The Arthuriad – Volume One

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Jack & Arthur: An Introduction to Jack the Giant-Killer

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The tale of Jack the Giant-Killer is one that has held considerable fascination for English readers. The combination of gruesome violence, fantastic heroism and low cunning that the dispatch of each giant involves gained the tale numerous fans in the eighteenth century, including Dr Johnson and Henry Fielding.[1] It did, indeed, inspire both a farce[2] and a 'musical entertainment'[3] in the middle of that century. However, despite this popularity the actual genesis of Jack and his tale remains somewhat obscure. The present collection of source materials is provided as an accompaniment to my own study of the origins of *The History of Jack and the Giants* and its place within the wider Arthurian legend, published as 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer: Two Arthurian Fairy Tales?', *Folklore*, 118.2 (2007), pp. 123-40.

The curious thing about Jack is that – in contrast to that other fairy-tale contemporary of King Arthur's, Tom Thumb – there is no trace of him to be found before the early eighteenth century. The first reference to him comes in 1708 and the earliest known (now lost) chapbook to have told of his deeds was dated 1711.[4] He does not appear in Thackeray's catalogue of chapbooks in production around 1689, nor is he present in the lists of 'petty books' published in the first years of the eighteenth century, and he was not one of the folk heroes portrayed by puppet showman Robert Powel – as we might have expected him to have been – in Covent Garden at this time.[5] The suspicion must be, in light of this, that Jack is not mentioned before 1708 because he had no existence before this: he was a literary creation of the early eighteenth century, the framing device for a new heroic tale which was created out of pre-existing stories and classic anecdotes.[6] In support of the this is the fact that Jack, unlike some of his victims, is 'except in story-books, unknown' – he has, for example, no genuine place in Cornish folklore that Robert Hunt could discover, despite Hunt's extensive investigations into this material and the clear localisation of Jack's tale there.[7]

If Jack was a literary creation – rather than a genuine figure of folk-tale – whose tale was woven from earlier non-Jack giant-killings and traditions, this naturally raises some intriguing questions about the origins of both these stories of Welsh and Cornish giants

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1 I. Opie and P. Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 61.

2 *Jack the Gyant-Killer: A Comi-Tragical Farce of One Act* (London: J. Roberts, 1730).

3 *An English Musical Entertainment, called Galligantus* (London, 1758).

4 J. O. Halliwell, *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales of England* (London: John Russell Smith, 1849), p. 56 – see below for Halliwell's version of this text.

5 Opie and Opie, *Classic Fairy Tales*, pp. 60-61.

6 See T. Green, 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer: Two Arthurian Fairy Tales?', *Folklore*, 118.2 (2007), pp. 123-40 at pp. 131, 136-37; Opie and Opie, *Classic Fairy Tales*, p. 60.

7 R. Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England. The Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, two volumes (reprint of 1881 edition, Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1993), II, pp. 303-04.

and the actual concept of Jack as the hero who finally rids Britain of these creatures. With regards to this, it is important to note the presence of King Arthur throughout Jack's tale. Thus the *History of Jack and the Giants* is explicitly set from the start in 'the reign of King Arthur', but this is not simply a case of 'In the days of King Arthur…' as a variant of 'Once upon a time…' So, in the course of the tale, Arthur's son becomes both Jack's companion and his master, and the assistance that Jack's renders him leads to a place for Jack as a Knight of the Round Table. Then, after spending a little time as a member of Arthur's court, Jack asks permission to go and rid Britain of all remaining 'blood-thirsty Giants', a proposal which Arthur accepts. Jack – of course – has great success in this endeavour, but he does make sure to send the heads of all the giants he kills to Arthur, along with an account of his deeds. Finally, when the last giant left in Britain is slaughtered, Arthur rewards Jack with an estate and a wife, with whom to live happily ever after.

What all this means is open to debate. Certainly Arthur is not fundamental to the *History*, but his presence is felt throughout much of the narrative. In this context it ought not to be forgotten that the *History* must, after all, have been deliberately written with this role for Arthur planned within it, given its apparent literary origins. The solution, I have argued,[1] may in fact lie with Arthur's well-documented role as the slaughterer of British giants, through a combination of extreme violence, cunning and trickery. This is found in the earliest of Welsh Arthurian tales right through to the folklore of the modern era (see below, pp. 34-44 for a selection of texts illustrative of this). In fact, in Welsh and Cornish folklore of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries it is repeatedly claimed that Arthur was the greatest of all giant-killers, responsible for finally ridding the land of giants. To quote one old Cornish man (living near Land's End, like Jack), whose reminiscences were collected by Robert Hunt at some point in the early-mid nineteenth century, the whole land at one time 'swarmed with giants, until Arthur, the good king, vanished them all with his cross-sword.'[2]

We thus have a situation wherein Jack – who is 'except in story-books, unknown' – possesses that very same role in British mythical history (the exterminator of all remaining Cornish and Welsh giants in Britain) which belongs to Arthur in Cornish and Welsh folklore. Indeed, not only is this folkloric role for Arthur well-attested before Jack's first appearance in the said 'story-books', but the giant-killings attributed to Arthur and his closest companions are of a very similar character to those of Jack. As can be seen from the materials selected for inclusion below, Jack's initial trickery of the Cornish and Welsh giants he encounters is paralleled by similar cunning in some of the Arthurian giant-killings. For example, Arthur is said (in a piece of folklore recorded in the early seventeenth century) to have killed the three sisters of the giant Cribwr at Cefn Cribwr near Llangewydd, Glamorgan, 'through cunning':

> For Arthur nicknamed himself Hot Soup to the first sister, and Warm Porridge to the second sister (so runs the tale), and to the third sister Piece of Bread. And when the first sister called for help against Hot Soup, Cribwr answered, "Silly girl, let it cool." And in the same manner

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1 Green, 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer'.

2 Green, 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer', pp. 132-35; T. Green, *Concepts of Arthur* (Stroud: Tempus, 2007), pp. 112-18; C. Grooms, *The Giants of Wales. Cewri Cymru*, Welsh Studies volume 10 (Lampeter: Edwin Meller, 1993); *Culhwch and Olwen. An Edition and Study of the Oldest Arthurian Tale* edited by R. Bromwich and D. Simon Evans (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), pp. liv-lix; Hunt, *Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, II, p. 307.

> he answered the second sister when she sought help against Hot Porridge. And the third sister cried out that Piece of Bread was choking her, and he answered as well, "Silly girl, take a smaller piece." And when Cribwr reproached Arthur for killing his sisters, Arthur answered with an Englyn Milwr in this form:
>
> > Cribwr [Comber] take your combs.
> > Skulk not in silent wrath.
> > Opponents, if to me they come,
> > What they have had you too shall have.
>
> No one could kill the three sisters together, by reason of the greatness of their strength, but separately and through cunning Arthur killed them.[1]

In the same way, the last Welsh giants that Jack kills are slaughtered through extreme violence, and this too is a feature of Arthur's giant-killing. Thus, for example, his killing of the Giant of Mont St Michel bears close comparison with Jack's deeds. So, Jack strikes at the head of the second giant he meets after setting off from Arthur's court, but misses his aim and so cuts into the giant's face, removing his nose. He then avoids the giant's wild attack, inserts his sword up to the hilt in the giant's 'arse', and laughs out loud as the creature suffers and dies, the giant 'crying out' and 'raving' before finally toppling to the ground in a 'dreadful fall'. Jack then cuts off the giant's head as a trophy for King Arthur. Correspondingly, we are told that Arthur,

> fired with rage... lifted up his sword, and gave him a wound in the forehead, which was not indeed mortal, but yet such as made the blood gush out over his face and eyes, and so blinded him; for he had partly warded off the stroke from his forehead with his club, and prevented its being fatal. However, his loss of sight, by reason of the blood flowing over his eyes, made him exert himself with greater fury, and like an enraged boar against a hunting-spear, so did he rush in against Arthur's sword, and grasping him about the waist, forced him down upon his knees. But Arthur, nothing daunted, slipped out of his hands, and so bestirred himself with his sword, that he gave the giant no respite till he had struck it up to the very back through his skull. At this the hideous monster raised a dreadful roar, and like an oak torn up from the roots by the winds, so did he make the ground resound with his fall. Arthur, bursting out into a fit of laughter at the sight, commanded Bedver to cut off his head, and give it to one of the armour-bearers, who was to carry it to the camp, and there expose it to public view…[2]

It may be relevant in this context that some tellings of this same event include a scene in

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1 Grooms, *Giants of Wales*, p. 311.

