

# Polly Evans' Story Page

## For Boys and Girls

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# TOM, the CHIMNEY-SWEEP

**T**OM was a very dirty little chimney-sweep. He lived in a big city where there were plenty of chimneys to sweep. Tom never washed himself, for there was no water in the court where he lived. He cried half of his time and laughed the other half. He cried when he had to climb the dark flues, rubbing his poor knees and elbows raw; when soot got into his eyes; when his master beat him, and when he had not enough to eat, which happened every day. He laughed the other half of the day, when he was tossing pennies with the other boys or playing leapfrog. Tom never worried about being a chimney-sweep, or being hungry, or being beaten. He said to himself, "When I am a man there is a good time coming."

One day Tom's master, Mr. Grimes, got an order to clean the chimneys at a very grand place, far out in the country, owned by a very rich gentleman. So, at 3 o'clock one summer morning, Tom and his master started out.

Mr. Grimes rode the donkey in front and Tom, with the brushes, walked behind, out of the court and up the street, and soon they had left the city far behind. At last they came to a very grand lodge and Grimes rang at the gate. Out came the keeper at once. They all walked up the great avenue in front of the mansion. Tom as he went along peeped at the sleeping deer, which he had never seen before, nor had he ever seen such big trees. It seemed to him that the sky rested on the tops of them. There was a queer murmuring noise all about, and Tom, much puzzled, asked the keeper what it was.

"The keeper told him it was a great many bees buzzing about the flowers. 'What are bees?' asked Tom, never having heard of bees before. 'They make honey,' said the keeper. 'What is honey?' asked Tom. 'Hold your tongue!' said Grimes.

"Let the boy be," said the keeper. "He is a nice, civil little fellow," and Grimes laughed. "I wish I were a keeper," said Tom, "to live in such a beautiful place and have a real dog-whistle at my button, like you." The keeper laughed and told Tom that some day he might be.

At last they reached the house. Tom swept so many chimneys out that he got very tired and a little mixed up. He came down the wrong chimney and found himself standing on a hearth in a room, the like of which he had never seen before. This room was all white and had pictures on the walls, and he saw a washstand with soap and towels and a large basin full of water on it. He thought, "What a lot of things for washing; she must be a very dirty person who has to wash so much." And then he looked toward the bed, and there he saw the person and held his breath with wonder, for there lay a most beautiful little girl. Her face was almost as white as the pillow, and she had long hair like threads of gold.

### MADE HIM WONDER

Tom wondered whether she was a real live person or a wax doll. "No, she cannot be dirty," thought Tom, and said to himself: "Are all people like that when they are washed?" and he looked at his own dirty fist and tried to rub off some of the soot. "I wish I could look like she does." He looked around and saw standing close to him a little ugly black, ragged figure, with big eyes and grinning white teeth. He soon saw it was himself, reflected in a big looking glass. For the first time in Tom's life he found out he was dirty, and he felt ashamed. As he turned to sneak up the chimney to hide he upset the fender and threw the fire-bricks down with a noise like thunder. Up jumped the little white lady in her bed and, seeing Tom, screamed. In rushed a stout, old nurse, and she

made for Tom, as she thought he had come to rob them. Tom doubled under her arm and across the room, and was out of the window in a moment.

Under the window spread a tree, and down the tree he went like a cat, and across the garden lawn toward the woods, leaving the old nurse screaming murder and fire at the window. The gardener saw Tom and threw down his scythe and gave chase. The dairy maid got the churn

himself, he turned away from the wall and ran on.

On his way he saw spiders who sat on their webs, and lizards, brown and green, and under a rock he saw a great, brown, sharp-nosed fox. She had five little baby cubs around her; they were rolling about and playing with each other. When they saw Tom the mother caught one up in her mouth and the rest came after her, and into a crack in the rock they went. He next had a fright as, whirr, pop-poff, cook-kick, something went off in his face. He thought the ground had blown up, but it was nothing but a big bird.

At last he saw, many, many feet below him, a cool stream, and by the stream he saw a cottage. He came slowly up to the open door and saw inside a nice old woman. When she saw Tom she said:

"Bless your little heart, where did you come from? Come in and eat and I will give you something to eat."

### TOM FELL ASLEEP

So Tom went in, and the woman was kind to him and gave him something to eat, and put him on a sofa to rest. Tom fell asleep and dreamed he heard the little white girl crying to him:

"Oh, you are dirty; go and get washed!" and he cried out loud, again and again:

"I must be clean!"

He got off the sofa, half awake, and crawled out of the cottage to the banks of the brook. He pulled off all his clothes, which was easy enough, they were so ragged, and put his little feet into the water and then his legs. "Ah," he said, "I must be quick and wash myself." So he tumbled himself as quick as he could right into the stream. And he had not been in it two minutes before he fell fast asleep, and when he woke he

found himself swimming about in the stream.

In fact, the fairies led turned Tom into a water baby, and a merry, happy water baby he was, and he was never tired or dirty again.

