

THE HISTORY  
OF  
WHITTINGTON

AND  
HIS CAT.



Price One Penny.



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See Page 19.

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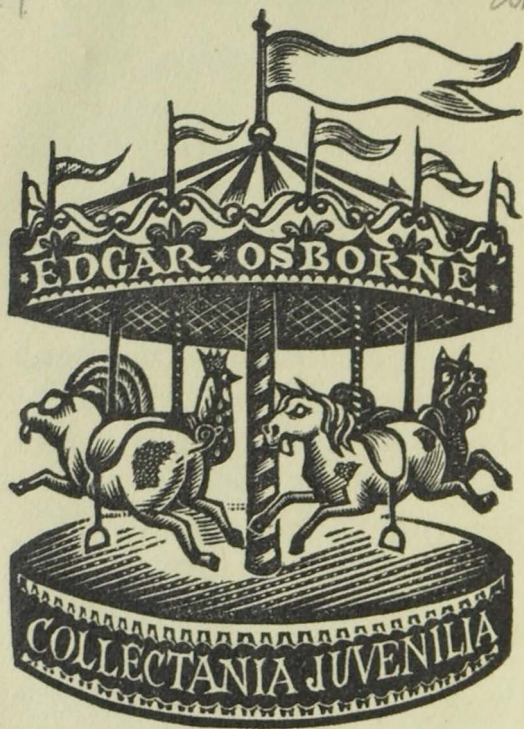
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DICK Whittington was so young when his parents died, that he neither knew them nor where he was born. He strolled about the country as ragged as a colt, till he met a wagoner who was going to London, and he gave him leave to walk all the way by the side of his wagon, without paying any thing for his passage, which obliged little Whittington very much, as he wanted to see London sadly; for he had heard that the streets were paved with gold.





But how great was his disappointment, poor boy, when he saw the streets covered with dirt instead of gold, and found himself in a strange place without money, without friends, and without food!

The wagoner took no farther notice of him when they

reached town; and the little boy being both cold and hungry, asked charity of several people, one of whom bade him go to work for an idle rogue.

“That I will,” says Whittington, “with all my heart: I will work for you if you will let me.” The man, who thought this savoured of wit and impertinence, gave him a blow with a stick, which broke his head, so that the blood ran down. In this situation, and fainting for want of food, he lay down at the door of one Mr. Fitzwarren, a merchant, where the cook

saw him, and being an ill-natured hussy, ordered him to go about his business, or she would scald him. At this time Mr. Fitzwarren came from the Exchange, and also began to scold at the poor boy, bidding him go to work.





Whittington answered, that he should be very glad to work if any body would employ him ; and that he should be able, if he could get some victuals to eat ; that he had got none for three days ; and he was a poor country boy, that knew nobody, and nobody would employ him. He then endeavoured to get up, but being so very weak, he fell down again, which excited so much compassion in the merchant, that he ordered the servants to take him in, and give him some meat and drink, and let him help the cook to do any dirty work.

Whittington would have lived happily, had he not been bumped about by the cross cook, who must always be roasting or basting, and when the spit was still, she employed her hands upon poor Whittington; but Miss Alice, his master's daughter, being in-

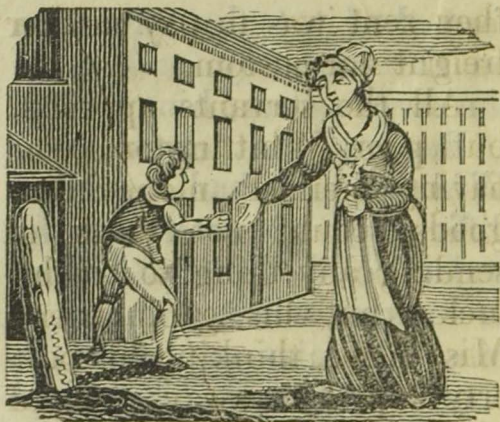


formed of it, took compassion on the poor boy, and made the servants treat him kindly.

Besides the cross cook Whittington had another difficulty to get over; for he had a flock-bed placed for him in a garret, where numbers of rats and mice ran over the poor boy's face, and disturbed him in his sleep.

A gentleman, who came to his master's house, gave Whittington a penny for brushing his shoes, which he determined to lay out to the best advantage.

The next day seeing a woman in the street with a



cat under her arm, he ran up, and prevailed on her to let him have it for a penny.

Soon after this the merchant, who had a ship ready to sail, called for his servants, in order that each of them might venture something to try their luck; and whatever

they sent was to pay neither freight nor custom.

All the servants appeared but poor Whittington, who having neither money nor goods, could not think of sending any thing to try his luck; but his good friend Miss Alice, thinking his poverty kept him away, ordered him to be called. Whittington brought poor puss, and delivered her to the captain with tears in his eyes.

While puss was beating the billows at sea, poor Whittington was severely beaten at home by his tyrannical mistress the cook, who



used him so cruelly, and made such game of him for sending his cat to sea, that at last the poor boy determined to run away from the place. He travelled as far as Holloway, and there sat down upon a stone, now called *Whittington's Stone*: but while he



was thus ruminating, Bow bells, of which there were then only six, began to ring, and, as he thought, addressed him in this manner:

“Turn again, Whittington,  
Lord Mayor of great London.”

“Lord Mayor of London!” said he to himself; “what would not one endure to be Lord Mayor of London, and ride in such a fine coach! Well, I’ll go back again, and bear all the hard usage of Cicely, rather than miss the opportunity of being Lord Mayor.” So home he went again.

