

The Little Man and the Little Maid: a synopsis of texts

The standard reference to the ballad is at no. 326 in Iona and Peter Opie's *Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (new ed. 1997): a mixed version of six stanzas, possibly from Hazen (not seen) but noting an early Strawberry Hill broadside of 1764, just preceding our first item below. The Opies repeat their text in their *Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book* (1955) pp.176-7 as "The Affecting Courtship of the Little Man and the Little Maid", topped by a woodcut from *The Picture Book* (Otley: William Walker ca.1815) but not recorded as being related to the ballad.

The following list is related to items displayed and hence omits some of the versions recorded in the Opie *Dictionary*, while noting others not found there.

1765 *The Fairing: or a golden toy for children of all sizes and denominations...*
London: John Newbery, advertised 1765 (Roscoe J110), here a 1777 ed. from Carnan & Newbery pp. 116-8
Six stanzas with a relief-engraved soft metal headpiece.

ca.1780 *Mother Goose's Melody; or sonnets for the cradle...* London: Thomas Carnan, ad. 1780 (Roscoe J250) here two facsimiles from Francis Power 1791 and John Marshall, second issue ca.1795
Six stanzas with a wood-engraved headpiece by Thomas Bewick after the above

1807 *Memoirs of the Little Man and the Little Maid: with some interesting Particulars of their lives. Never before published.* London: B. Tabart, 1807
Twelve stanzas adapting and extending the original, with twelve hand-coloured copper-engraved illustrations. For the complexities of this edition see Marjorie Moon *Benjamin Tabart's Juvenile Library; a bibliography...* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990 no.109 with an appendix by BA pp. 168-171

ca.1820 *The Cheerful Warbler, or juvenile song book.* York: J. Kendrew n.d.
One of Kendrew's halfpenny books (Davis no.3) p.14
One stanza only (probably from *MGM*), with woodcut headpiece

ca.1830 *Authentic Memoirs of the Little Man and the Little Maid...[as Tabart].* Price sixpence coloured. London: E. Wallis n.d.
Eight stanzas selected from Tabart, each topped with a hand-coloured woodcut

1842 James Orchard Halliwell Esq. ed. *The Nursery Rhymes of England, collected principally from oral tradition.* London: printed for the Percy Society, 1842 (Publication no. XVII) p. 16) in "Class Two: Tales")
Stanzas one and two only, from an untraced source. Unillustrated.

This short version of the ballad becomes the source for most of the subsequent texts appearing in children's nursery rhyme books. It continues through the many new editions of Halliwell's collections, later moving into his Fourteenth Class: Love and Matrimony and carrying his note on the Walpole broadside and the Tabart *Memoirs*. We show a mid-Victorian compendium with a Dalziel wood-engraved illustration.

1846 Edward F. Rimbault ed. *Nursery Rhymes with the Tunes to which they are*

still sung in the Nurseries of England. London: Cramer, Beale & Chappell n.d. p.51. Two stanzas noted as to the same tune as "The Duck and the Drake"

1849-50 *Harry's Ladder to Learning. Part IV. Harry's Nursery Tales.* London: Joseph Cundall (in parts), with David Bogue (in volume form). Two stanzas only (see McLean pp.30 and 69). Copy not present, details from Cotsen copy. This bears no relation to the following item.

1850 *A Treasury of Pleasure Books for Children...* London: Grant & Griffith...and Joseph Cundall, 1850, as the seventeenth 16-page section, with the title "The Courtship and Wedding of the Little Man and the Little Maid". Thirty-four 3-line stanzas with an entirely different narrative content, illustrated with six full-page hand-coloured wood engravings by Walter G. Mason after John Absolon. Later issued as separately published picture books, first by Cundall & Addey in 1851, later by Sampson Low in a "Pleasure Books for Children" series (see McLean p.69).

The Cotsen Coll. has a printing with music published by Routledge ca. 1880 of the first nineteen stanzas of the Grant and Griffith text in a collection: *Song-Land; a series of ditties for small folks*, Set, arranged and composed [well, that covers most contingencies] by William M. Hutchinson. With illustrations by A.W. Cooper, J.B.C., Miriam Kerns (Mrs Percy Weekes), and J. Sadler. Engraved and printed by Edmund Evans.

Various other nursery rhyme collections published after 1850 are displayed, variably illustrated and almost all consisting of the two Halliwell stanzas.