2 See p. 35. In the same way, compare Jack cutting off another giant's legs so that he becomes a more manageable foe, later removing his head to send to Arthur, to Arthur slaying 'a great giant named Galapas, which was a man of an huge quantity and height, he shorted him and smote off both his legs by the knees, saying, Now art thou better of a size to deal with than thou were, and after smote off his head' – see p. 37.

which Arthur stabs the giant in the genitals.[1] Even if there is no direct derivation of Jack's killing described above from this specific one of Arthur's, the two slaughters (and slaughterers) are clearly highly similar in nature. Consequently I think it fair to say that Grooms displayed sound judgement when he remarked that the tales of Arthur the giant-killer constitute 'a tradition that precedes and informs the popular chap-book tales of Jack the Giant-killer.'[2] In Arthur we have a figure of genuine folklore and early British story who parallels and pre-dates Jack in both his role and the type of deeds that are ascribed to him. In this light the references to Arthur throughout *The History of Jack and the Giants* – in particular the ritualistic collecting of the giants' heads for return to Arthur – become explicable. I would contend[3] that they ought to be considered as an acknowledgement by the creator of the *History* that Jack's actions were, in fact, ultimately modelled upon those of the Arthur of British mythical history and folklore: Jack was a new final vanquisher of the giants of Britain, designed for an England that was interested such folkloric tales but which would appear to have become bored of Arthur himself by the early eighteenth century (to give one illustrative example, Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* remained out of print from 1634 until the early nineteenth century).

This is not, of course, to say that a knowledge of the Arthurian tradition fully explains Jack's *History* – there are numerous non-Arthurian sources for its incidents and concept of Jack, some of which are referenced in the notes to my transcription of the 1787 text – but rather to suggest that *The History of Jack and the Giants* deserves to be considered as a genuine part of the development of the Arthurian legend, not simply an unrelated fairy tale that happens to be set in 'the reign of King Arthur' as a variant of 'Once upon a time'.

1 See p. 36.
2 Grooms, *Giants of Wales*, p. l.
3 As in Green, 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer', pp. 135-37.

The History of Jack and the Giants (1787)

Introduction

Jack the Giant Killer's tale, *The History of Jack and the Giants*, would seem to have been first published by 1708, although the earliest known chapbook to contain it dates from 1711. This was transcribed by James Orchard Halliwell (later Halliwell-Phillipps) and his version is given in full after the present text. Unfortunately, Halliwell transcribed this now-lost chapbook 'with a few necessary alterations', which is to say that he thoroughly modernised the text and removed elements which he found distasteful.[1] As a result, later eighteenth-century derivatives of the original chapbook – such as the *c.* 1760-65 Shrewsbury chapbook used by the Opies in their edition[2] – are usually relied upon during detailed analysis of the tale.

The following transcript was made by the present writer from a 1787 un-bowdlerised version of the *History*, printed in Falkirk and housed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, which is very similar in most regards to the Opies' Shrewsbury version.[3] The layout adopted below approximates that of the original chapbook, hence its eccentricities; where letters were difficult to decipher, the probable reading has been added in square brackets.

Text

The History of Jack and the Giants.

Of his birth and Parentage, and what past between him and the Country Vicar, &c.

IN the reign of King Arthur, near the Lands-end of England, namely the country of Cornwall there lived a wealthy Farmer, who had one only Son, commonly known by the name of Jack the Giant Killer.[4] He was brisk and of a ready wit; so that whatever he could not perform by strength he compleated by ingenious wit and policy: Never was any

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1 J. O. Halliwell, *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales of England* (London: John Russell Smith, 1849), pp. 56-69 at p.56.

2 I. Opie and P. Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 64-82.

3 It is the earliest version readily available in facsimile, from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, accessible via *infotrac.london.galegroup.com*.

4 The Opies consider 'the Land's end' to be a Cornish turn of phrase, which may be significant in determining where Jack's *History* was created: Opie and Opie, *Classic Fairy Tales*, p. 64. A Cornish origin might also be supported by the fact that the two Cornish giants he kills bear names that were also apparently found in the same or similar forms in Cornish folklore: R. Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England. The Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, two volumes (reprint of 1881 edition, Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1993), I, pp. 46-47, 55-60. The name Jack is a common one for English folkloric heroes, see J. Simpson and S. Roud, *The Oxford Dictionary of English Folklore* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 196-99.

person heard of that could worst him; Nay the very learned many times he baffled by his cunning sharp and ready inventions.[1]

For instance when he was no more than seven years of age his Father, the Farmer, sent him into the field to look after his Oxen, which were then feeding in a pleasant pasture: A country Vicar by chance coming across the field, call'd to Jack, and asked him several questions; in particular, How many commandments were there? Jack told him there were nine. The parson reply'd There are ten. Nay (Quoth Jack.) Master parson, you are out of that, it is true there was ten, but you broke one of them with your own maid Margery. The parson reply'd thou art an arch Wag, Jack. Well Master parson quoth Jack, you have asked me one question, and I have answered it; I beseech you let me ask you another. Who made these Oxen? The parson reply'd, God made them Child. You are out again (quoth Jack) for God made them bulls, but my Father, and his man Hobson, made Oxen of them. These were the witty answers of Jack. The parson finding himself fool'd, truged away leaving Jack in a fit of laughter.

How a Giant *inhabited the Mount of* Cornwall, *spoiled the Country thereabouts,* &c.

IN those days the mount of Cornwall[2] was kept by a Huge and Monstrous Giant, of 27 feet[3] in height, and about three yards in compass, of a fierce and grim countenance, the Terror of all the neighbouring Towns and Villages. His habitation was in a cave, in the midst of the Mount, neither would he suffer any leaving creature to inhabit near him; His feeding was upon other mens cattle, which often became his prey: for whensoever he had occasion for food, he would wade over to the main Land, where he would furnish himself with whatever he could find. For the people at his approach would forsake their habitations; then would seize upon their cows and oxen, of which he would make nothing to carry over on his back half a dozen at a time: and as for the sheep and hogs, he would tye them round his waist like a bunch of bandeliers.[4] This he for many years had practised in Cornwall, which was much impoverished by him.

But one day Jack coming to the Town-Hall, when the Magistrates were sitting in consternation about the Giant; he asked them what reward they would give to any person that would destroy him? They answered He shall have all the treasure in recompence. Quoth Jack, then I myself will undertake the work.

How Jack *slew this* Giant, *and got the name of* Jack *the* Giant *Killer.*

JAck having undertaken this task, he furnished himself with a horn, a shovel, and pick-ax, and over to the Mount he goes, in the beginning of a dark winter evening, where he

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1 B. C. Spooner, 'Jack and Tom in "Drolls" and Chapbooks', *Folklore*, 87.1 (1976), pp. 105-12 at p. 115 suggests that this section derives from the Merry Tales and Quick Answers genre that was popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Halliwell, *Popular Rhymes*, pp. 47-48 includes another similar sequence, attached to the name of 'Jack Hornby'.