The ship with the cat on

board was long beaten about at sea, and at last, by contrary winds, driven on a part of the coast of Barbary, which was inhabited by Moors unknown to the English. These people received our countrymen with civility; therefore, the captain showed them patterns of the goods he had, and sent some of them to the king of the country, who was so pleased, that he sent for the captain and factor to his palace. Here they were placed, according to the custom of the country, on rich carpets flowered with gold and silver; and the king and queen sat at the

upper end of the room. Dinner was brought; but an amazing number of rats and mice came from all quarters, and devoured all the meat in an instant. The factor, in surprise, turned round to the nobles, and asked if these vermine were not offensive. "O yes," said they, "very offensive, and the king would give half his treasure to be free of them; for they not only destroy his dinner as you see, but assault him in his chamber, and even in his bed, so that he is obliged to be watched while sleeping for fear of them."

The factor jumped for joy, and he remembered poor Whittington and his cat; and told the king, he had a creature on board the ship, that would dispatch all these vermin immediately. "Bring this creature to me," says he: "vermin are dreadful in a court; and if she will perform what you say, I will load your ship with jewels in exchange for her." The factor, who knew his business, took this opportunity to set forth the merits of Mrs. Puss. He told his majesty, that it might be inconvenient for him to part with her, as when she was



gone, the rats and mice might destroy the goods in the ship; but that to oblige his majesty he would fetch her. Away flew the factor, while another dinner was providing, and returned with the cat just as the rats and mice were devouring that also. He immediately put down Mrs. Puss, who killed a great part of them, and the rest ran away. The king rejoiced greatly, to see his old enemies destroyed by so small a creature; and the queen was highly pleased, and desired that the cat might be brought near, that she might look at her. Upon

which the factor called, "Pussey, pussey, pussey!" and she came to him: he then presented her to the queen, who started back, and was afraid to touch a creature who made such havock among the rats and mice; however, when the factor stroked the cat, and cried, "Pussey, pussey!" the queen also touched her, and cried, "Puttey, puttey, puttey!" for she had not learned English. He then put her in the queen's lap, when she, purring, played with her majesty's hand, and then sung herself to sleep.

The king having seen the

exploits of Mrs. Puss, and being informed, that she was with young, and would stock the whole country, bargained with the captain and factor for the whole ship's cargo, and then gave them ten times as much for the cat as all the rest amounted to. With which, after taking leave of their majesties, they sailed with a fair wind for England, where we will now attend them.

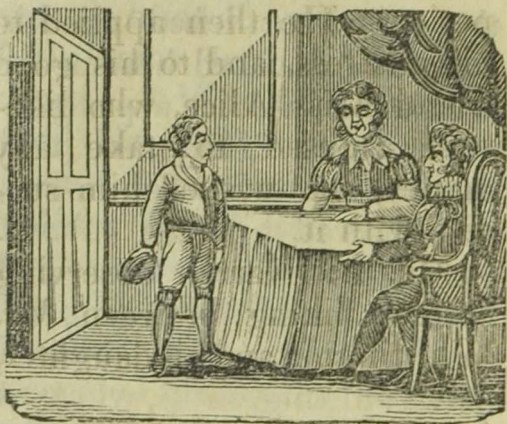
When Mr. Fitzwarren stole from bed, to count over the cash, and settle the business of the day, he had just entered the counting-house, and

seated himself, when somebody came tap, tap, at the door. "Who is there?" says Mr. Fitzwarren. "A friend," answered the other. "What friend can come at this unseasonable time?" says Mr. Fitzwarren. "A real friend is never unseasonable," answered the other: "I come to bring you news of the good ship Unicorn." The merchant bustled up in such a hurry, that he forgot his gout, and instantly opened the door; and who should be seen waiting but the captain and factor, with a cabinet of jewels, and a bill of lading; for which

the merchant lifted up his eyes, and thanked heaven for sending him such a prosperous voyage. They then told him the adventures of the cat, and showed him the cabinet of jewels, which they had brought for Mr. Whittington.

Mr. Fitzwarren ordered Mr. Whittington in, who was at that time cleaning the kitchen, and would have excused himself from going into the parlour. The merchant, taking him by the hand, said, "Indeed, Mr. Whittington, I am in earnest with you, and sent for you, to congratulate you on your success. Your





cat has produced you more money than I am worth in the world, and may you long enjoy it and be happy."

Mr. Whittington laid all his treasure at his master's feet, who refused to take any part of it, but told him he heartily rejoiced at his pros-

perity. He then applied to his mistress, and to his good friend Miss Alice, who likewise refused to take any money, but wished him success with it.

Mr. Fitzvarren observing a good liking between Mr. Whittington and his daughter,



proposed a match between them, to which both parties cheerfully consented; and the Lord Mayor in his coach, court of aldermen, sheriffs, the company of stationers, and a number of eminent merchants, attended the ceremony, and were elegantly treated at an entertainment made for that purpose.

History tells us, that they lived happy, and had several children; that he was sheriff of London in the year 1340, and then Lord Mayor; that in the last year of his mayoralty he entertained King Henry V. and his queen, af-

ter his conquest of France; upon which occasion the king, in consideration of Whittington's merit, said,

“Never had Prince such a subject,” which being told Whittington at table, he replied,

“Never had subject such a King.”

He constantly fed great numbers of the poor. He built a church and a college to it, with a yearly allowance for poor scholars; and near it erected an hospital. He built Newgate for criminals, and gave liberally to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and other public charities.

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