, in an instant. The salmon was soon caught, and sold, in the market, to the steward of a lord, who thinking it a noble fish, made a present of it to the king, who ordered it to be dressed instantly. When the cook cut open the salmon, he found poor Tom, and ran with him directly to the king, who being then busy with state affairs, told the cook to bring him again another day. The cook, resolved to keep his prisoner safe this time, since Tom gave them the slip before, clapped him into a mouse-trap, where he kept him a whole week,

his only amusement being to peep through the wires at the good things he saw around him, but which he was unable to touch. At length the king sent for him, forgave him for throwing down the furmenty, ordered him a magnificent suit of new clothes, and knighted him on the spot.

His shirt was made of butterflies' wings,
His boots were made of chicken-skins ;
His coat and breeches were made with pride,
A taylor's needle hung by his side ;
And a mouse for a horse he used to ride.

When he was thus dressed and mounted, he rode a-hunting with the king and lords of the court, who all laughed heartily at Tom and his fine prancing steed.

As Tom was riding on his mouse by a farmhouse one day, with the king and his nobles, a cat sprang from behind the door, seized the mouse and Tom, and running up a tree, began to devour the mouse ; but Tom boldly drew his sword, and attacked the cat, who then let him fall. When the king and his attendant lords saw Tom fall, they went to help him, and one of the lords caught him in his hat ; but poor

Tom was sadly scratched, and his clothes torn. He was carried home, and placed in a bed of down, in a little ivory cabinet.

The Queen of the Fairies now took him with her to Fairy Land, where he spent many happy years, till he was sent for to the court of King Thunston, whom he thus addressed :

My name is Tom Thumb,
From the fairies I come ;
When King Arthur shone,
This court was my home ;
In me he delighted ;
By him I was knighted ;
Did you never hear of
Sir Thomas Thumb ?

The king was so charmed with this speech, that he gave him a little palace to live in, and a little chair to sit on the royal table in. The queen, jealous of the attention he received, would have destroyed him, but Tom escaped, and getting into the corner of a cupboard, he crept into a cobweb, when a huge spider, taking him to be a fly, attacked him, and after a fierce battle, during which Tom fought very bravely, the spider overcame and killed him !

He fell dead on the ground, where before he
had stood,
And the spider suck'd up the last drop of his
blood!

King Thunston and his whole court went
into mourning for little Tom Thumb. They
buried him under a rose-bush; and raised a
nice white marble monument over him, with
the following epitaph:

Here lies Tom Thumb, King Arthur's knight,
Who died by a cruel spider's bite;
He was well known in Arthur's court,
Where he afforded gallant sport:
He rode at tilt and tournament,
And on a mouse a-hunting went.
Alive, he filled the court with mirth;
His death to sorrow soon gave birth.
Wipe, wipe your eyes, and shake your head
And cry, "Alas! TOM THUMB is dead!"

THE END.

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