2 Hunt, *Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, (I, pp. 46-47; II, pp. 303-04) could find no tale of Jack killing a giant at St Michael's Mount in Cornish folklore, and the giant who did live there in this material was not killed. Given the relationship of Jack and Arthur suggested on pp. 1-4, one must wonder whether the creator of the *History* was inspired to place an initial fatal battle here because the most famous Arthurian giant-killing took place at Mont St Michel in Brittany (see p. 3 for another possible instance of this story influencing that of Jack).

3 In the Opie's and Halliwell's earlier versions of the chapbook, the giant is eighteen feet high.

4 *Bandoliers* are, in this case, the twelve small boxes or cases attached to a soldier's belt (also known as a Bandoleer/Bandolier) which contained charges for a musket: *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. Bandoleer.

fell to work, and before morning had digged a pit two and twenty foot deep, and almost as broad, and cover'd the same over with long sticks and straws: then strowing a little of the mould upon it, so it appeared like plain ground.

This done, Jack places himself on the contrary side of the pit, just about the dawning of the day, when putting his horn to his mouth, he then blew, *Tan Twivie*, *Tan Twivie*. Which unexpected noise rouz'd the Giant, who came roaring towards Jack, crying, thou incorigible villain! are you come here to disturb my rest? You shall dearly pay for it: Satisfaction I will have, and it shall be this; I will take thee wholely and broil you for my breakfast. Which word were no sooner out of his mouth, but he tumbled head-long into the deep pit, whose heavy fall made the very foundation of the mount to shake.[1]

Oh! Giant where are you now? Faith you are gotten in Lob's pond,[2] where I will plague you for your threatening words. What do you think now of broiling me for your breakfast? Will no other diet serve you but poor Jack? Thus having tantaliz'd the Giant for a while he gave him a most weighty knock upon the crown of his head, with his pick-ax, that he immediately tumbled down and gave a most dreadful moan and died. This done, Jack threw the earth in upon him, and so buried him; then going and searching the cave, he found a great quaintity of treasure.

Now when the Magistrates, who employed him, heard the work was over, they sent for him, declaring, that he should henceforth be call'd, Jack the Giant Killer. And in honour thereof they presented him with a Sword, together with a fine rich embroider'd Belt, on which these words were wrought in letters of gold.

> Here's the right valiant Cornish Man,
> Who slew the Giant Cormilion.[3]

How Jack was taken by a Giant while asleep, and how he got his liberty again.

THE news of Jack's victory was soon spread over all the western parts; so that another huge Giant Named Blunderboar,[4] hearing of it, vow'd to be revenged on Jack, if ever it

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1 The use of a pit appears to have been a traditional method of disposing of giants. Hunt, *Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall* (I, pp. 71-72), in the nineteenth century, tells of a giant killed at Morva in Cornwall by a similarly concealed hole. This was done by a man named Jack the Tinkeard – not another name for our Jack, but a different character, at least in the tales we have of him – who was required to kill this giant by his prospective father-in-law. If this story goes back to before the beginning of the eighteenth century then this story and character, despite their later lack of relation, might well be seen as a source for Jack the Giant-Killer and this specific giant-killing. However, we unfortunately have no way of proving this at present, and the opposite – that the Morva method of dispatch derives from the *History*, attracted to a similarly named character – may be true instead (as noted by B.C. Spooner, 'The Giants of Cornwall', *Folklore*, 76.1 (1965), pp. 16-32 at p. 27). The use of a hole to kill a giant is not, of course, a method confined to just Cornwall, and it is indeed known from the Arthurian legend too; Arthur's men used a similar method to defeat the giant Dillus in *Culhwch ac Olwen* (see p. 34), and this tale appears to have it origins in Welsh folklore: T. Green, *Concepts of Arthur* (Stroud: Tempus, 2007), pp. 115-16; C. Grooms, *The Giants of Wales. Cewri Cymru*. Welsh Studies volume 10 (Lampeter: Edwin Meller, 1993), pp. 167-68; *Culhwch and Olwen. An Edition and Study of the Oldest Arthurian Tale*, edited by R. Bromwich and D. Simon Evans (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992), pp. lvii-lviii, 148.

2 Lob's Pond = Lob's Pound, 'prison, jail'. Lob means in this context a 'lout': *OED*, s.v. Lob's Pound; Lob, n^2.

3 *Cormilan* in the Opie's Shrewsbury chapbook; *Cormelian* in Halliwell's transcript of the 1711 chapbook.

4 *Blunderboar* in the Shrewsbury chapbook; *Thunderbore* in Halliwell's transcript of the 1711 chapbook. This creature is presumably related to the Blunderbuss of Cornish folklore, whom a certain Tom kills in a Cornish folktale recorded by Hunt: *Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, I, pp. 55-9.

was in his fortune to light upon him. This Giant kept an inchanted Castle, situated in the midst of a lonesome wood: Now Jack about four months after walking near the borders of the said wood, on his journey towards Wales, he grew very weary and therefore sat himself down by the side of a pleasant fountain,[1] where a deep sleep suddenly seiz'd on him; at which time the Giant coming there for water, found him, and by the Lines written upon his belt, knew him to be Jack that kill'd his brother Giant, and therefore without making any words, he throws him upon his shoulder, for to carry him to his inchanted castle.

Now as they passed through a thicket the rustling of the boughs awak'd poor Jack, who finding himself strangely surprised, yet it was but the beginning of his terrors; for he beheld the ground all cover'd with bones and skulls of dead men. The Giant telling Jack that his bones would enlarge the number that he saw. This said, he brought him into a large parlour where he beheld the bloody quarters of some that were lately slain, and in the next room were many hearts and livers: which the Giant to terrify Jack, told him, "that mens hearts and livers were the choicest of his diet, for he commonly (as he said) eat them with pepper and vinegar: adding, that he did not question but his heart would make him a dainty bit." This said, he locks up poor Jack in an upper room leaving him there, while he went to fetch another Giant, living in the same wood, that he might be partaker in the pleasure which they would have in the destruction of poor Jack.

Now, while he was gone, dreadful shrieks and cries affrighted Jack, especially a voice which continually cried. This dreadful noise so affrighted poor Jack, that he was ready to run distracted, then seeing from a window afar off, the two Giants coming together; now (quoth Jack to himself,) my death or deliverance is at hand.

There was strong cords in the room by him, of which he takes two, at the end of which he made a noose; and while the Giant was unlocking the iron gate, he threw the ropes over each of their heads, and then drawing the other end across the beam, where he pulled with all his main strength until he had throatled them; and then fastening the rope to the beam, turn'd towards the window, where he beheld the two Giant's to be black in their faces; Then sliding down by the rope he came close to their heads, where the helpless Giants could not defend themselves, and drawing out his sword, slew them both and delivered himself from their intended cruelty: He then taking the bunch of keys, he unlock'd the rooms, where upon a strict search, he found three fair Ladie's ty'd by the hair of their heads, almost starved to death, who told Jack, That their husbands was slain by the Giant, and that they were kept many days without food: in order to force them to feed upon the flesh of their husbands; which they could not, if they were starved to death.

Sweet Ladies, (quoth Jack) I have destroyed this Monster, and his brutish brother, by which I have obtained your liberties. This said, he presented them with the keys of the casile, and so proceeded on his journey into Wales.