### The Cat Orchestra

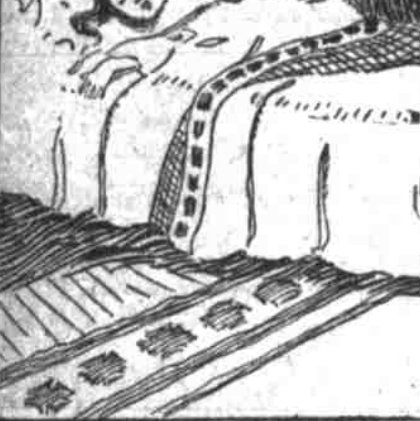
**T**HERE were four of them—Fluffy, Snowball, Tabby and Thomas. But Thomas, the pussy with the glossy black coat, was the clearest of the four. He it was who organized the quartet. The four pussies sang ever so nicely, under the leadership of Thomas, and surely it was only envy that made the Human Beings around them angry. However, this did not prevent the quartet from practicing.

One evening when they had gathered in the big library for a chorus, Thomas suddenly thought that the music was incomplete without the accompaniment of stringed instruments. So he directed the other pussies to twang the viol and violin and guitar t at lay on the couch nearby. He had often seen Human Beings play these instruments, so he knew exactly how it was done. He explained it all very carefully to the other members of the quartet. Then Thomas waved his paw in air as a signal for the music to begin. The next moment, instead of sweet instrumental music mingling with the song of the chorus, there was a succession of snaps and whirrs as the strings broke under the sharp claws of the four pussies. Thomas never found out just what the matter was, for a Human Being sent the quartet flying in all directions, while he said very ugly things about cat choruses in general. Thomas' feelings were greatly hurt.

### Rather Difficult

One of the professors absent-mindedly said the other day, while calling the roll:

"When the names are read out all the boys who are here will answer 'present'; those not present will answer 'absent.'"



## AN "APRIL FOOL" REVENGE

"**J**UST tell you, Skinny, he's grown so all-fired conceited that I can't stand him. What's more, I'm not going to try," firmly announced Billy.

"Oh, I say," pleaded Skinny, "let's give Jerry one more chance. We'll see what the fellows think about it, anyway."

As a result of this conversation, a lumpy and secret meeting of the "Bloody Robbers" was held in Warner's hay-loft. All were present except Jerry Coleman, and especial care was taken

you're right; maybe it's best to try out some of the others. I've had my eye on one fellow in particular. He knows heaps more than any of the rest of us, an' I've no doubt he'd make a superby sort of a leader. Fellars, I nominate Jerry Coleman for captain."

Just about one minute was consumed in the election of Jerry. The vote was unanimous; enthusiasm was unbounded.

Jerry, evidently conscious of his new dignity, strutted over to the

one!" sputtered the "April Fool" captain.

Skinny laughed carelessly. "Oh, say, Jerry; you didn't really think we elected you captain, did you? I thought you would know it was only an April Fool joke."

"Only a-a-a April Fool joke!" stammered Jerry, leaning against the fence for support.

But Skinny had already started off, merrily whistling, leaving Jerry staring blankly after him.

The lad who had been captain for a day sank down by the roadside. For fully five minutes he lay as though he were dead. Then he buried his face in his hands and sobbed violently.

Jerry was not in school that afternoon, nor was he seen by any "Bloody Robber" during the rest of the day.

The "Robbers" didn't get nearly as much fun out of the joke as they had expected. Indeed, one and all confessed that it was "an awful mean thing to do." They hadn't even the satisfaction of knowing that the lesson, cruel though it was, had effected a cure. But it had.



**JERRY THRILLS HIS AUDIENCE**

That Jerry should not hear of the conversation, there was a silence for a moment after Captain Bill Mumford had stated the purpose of the meeting. Then Bill came arose. Bill always formed opinions mighty quickly, and clung to them.

"Fellars," said he, "I think there's a whole lot in what Bill says. Jerry knows more than anybody I've ever known."

"Never made your own acquaintance, then," suggested Joe Stanton.

"And he does less than any one else," continued Bill, disregarding the laugh which Joe's remark had caused.

"April Fool should be the best time of all to cook up some kind of a revenge on Jerry," remarked Skinny, reflectively.

"He added:

"Why not hold a sham meeting the first of April and elect Jerry captain? When he finds out afterward how we fooled him it ought to take some of that monkey business out of him."

Skinny's plan was adopted with acclamation, and the members of the "Bloody Robbers" adjourned to gloat over their intended revenge.

Jerry little suspected the gigantic conspiracy directed against him. So he was surprised not a little when Billy called the meeting to a semblance of order at the appointed time, on April 1, and began:

"Members of the 'Bloody Robbers,' I've asked you to come here so's to elect a new captain. I ain't got no special reason for resignin'. Though I haven't done nearly as good as Skinny did as a captain, still I ain't altogether ashamed of my record. But there are other fellows here who are much more deservin' and I want to give 'em a chance."

"When Billy had seated himself at the conclusion of this announcement, Skinny slowly raised himself to an upright position.

"Well, say, he, 'you do yourself credit. We've never had a better captain, either. But, after all, maybe

## THE TEDDY WHO STOOD ON HIS HEAD



"The old cow jumped the moon," remarked Ted.

