

Those little rhymes we sing once had a different ring

The very term "nursery rhymes" implies these little verses were for children, and many are indeed nothing more than simple riddles, counting songs or jingles to accompany the games and dances of little children. But the sing-song rhythm of the nursery rhyme easily lends itself to teasing chants, and it seems quite safe to say that many of these rhymes were not originally written for children. In fact, research has shown that in their original wording, some were downright unsuitable, unimproving and beyond the comprehension of young children.



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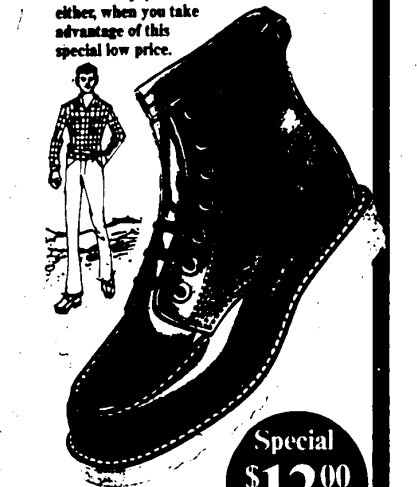
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IN THE DAYS of King Henry VIII of England, there were some dastardly dealings taking place. It seems that a steward named John Horner was sent to London with a pie for the king's Christmas dinner. Baked in this pie were the life deeds to several estates in Somersetshire. John (Jack) Horner "stuck his thumb" in the pie before he got to London. In other words, he stole the king's "plum," which was the land in question. This is the tale that is told in the following rhyme.

Little Jack Horner sat in the corner
Eating his Christmas pie;
He stuck in his thumb
And pulled out a plum,
And cried, "What a bright boy am I!"

This legend becomes more believable when one understands that jewels, letters and all sorts of unlikely things often were baked into pies in those days. It was a favorite trick to hide surprises in pies.

A RARE, OLD recipe book tells how to make a pie with live birds in it so that they may fly out when the pie is cut. This probably accounts for the famous rhyme:

Sing a song of sixpence,
Pick a peck of rye,
Four and twenty blackbirds
were baked into a pie,
When the pie was opened,
The birds began to sing,
Wasn't that a dainty dish to set before the king?

Listen to this one:
Oh, Pearlina Jean,
Oh, Pearlina Jean,
She haunts the lane,
She haunts the green;



And glowers at me
With her evil-evil eyes.

"Pearlina" refers to either the wearing of making of lace. Can't you just picture this ghost with her "evil evil eyes?"

Some rhymes are actually witchcraft incantations or charms to change the weather, protect loved ones, or as in the following charming charm, to turn the butter.

Come butter, come;
Come, butter, come;
Peter stands at the gate,
Waiting for a buttered cake.
Come, butter, come.

You may write Gundalla at Box 634, Garden City, Mich. 48135. For a personal reply, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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Have lunch with us, say St. Bede moms

Mothers of students at St. Bede School, 8200 18 Mile, Southfield will sponsor their 5th and annual salad luncheon and fashion show at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25 in the school gym and social hall. Proceeds will benefit the school.

A smorgasbord of salads made and donated by the mothers, plus dessert and coffee will be served.

The fashion show will be by Mathew et al. of Birmingham and handmade articles will be raffled.

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