How Jack travelled into Flintshire, and what happened

JACK having but very little money, thought it prudent to make the best of his way by travelling as fast as he could, but losing his road was benighted and could not get a place of entertainment; until he came to a valley, placed between two hills where stood a large

[1] At this point Halliwell quotes the following description directly from the 1711 text: 'o'ercanopied with luscious woodbine' (see p. 20). This description is missing from both the Shrewsbury and Falkirk versions, which indicates that both their texts, whilst certainly closely related to that of the lost 1711 chapbook, are at least one step removed from that of the original *History*.

house in a lon[e]some place, and by reason of his present condition, he took courage to knock at the gate; and to his surprise there came forth a monstrous Giant, having two heads; yet he did not seem so fiery as the others had been, for he was a Welsh Giant, and what he did was by private and secret malice under the false shew of friendship; for Jack telling his condition he bid him welcome shewing him a room with a bed in it, whereupon he might take his night's repose: Therefore jack undresses himself, and as the Giant was walking away to another apartment, Jack heard him mutter these words to himself.

> Tho' here you lodge with me this night,
> You shall not see the morning light,
> My club shall dash your brains out right.

Say'st though so, quoth Jack, that is like one of your Welsh tricks, yet I hope to be cunning enough for you. Then getting out of bed, he put a billet in his stead and hid himself in a corner of the room, and in the dead time of the night, the Welsh Giant came with his great knotty club, and struck several blows upon the bed where Jack had laid his billet, and then returned to his own chamber supposing he had broken all the bones in his body.[1]

In the morning Jack gave him a hearty thanks for his lodging. The Giant said to him, how have you rested? Did you not feel something in the night? Nothing (quoth Jack) but a rat which gave me three or four slaps with her tail. Soon after the Giant arose, and went to breakfast with a bowl of hasty pudding, containing near four gallons, giving Jack the like quantity; who, being loath to let the Giant know he could not eat with him, got a large leather-bag putting it artfully under his loose coat, into which he secretly conveyed his pudding, telling the Giant, he could show him a trick; Then taking a large knife, he ripped open the bag, which the Giant supposed to be his belly, when out came the hasty pudding; At which the Welsh Giant, cried out, Cuts plut, hur can do dat trick hurself.[2] Then taking his sharp knife, he ripped up his own belly, from the bottom to the top, and out dropped his tripes and troly bags,[3] so that hur fell down for dead: thus Jack outwitted the Giant, and proceeded on his journey.[4]

How King Arthur's Son met with Jack, &c.

KING Arthur's Son,[5] only desired of his Father to furnish him with a certain sum of money, that he might go and seek his fortune in the principality of Wales, where a

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1 It is often suggested that this sequence derived ultimately from Norse and Germanic mythology/folklore: Opie and Opie, *Classic Fairy Tales*, p. 58; Halliwell, *Popular Rhymes*, pp. 56-57; H. Weiss, 'The Autochthonal Tale of Jack the Giant Killer', *The Scientific Monthly*, 28.2 (1929), pp. 126-33 at pp. 129-32. However, Weiss notes that such substitution is a common motif found in French, Italian, and Persian tales (p. 132).

2 M. S. Kirch, 'Note on the History of Jack and the Giants', *Modern Language Notes*, 69.1 (1954), p. 44, suggests this is a corruption of 'God's Blood', with the 'hur' being used to suggest an imperfect command of the English language.

3 *OED*, s.v. Trollibags, 'entrails, intestines'. Note that the *OED* records the first print usage as 1824, which this instance obviously significantly predates.

4 This method of trickery and dispatch is paralleled again in Scandinavian folk-tale: Opie and Opie, *Classic Fairy Tales*, pp. 58-59.

5 Numerous sons of Arthur are known from the medieval Arthurian legend – including Amr, Llacheu, Loholt and Gwydre – but there is no reason to think that any specific son is intended here.

beautiful Lady lived, whom he heard was possessed with seven evil spirits; But the King his Father advised him utterly against it, yet he would not be persuaded from it; so that he granted what he requested, which was one horse loaded with money, and another for himself to ride on; thus he went forth without any attendance.

Now after several days travel, he came to a market town in Wales, where he beheld a large concourse of people gathered together; the King's Son demanded the reason of it, and was told, that they had arrested a corpse for many large sums of money, which the deceased owed when he dy'd. The King's Son reply'd it is a pity that creditors should be so cruel, so bury the dead (said he) and let his creditors come to my Lodging, and their debts shall be discharged. Accordingly they came, and in such great number, that before night he had almost left himself moneyless.

Now Jack the Giant Killer being there, and seeing the generosity of the King's Son, he was taken with him, and desired to be his servant; it was agreed upon the next morning they set forward, when at the town end, an old woman called after them, crying out, he was ow'n me two pence these five years: pray Sir, pay me as well as the rest? He puts his hand into his pocket, and gave it her, it being the last he had left, then the King's Son turning to Jack, said, I cannot tell how I shall subsist in my intended journey. For that (quoth Jack) take you no thought nor care let me alone, I warrant you we will not want.[1]

Now Jack having a small spell in his pocket, which served at noon to give them a refreshment, when done, they had not one penny left betwixt them; the afternoon they spent in travel and familiar friendly discourse, 'till the sun began to grow low, at which time, the King's Son said, Jack, since we have no money, where can we think to lodge this night? Jack reply'd, Master, we'll do well enough. For I have an uncle lives within two little miles of this place, he's a hudge and monstrous Giant[2] with three heads; He'll fight five hundred men in armour, and make them to fly before him. Alas! (quoth the King's Son) what shall we do there, he'll certainly chop us both up at one mouthful! Nay, we are scarce enough to fill one of his hollow teeth. It is no matter for that (quoth Jack,) I myself will go before, and prepare the way for you; therefore tarry here, and wait my return.

He waits, and Jack rides full speed, when coming to the Gates of the castle, he knock'd with such force, that he made all the neighbouring hills resound. The Giant with a voice like thunder, roared out; who's there? He answered, none but your poor cousin Jack[3] quoth he, what news with my poor cousin Jack? He replied, dear uncle, heavy news; God wot prithee what heavy news can come to me? I am a Giant, with three heads; and besides thou knows I can fight five hundred men in Armour and make them fly like

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1 This is generally thought to represent a version of The Grateful Dead theme. The earliest version of this appears in the Biblical 'Book of Tobit', but it is frequently to be found in the folklore of many countries. At its core it involves a dead man's corpse being denied burial by his creditors. These are eventually paid-off by someone – the son of Arthur in this instance – with the corpse then becoming the servant of this person; in this telling, Jack takes the dead man's place as the servant. We also find this theme expressed in Peele's sixteenth-century play *The Old Wives Tale*, but here the corpse retains his original role as the servant after the creditors are paid off, with the corpse's name being revealed to be – most intriguingly – Jack. See K. M. Briggs, 'Possible Mythological Motifs in English Folktales', *Folklore*, 83.4 (1972), pp. 265-71 at p. 270; F. H. Groome, 'Tobit and Jack the Giant-Killer', *Folklore*, 9.3 (1896), pp. 226-44. For further possible evidence of some influence from Peele's *Old Wives Tale* on Jack's *History*, see the notes below.

2 Another example of a giant-killer with gigantic relatives is Arthur, whose wife, son, nephew and closest companion all seem to have been considered giants at some point, see Green, *Concepts of Arthur*, pp. 143, 154-55, 170. Indeed, Arthur's father too appears in some Cornish lore as a giant: J. H. Harris, *Cornish Saints and Sinners* (London: Bodley Head, 1906).

3 Presumably an early usage of 'Cousin Jack', a 'familiar name for a Cornishman' (*OED*, s.v. Jack, n.[1]).

chaff before the wind. Oh! but (quoth Jack) here's the King's Son coming with a thousand men in Armour to kill you, and so to destroy all that you have. Oh! Cousin Jack, this is heavy news indeed; I have a large vault under the ground, where I will immediately hide myself, and thou shalt lock, bolt and bar me in, and keep the keys till the King's Son is gone.