"When she should have been snug in her bed."

"But I'm sure it is true. Here's a trick she can't do—"

And the Teddy stood right on his head.

"Little boys think they're smart," said the bear.

"But I wonder if they are aware of the fact that they're not showin' for their credit. I know. Stand all day with your feet in the air."

Said the Fuzzy Dog, "Teddy, my dear, pray take care, there are tacks scattered here."

"Oh, I'm not much afraid. For of plush I am made," Ted replied as he spun on his ear.

"Much more comfort you'd find, if you rose and stood firm and upright on your toes!"

The wise Fuzzy barked:

"But the foolish Ted larked. And for answer just whirled on his nose."

## The Boy Martyr

**I**N THE beautiful churchyard of Grantchester, near Cambridge, England, there is a small slab about a foot square. Close under the shade of a grand old Saxon tower it stands, and it is all that remains to mark the spot where lies the heroic lad whose martyrdom is pathetically told in "The Chorister."

The youth was a choir boy of King's College, and was about 15 years old. Before King's College Chapel was occupied by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers during the civil wars, a faithful band, among whom was the choir boy, had cut out the beautiful stained glass windows and buried them in a secret place.

The boy was seized and brought before Cromwell. He was ordered to reveal the hiding place of the windows, under pain of instant death. He bravely chose death, and, without a trial, was mercilessly shot outside the chapel.

Many visitors come into the churchyard to examine the slab and to talk of the heroic death of the martyred choir boy.

**A Difference.**

James—Toothache again, eh? I'd have the thing pulled out if it were mine.

Joseph—So would I if it were yours.

## Magnetic Experiment

**L**AY an ordinary one-foot rule across the top of a glass. Grasp one end of the rule between the forefinger and the middle finger. Secure a small sheet or plate of hard rubber. Rub it vigorously with a piece of silk to generate electricity. Hold the piece of rubber between the thumb and forefinger of the same

### MATERIALS EMPLOYED

hand in which you grasp the rule.

By touching the rule with the rubber you will find that pieces of paper thrust upon the under side of the other end of the ruler will remain suspended without visible means of support.

The paper, of course, is attracted by the magnetized rule.

## Marie Avoided the Tax

**T**O DRIVE in the magnificent landau with madame was a thing to be proud of, and madame's maid, Marie, was as proud as proud could be.

When they reached the chateau, which was madame's destination, the great lady bade Marie trudge to the neighboring town and purchase some eggs, while she herself paid her call at the chateau.

Marie clutched the coin tightly in her hand and started out upon her errand. For a wonder, she bought the eggs without mishap. Returning, however, she was stopped by the police, who explained that, inasmuch as she had crossed the border of another province, she must pay duty on the eggs before she could return to the chateau at which her mistress was visiting.

Marie was in a quandary. Madame had given her just so much to spend, and she had no more money with her. But she had also been told not to return without the eggs. What should she do? She retired to the place where she had bought the eggs to think it all over. Half an hour later she again appeared before the police. This time she was permitted to pass, inasmuch as no eggs could be found about her person.

"Well, Marie, have you come back with the eggs?" asked madame, when the maid arrived at the chateau.

"Yes, madame, the police wouldn't let me pass with the eggs, they said; but I fooled them—I ate the eggs, and got by without the least bit of trouble!"

Marie was so pleased with what she had done that madame hadn't the heart to scold her brilliant maid.

## Not Treated Right

Jimmy was standing near a hole in the ice, shouting at the top of his voice. To one who approached he explained his grievance. "Johnny's down there," said he, pointing to the hole, "and he won't give me the skates. He's had 'em more than his share of time now."

## Fond of Solitude

"Jesse—I do so like to take long walks all by myself."

Her friend—Oh, so do I. Let's go for one this afternoon!

**A**WAY with all sadness;  
Let mirth come, and gladness—  
Nothing but fooling;  
'Tis the one ruling  
Made by King Jester this day—  
Fol-de-rol, la, tool-de-ray—  
O, hail to the merry Fools' Day!



**Long Lives.**

Boastful Boy—All of our folks live longer than any one else's. My grandfather died when he was 105 years old.

Quiet Boy—That's nothing. My grandfather died at 25.

Boastful Boy—Two hundred and fifty? Say, I'd like you to prove that.

Quiet Boy—Any one will tell you that grandfather died at 25 Main street.

**Already Broken.**

Teacher—Samuel, how many commandments did I say there were?

Samuel—Not any.

Teacher—Why, Samuel! Don't you remember, I said there were ten?

Samuel—Yes, teacher, but you said, too, that every one of 'em was busted long ago.

**A Natural Supposition.**

Ethel (who is clever)—Do you think it true, as Dr. Brown says, that the baby of today has a much better chance of life than the baby of fifty years ago?

Edith (also clever)—Of course; why shouldn't he? The baby of fifty years ago is half a century old now.

**Tried it Before.**

Farmer—You may skate on the pond if you want to, but I warn you it is unsafe.

Small Boy—What's the matter? I skated on it last winter and the ice was all right.