Now Jack having secured the Giant, he soon returned and fetched his master, and were both heartily merry with the wine, and other dainties which were in the house: So that night they rested in very pleasant lodgings, whilst poor Uncle the Giant, lay trembling in the vault under ground.

Early in the morning Jack furnished his master with a fresh supply of gold and silver, and then set him three miles forward on his journey; concluding he then was pretty well out of the smell of the Giant, and then returned to let his Uncle out of the hole: Who asked Jack what he should give him in reward his castle was not demolished. Why (quoth Jack) I desire nothing but the old coat and cap together with the old coat and slippers, which are at your bed-head. Quoth the Giant, thou shalt have them, and pray keep them for my sake, for they are things of excellent use. The coat will keep you invisible; the cap will furnish you with knowledge; the sword cuts in sunder whatever you strike; and the shoes are of extraordinary swiftness: These may be serviceable to you, and therefore pray take them with all my heart. Jack takes them, thanking his Uncle and follows his master.[1]

How Jack saved his Master's Life and Drove the evil Spirit out of a Lady, &c.

JACK having overtaken his master, they soon after arrived at the Lady's house: who finding the King's Son to be a suitor, she prepared a banquit for him; which being ended, she wiped his mouth with her handkerchief saying, you must shew me this once to morrow morning, or else lose your head: And with that she put it into her own bosom.

The King's Son went to bed very sorrowful, but Jack's cap of Knowledge instructed him how to obtain it. In the middle of the night she called upon her familiar spirit to carry her to her friend Lucifer, Jack soon put on his coat of darkness, with his shoes of swiftness, and was there as soon as her, by reason of his coat they could not see him. When she entered the place she gave the handkerchief to old Lucifer, who laid it upon the shelf; from whence Jack took it, and brought it to his master, who shewed it to the Lady the next day, and so saved his Life.

The next night she saluted the King's Son, telling him, he must shew her to morrow morning, the lips that she kissed last, this night, or lose his head. Ah! (reply'd he) if you kiss non but mine, I will, 'tis neither here nor there (said she) if you do not, death's your portion. At midnight she went as before, and was angry with Lucifer for letting the handkerchief go; But now (said he) I will be too hard for the King's Son, for I will kiss thee, and he's to shew thy Lips; which she did, Jack standing near him with his sword of sharpness, cut off the devil's head, brought it under his invisible coat to his master, who was in bed, and laid it at the end of his bolster. In the morning, when the Lady came up, he pulled it out by the horns, and shewed her the devil's lips which she kissed last.

Thus hav[i]ng answered her twice, the enchantment broke, and the evil spirit left her; at which time she appeared in all her beauty, a beautiful and virtuous creature. They were married the next morning, in great pomp and solemnity, and soon after they returned with a numerous company to the court of King Arthur, where they were received with

[1] These items are often cited as further evidence for the influence of Scandinavian or Germanic mythology on the tale of Jack: Opie and Opie, *Classic Fairy Tales*, p. 59; Weiss, 'Jack the Giant Killer', p. 130.

the greatest Joy, and loud acclamation by the whole court. Jack for his many and great exploits he had done for the good of his country, was made one of the knights of the round Table.

Thus we have finished the first part of this History which now leads us to the second part, wherein you have a more full account of the many valiant and wonderful exploits which was done by the bold adventures of this great and valiant HERO, Jack the Giant Killer.[1]

The SECOND Part.

How Jack by King Arthur's leave went in pursuit of Giants yet alive, &c.

JACK having been successful in all his undertakings, and resolved not to be idle for the future; but to perform what service he could for the honour of his King and country; he humbly requested of the King his royal master, to fit him with a horse and money, to travel in search of strange and new adventures: For, said he, there are many Giants yet alive in the remote parts of the kingdom, and the dominions of Wales, to the unspeakable damage of your Majesty's liege subjects; wherefore may it please your Majesty to give me encouragement, and I doubt not but in a short time to cut them of root and branch, and to rid the realm of those cruel Giants, and devouring monsters of nature.[2]

Now when the King had heard these noble propositions and had duly considered the mischevious practices of those blood-thirsty Giants: He immediately, granted what honest Jack requested, and on the first day of March, being thoroughly furnished with all the necessaries for his progress, he took leave, not only of King Arthur, but likewise of all the trusty and hardy Knights belonging to the round Table,[3] who after much salutation and friendly greeting they parted, the King and his nobles to their courtly palaces, and Jack the Giant Killer to the eager pursuit of fortune's favours, taking with him the cap of knowledge, sword of sharpness, shoes of swiftness, and likewise the invisible coat, the better to perfect and complete the dangerous enterprizes that lay before him.

How Jack slew a Giant, and delivered a Knight and his Lady from death

JACK travelling over vast hills and wonderful mountains, when at the end of three days, he came to a large and spacious wood through which he must needs pass, where on a sudden to his great amazement he heard dreadful shrieks and cries: Whereupon casting his eyes around to observe what it might be, beheld with wonder, a Giant rushing along with a worthy knight and his fair lady, which he held by the hair of their heads in his hands, with as much ease, as if they had been but a pair of gloves; the sight of which melted poor Jack into tears of pity and compassion: wherefore, alighted off from his horse; which he left tied to an oak tree, and then putting on his invisible coat, under

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1 This paragraph is missing in both the 1760s chapbook used by the Opies and Halliwell's transcript of the 1711 text.

2 As discussed on pp. 1-2, although Jack takes this role here, it actually belongs to Arthur in Welsh and Cornish folklore.

3 Interestingly, these two mentions of the 'Round Table' are the only elements of the international 'literary' Arthurian legend found in Jack's History. Compare this situation with that of *Tom Thumbe, His Life and Death*, which includes Merlin, Lancelot, Tristram and a jousting tournament: see Green, 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant Killer' for some further comment.

which he carried his sword of sharpness, he came up to the Giant and though he made several passes at him: yet nevertheless, it could not reach the trunk of his body, by reason of his height, tho' it wounded his thighs in several places: but at length giving him a swinging stroke, he cut off both his legs, just below the knees,[1] so that the trunk of his body, made not only the ground to shake, but likewise the trees to tremble with the force of his fall, at which by mere fortune, the knight and his lady escaped his rage, then had Jack time to talk with him, setting his foot upon his neck said, thou savage and barbarous wretch, I am come to execute upon you the just reward of your villany. And with that running him through and through, the monster sent forth a hideous groan, and yielded up his life, into the hands of the valiant conqueror; Jack the Giant killer, while the noble Knight and virtuous lady were both joyful spectators of his sudden downfall, and their deliverance.

This being done, the courteous Knight and his fair lady, not only returned him hearty thanks for their deliverance, but also invited him home, there to refresh himself after the dreadful encounter; as likewise to receive some ample reward by way of gratitude for his good service. No quoth Jack, I cannot be at ease till I find out the den which was this monsters habitation. The Knight hearing this, waxed right sorrowful and reply'd, noble stranger, it is too much to run a second risk, for this noted monster lived in a den under yon mountain, with a brother of his, more fierce and fiery than himself; and therefore if you should go hither and perish in the attempt, it would be the heart breaking of both me and my lady, here let me persuade you to go with us and desist from any farther pursuit: Nay, quoth Jack, if there be another; nay, if there were twenty I would shed the last drop of my blood in my body, before one of them shall escape my fury, and when I have finished this task, I will come and pay my respects to you. So taking directions to their habitation, he mounted his horse, leaving them to return home, while he went in pursuit of the deceased Giants brother.

How Jack slew the other Giant, and sent both their heads to King Arthur

JACK had not rode past a mile and a half before he came in sight of the cave's mouth, near to the entrance of which he beheld the other Giant, sitting upon a huge block of timber, with a knotted iron club lying by his side, waiting as, he supposed, for his brother's return with his cruel prey; his gogle eyes appeared like terrible flames of fire, his countenance grim and ugly, and his cheecks appeared like a couple of large fat flitches of bacon: moreover the bristles of his head seem'd to resemble rods of iron wire; his locks hung down upon his broad shoulders, like curled snakes or hissing adders.

Jack alighted from his horse, and put him into a thicket, then with his coat of darkness he come somewhat near to behold his figure, and said softly, Oh! are you there? It will not be long e'er I take you by the beard. The Giant all this time could not see him by reason of his invisible coat, so coming up close to him, valiant Jack fetching a blow at his head with his sword of sharpness, and missing somewhat his aim, cut off the Giant's nose, whose nostrils were wider than a pair of jack-boots; the pain was terrible and so he put up his hand to his nose, and when he could not find it, he rav'd and roar'd louder than claps of thunder: and tho' he turn'd up his large eyes, he could not see from whence the blow came, which had done him that great disaster; nevertheless he took up his iron knotted club, and began to lay about him like one stark mad: Nay, quoth Jack, if you be for that sport, then I will dispatch you quickly, for fear of an accidental blow falling out.

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[1] Compare here Arthur's treatment of Golopas/Galapas, see p. 37.

Then as the Giant rose from his block, Jack makes no more to do, but runs his sword up to the hilt in the Giant's fundament, where he left it sticking for a while and stood laughing with his hands a kim bow to see the Giant caper and dance the canaries with his sword in his arse, crying out, he should die, he should die, with the gripping of his guts. Thus did the Giant continue raving for an hour or more, and at length fell down dead whose dreadful fall had like to have crushed poor Jack, had he not been nimble to avoid the same.

This being done, Jack cut off both the Giant's heads and sent them both to King Arthur by a waggoner, whom he hired for the same purpose, together with an account of his prosperous success in all his undertakings.[1]

How Jack searched their cave, and delivered many men out of captivity.

JACK having thus dispatch'd these two monsters, resolved with himself to enter the cave in search of these Giants treasure; he passed along through many turnings and windings which led him at length to a room paved with free stone, at the upper end of which was a boiling cauldron, then on the right hand stood a large table; where (as he supposed) the Giants used to dine, then he came to an iron gate, where was a window secured with bars of iron, through which he looked, and there beheld a vast many miserable captives; who seeing Jack at a distance, cried out with a loud voice, Alas! young man, art thou come to be one amongst us in this miserable den? Ay, quoth Jack, I hope I shall not tarry long here: but pray tell me what is the meaning of your captivity? why, said one, young man, I'll tell you, we are persons that have been taken by the Giants that keep this cave, and here we are kept until such time as they have occasion for a particular feast, and then the fattest amongst us is slaughtered, and prepared for their devouring jaws: it is not long since they took three of us for the same purpose: nay, many are the times they have dined on murdered men. Say you so quoth Jack, well, I have given them both such a dinner, that it will be long enough e'er they'll have occasion for any. The miserable captives were amazed at his words: You may believe me, quoth Jack, for I have slain them both with the point of my sword, and as for their monstrous heads I sent them in a wagon to the court of King Arthur, as Trophies of my unparallel'd victory. And for testimony of the truth he had said, he unlock'd the iron gate setting the miserable captivity at liberty, who all rejoiced like condemned malefactors at the sight of a reprieve: then leading them all together to the aforesaid room, he placed them round the table, and set before them two quarters of beef, as also bread and wine, so that he feasted them very plentifully, supper being ended, they searched the Giant's coffers, where finding a vast store of gold and silver, Jack equally divided it amongst them: they all returned him hearty thanks, for their treasure and miraculous deliverance. That night they went to their rest, and in the morning they arose and departed, the captives to their respective towns and places of abode; and Jack to the knight's house, whom he had formerly delivered from the hand of the Giant.

How Jack came to the Knight's house, and his noble Entertainment there, &c.

IT was about Sun rising when Jack mounted his horse to proceed on his journey, and by the help of his directions he came to the Knight's house some time before noon: where

[1] As noted on p. 3, this incident has a number of points of similarity with Arthur's killing of the giant of Mont St Michel.

he was received with all demonstrations of joy imaginable by the Knight and his lady, who in honourable respect to Jack prepared a feast, which lasted for many days, inviting all the gentry in the adjacent parts, to whom the worthy Knight was pleased to relate the manner of his former danger, and the happy deliverance, by the undaunted courage of Jack the Giant Killer: And by way of gratitude, he presented him with a Ring of gold on which was engraven by curious art, the picture of the Giant dragging a distressed Knight and his fair Lady by the hair of the head, with this Motto.

We are in sad distress you see,
Under a Giant's fierce command;
But gain'd our Lives and Liberty,
By valiant Jack's victorious hand.

Now amongst the vast assembly there present, were five aged Gentleman who were fathers to some of those miserable captives, which Jack had lately set at liberty; who understanding that he was the person that performed those great wonders, they immediately paid their venerable respects: After which their mirth encreased; and the smiling bowls went freely round to the prosperous success to the victorious conqueror. But in the midst of all mirth, a dark cloud appeared, which daunted all the hearts of the assembly. Thus it was, a messenger brought the dismal tidings of the approach of one Thunderdel,[1] a huge Giant with two heads; who having heard of the death of his kinsmen, the above named Giants; was come from the Northeren poles in search after Jack to be revenged of him for their most miserable downfal, and was within a mile of the Knight's seat, the country people flying before him, from their houses and habitations like chaff before the wind. When they had related this, Jack not a whit daunted, said, let him come, I am prepared with a tool to pick his tooth, and you gentlemen and ladies, walk but forth into the garden, and you shall be the joyful spectators of this monstrous Giant's death and destruction. To which they all consented, every one wishing him good fortune in that great and dangerous enterprize.

How Jack overthrew the Giant in the Moat.

THE situation of the Knight's house take as follows: It was placed in the midst of a small island, encompassed round with a vast moat, thirty feet deep, and twenty feet wide, over which lay a draw bridge. Wherefore Jack employed two men to cut it on both sides, almost to the middle; and then dressing himself in his coat of darkness, likewise putting on his Shoes of swiftness, he marches forth against the Giant, with his sword of sharpness ready drawn; yet when he came close to him, the Giant could not see Jack by reason of his invisible coat which he had on, yet nevertheless he was sensible of some approaching danger, which made him cry out in these words.

Fe, Fi, Fo, Fum,
I smell the blood of an Englishman;
Be he living or be he dead,
I'll grind his bones to mix my bread.[2]

[1] This name is *Thunderdel* in the Shrewsbury chapbook and *Thunderdell* in Halliwell's transcription of the 1711 Newcastle chapbook.

[2] As the Opies note, this is a formula common to most British blood-thirsty giants, back to Red Etin in 1528: 'Snouk but and snouk ben, / I find the smell of an earthly man; / Be he living or be he dead, / His heart this night shall kitchen my bread' (Opie and Opie, *The Classic Fairy Tales*, p. 78). Interestingly,

Says thou so quoth Jack, then thou art a monstrous Miller indeed: But how if I should serve thee as I did the two Giants of late, in my conscience I should spoil your practice for the future. At which the Giant spoke with a voice as loud as thunder: Art thou that villian which destroyed my two kinsmen? Then will I tear thee with my teeth, suck thy blood and what is more, I will grind thy bones to powder. You must catch me first quoth Jack; and with that he threw off his coat of darkness that the Giant might see him clearly, and then run from him as through fear. The Giant with a foaming mouth, and glaring eyes, following after like a walking castle, making the foundations of the Earth, as it were, to shake at every step, Jack led him a dance three or four times around the moat that belonged to the Knight's house, that the gentlemen and ladies might take a full view of this huge monster of nature, who followed Jack with all his might but could not overtake him by reason of his shoes of swiftness: [which] carried him faster than the Giant could [follow;] at length Jack to finish the work took [over the] bridge, wh[at] with the weight of his bo[d]y [an]d the most dreadful steps that he took, it broke down, and he tumbled into the water, where he roll'd and wallow'd like a whale. Jack standing at the side of the moat, laugh'd at the Giant and said you told me you would grind my bones to powder, here you have water enough, pray where is your mill? The Giant fretted and foamed to hear him scoff at that rate; and tho' he plunged from place to place in the Moat, yet he could not get out to be revenged on his adversary. Jack at length got a cart rope, and cast it over the Giants two heads with a slip-knot, and by the help of a team of horses, dragged him out again, with which he was near strangled; and before he would let him loose, he cut off both his heads with his sword of sharpness, in the full view of all the worthy assembly of knights, gentlemen and ladies, who gave a joyful shout when they saw the Giant fairly dispatched. Then before he would either eat or drink, he sent these heads also after the other to the court of King Arthur: Which being done, then Jack with the knights and ladies, returned to their mirth and pastime, which lasted for many days.

How Jack came to the house of an old Hermit, and what Discourse happened between them.

AFTER some time spent in triumphant mirth and pastime, Jack grew weary of riotous living, wherefore, taking leave of the noble knights and ladies, he set forward in search of new adventures. Thro' many woods and groves he passed, meeting with nothing remarkable till at length coming to the foot of an high mountain late at night he knocked at the door of a lonesome house, at which time an ancient man, with a head as white as snow arose and let him in. Father, said Jack, have you any entertainment for a benighted traveller, that has lost his way? Yes, said the man, if thou will accept of such accommodation as my poor cottage will afford, thou shalt be right welcome. Jack returned him many thanks, for his great civility, wherefore down they sat together, and the old man began to discourse him as follows: Son, said he, I am sensible thou art the great conqueror of Giants, and it is in thy power to free this place of the country from an intolerable burden which we groan under. For behold my son, on the top of this high mountain, there is an inchanted castle kept by a huge monstrous Giant, named Galigantus,[1] who by the help of an old conjuror betrays many knights and ladies into this strong castle; where by Magick Art they are transformed into sundry shapes and forms:

Peele's *Old Wives Tales*, referred to above, includes a version of this phrase.

[1] This name is *Galigantus* in the Shrewsbury chapbook and *Galligantus* in Halliwell's transcription of the 1711 Newcastle chapbook. Is there any relationship between this name and that of Galapas from Malory's *Morte Darthur*, who Arthur kills and whose method of dispatch may have been borrowed earlier in the tale?

But above all, I lament the sad misfortune of a Duke's Daughter whom they fetch'd from her father's garden by Art, carrying her through the air in a mourning chariot, drawn as it were by two fiery dragons, and being secured within the walls of the castle, she was immediately transformed into the real shape of a white Hind: tho' many worthy knights have endeavoured to break the inchantment, and work her deliverance, yet none of them could accomplish this great work, by reason of two dreadful Griffins who were fix'd by magick art at the entrance of the castle gate; which destroys any as soon as they see them.[1] But you my son, being furnished with an invisible coat, may pass by them undiscovered. Whereupon the brazen gates of the castle you find engraven in large characters, by what means the inchantment may be broken.

This old man having ended his discourse, Jack gave him his hand, with a faithful promise, that in the morning he would venture his life to break the inchantment, and free the lady, together with the rest that were miserable partners in her calamity.

How Jack got into the inchanted Castle, broke the inchantment, killed the Giant, put the conjuror to flight, set free the Knights, and Ladies, &c.

HAVING refreshed themselves with a small morsal of meat they laid them down to rest, and in the morning Jack arose and put on his invisible coat, his cap of knowledge, and shoes of swiftness, and so prepares himself for the dangerous enterprize.

Now when he had ascended to the top of the mountain, he soon discovered the two fiery Griffins; he passed on between them without fear, for they could not see him by reason of his invisible coat: now when he was yet beyond them, he cast his eyes around him, where he found upon the gate a golden trumpet, hang in a chain of fine silver, under which these lines were engraven.

Whosoever shall this trumpet blow.
Shall soon the Giant overthrow,
And break the black inchantment straight,
So all shall be in happy state.

Jack had no sooner read this inscription but he blew the trumpet, at which time the vast foundation of the castle trembled, and the Giant, together with the conjuror, was in horrid confusion, biting their thumbs and tearing their hair, knowing that their wicked reign was at an end. At which time Jack standing at the Giant's elbow as he was stooping to take up his club, he at one blow with his sword of sharpness, cut of[f] his head. The conjuror, seeing this, immediately mounted into the air, and was carried away in a whirlwind. Thus was the whole inchantment broke and every knight and lady who had been for a long time transformed into birds, and beasts, returned to their proper shapes again; and as for the castle tho' it seemed at first to be of a vast strength and bigness it vanished away like a cloud of smoke; whereupon an universal joy appeared among the released knights and ladies. This being done, the head of Galligantus was likewise (according to his accustomed manner[)] conveyed to the court of King Arthur as a present made to his Majesty. The very next day after having refreshed the knights and ladies at the old man's habitation, who lived at the foot of the mountain, he set forward for the court of King Arthur, with those knights and ladies which he had so honourably delivered.

When coming to his Majesty, and having related all the passages of his fierce

[1] Spooner, 'Jack and Tom', p. 107 notes that a 'conjuror' who abducts a princess to his castle appears in Peele's *Old Wives Tale*, again suggesting the possibility of some influence from this play on Jack's *History*.

encounters, and his fame run thro' the whole court; and as a reward of his good service, the King prevailed with the aforesaid Duke to he bestow his daughter in marriage to honest Jack protesting that there was no man so worthy of her as he; to all which the Duke very honourably consented: So married they were, and not only the court, but likewise the kingdom was filled with joy and triumph at the wedding. After which the king as a reward for his good services done to the nation, bestowed upon him a noble habitation, with a very plentiful estate belonging thereunto, where he and his lady lived the remainder of their days in peace.[1]

F I N I S.

[1] Later versions add here that 'His wife and his children were kind, / Friends place him in great reliance; / His boys were at college refined, / His girls told the tale of the giants' – see p. 31.

The 1711 Text of *The History of Jack and the Giants*

Introduction

James Orchard Halliwell (later Halliwell-Phillipps) transcribed, 'with a few necessary alterations', the earliest surviving version of *The History of Jack and the Giants*.[1] The original of this was printed at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1711, three years after the very first recorded reference to Jack; as such it constitutes our earliest witness to Jack. Unfortunately, the 1711 chapbook has long-since been lost and Halliwell's transcript is modernised throughout, abbreviated in places, and bowdlerised where the action becomes gruesome. As a result, later derivatives of the original chapbook are usually relied upon for detailed analysis. Nonetheless, Halliwell's text is valuable in and of itself. It is thus presented complete, to allow comparison with the unaltered chapbook text provided above.

Text

In the reign of King Arthur, and in the county of Cornwall, near to the Land's End of England, there lived a wealthy farmer, who had an only son named Jack. He was brisk, and of a lively ready wit, so that whatever he could not perform by force and strength, he accomplished by ingenious wit and policy. Never was any person heard of that could worst him, and he very often even baffled the learned by his sharp and ready inventions.

In those days the Mount of Cornwall was kept by a huge and monstrous giant of eighteen feet in height, and about three yards in compass, of a fierce and grim countenance, the terror of all the neighbouring towns and villages. He inhabited a cave in the middle of the mount, and he was such a selfish monster that he would not suffer any one to live near him. He fed on other men's cattle, which often became his prey, for whensoever he wanted food, he would wade over to the main land, where he would furnish himself with whatever came in his way. The inhabitants, at his approach, forsook their habitations, while he seized on their cattle, making nothing of carrying half-a-dozen oxen on his back at a time; and as for their sheep and hogs, he would tie them round his waist like a bunch of bandoleers. This course he had followed for many years, so that a great part of the county was impoverished by his depredations.

This was the state of affairs, when Jack, happening one day to be present at the town-hall when the authorities were consulting about the giant, had the curiosity to ask what reward would be given to the person who destroyed him. The giant's treasure was declared as the recompense, and Jack at once undertook the task.

In order to accomplish his purpose, he furnished himself with a horn, shovel, and pickaxe, and went over to the Mount in the beginning of a dark winter's evening, when

[1] J. O. Halliwell, *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales of England* (London: John Russell Smith, 1849), pp. 57-69.

he fell to work, and before morning had dug a pit twenty-two feet deep, and nearly as broad, covering it over with long sticks and straw. Then strewing a little mould upon it, it appeared like plain ground. This accomplished, Jack placed himself on the side of the pit which was furthest from the giant's lodging, and, just at the break of day, he put the horn to his mouth, and blew with all his might. Although Jack was a little fellow, and the powers of his voice are not described as being very great, he managed to make noise enough to arouse the giant, and excite his indignation. The monster accordingly rushed from his cave, exclaiming, "You incorrigible villain, are you come here to disturb my rest? You shall pay dearly for this. Satisfaction I will have, for I will take you whole and broil you for breakfast." He had no sooner uttered this cruel threat, than tumbling into the pit, he made the very foundations of the Mount ring again. "Oh, giant," said Jack, "where are you now? Oh faith, you are gotten now into Lob's Pound, where I will surely plague you for your threatening words: what do you think now of broiling me for your breakfast? will no other diet serve you but poor Jack?" Thus did little Jack tantalize the big giant, as a cat does a mouse when she knows it cannot escape, and when he had tired of that amusement, he gave him a heavy blow with his pickaxe on the very crown of his head, which "tumbled him down," and killed him on the spot. When Jack saw he was dead, he filled up the pit with earth, and went to search the cave, which he found contained much treasure. The magistrates, in the exuberance of their joy, did not add to Jack's gains from their own, but after the best and cheapest mode of payment, made a declaration he should henceforth be termed *Jack the Giant-killer*, and presented him with a sword and embroidered belt, on the latter of which were inscribed these words in letters of gold:

> Here's the right valiant Cornish man,
> Who slew the giant Cormelian.

The news of Jack's victory, as might be expected, soon spread over all the West of England, so that another giant, named Thunderbore, hearing of it, and entertaining a partiality for his race, vowed to be revenged on the little hero, if ever it was his fortune to light on him. This giant was the lord of an enchanted castle, situated in the midst of a lonely wood. Now Jack, about four months after his last exploit, walking near this castle in his journey towards Wales, being weary, seated himself near a pleasant fountain in the wood, "o'ercanopied with luscious woodbine," and presently fell asleep. While he was enjoying his repose, the giant, coming to the fountain for water, of course discovered him, and recognised the hated individual by the lines written on the belt. He immediately took Jack on his shoulders, and carried him towards his enchanted castle. Now, as they passed through a thicket, the rustling of the boughs awakened Jack, who was uncomfortably surprised to find himself in the clutches of the giant. His terror was not diminished when, on entering the castle, he saw the court-yard strewed with human bones, the giant maliciously telling him his own would ere long increase the hateful pile. After this assurance, the cannibal locked poor Jack in an upper chamber, leaving him there while he went to fetch another giant living in the same wood to keep him company in the anticipated destruction of their enemy. While he was gone, dreadful shrieks and lamentations affrighted Jack, especially a voice which continually cried,—

> Do what you can to get away,
> Or you'll become the giant's prey;
> He's gone to fetch his brother, who
> Will kill, and likewise torture you.

This warning, and the hideous tone in which it was delivered, almost distracted poor Jack, who going to the window, and opening a casement, beheld afar off the two giants approaching towards the castle. "Now," quoth Jack to himself, "my death or my deliverance is at hand." The event proved that his anticipations were well founded, for the giants of those days, however powerful, were at best very stupid fellows, and readily conquered by stratagem, were it of the humblest kind. There happened to be strong cords in the room in which Jack was confined, two of which he took, and made a strong noose at the end of each; and while the giant was unlocking the iron gate of the castle, he threw the ropes over each of their heads, and then, before the giants knew what he was about, he drew the other ends across a beam, and, pulling with all his might, throttled them till they were black in the face. Then, sliding down the rope, he came to their heads, and as they could not defend themselves, easily despatched them with his sword. This business so adroitly accomplished, Jack released the fair prisoners in the castle, delivered the keys to them, and, like a true knight-errant, continued his journey without condescending to improve the condition of his purse.

This plan, however honourable, was not without its disadvantages, and owing to his slender stock of money, he was obliged to make the best of his way by travelling as hard as he could. At length, losing his road, he was belated, and could not get to any place of entertainment until, coming to a lonesome valley, he found a large house, and by reason of his present necessity, took courage to knock at the gate. But what was his astonishment, when there came forth a monstrous giant with two heads; yet he did not appear so fiery as the others were, for he was a Welsh giant, and what he did was by private and secret malice under the false show of friendship. Jack having unfolded his condition to the giant, was shown into a bedroom, where, in the dead of night, he heard his host in another apartment uttering these formidable words:

> Though here you lodge with me this night,
> You shall not see the morning light:
> My club shall dash your brains out quite!

"Say'st thou so," quoth Jack; "that is like one of your Welsh tricks, yet I hope to be cunning enough for you." He immediately got out of bed, and, feeling about in the dark, found a thick billet of wood, which he laid in the bed in his stead, and hid himself in a dark corner of the room. Shortly after he had done so, in came the Welsh giant, who thoroughly pummelled the billet with his club, thinking, naturally enough, he had broken every bone in Jack's skin. The next morning, however, to the inexpressible surprise of the giant, Jack came down stairs as if nothing had happened, and gave him thanks for his night's lodging. "How have you rested," quoth the giant; "did you not feel anything in the night?" Jack provokingly replied, "No, nothing but a rat which gave me two or three flaps with her tail." This reply was totally incomprehensible to the giant, who of course saw anything but a joke in it. However, concealing his amazement as well as he could, he took Jack in to breakfast, assigning to each a bowl containing four gallons of hasty pudding. One would have thought that the greater portion of so extravagant an allowance would have been declined by our hero, but he was unwilling the giant should imagine his incapability to eat it, and accordingly placed a large leather bag under his loose coat, in such a position that he could convey the pudding into it without the deception being perceived. Breakfast at length being finished, Jack excited the giant's curiosity by offering to show him an extraordinary sleight of hand; so taking a knife, he ripped the leather bag, and out of course descended on the ground all the hasty pudding. The giant had not the slightest suspicion of the trick, veritably believing the pudding came from its natural

receptacle; and having the same antipathy to being beaten, exclaimed in true Welsh, "Odds splutter, hur can do that trick hurself." The sequel may be readily guessed. The monster took the knife, and thinking to follow Jack's example with impunity, killed himself on the spot.

King Arthur's only son requested his father to furnish him with a large sum of money, in order that he might go and seek his fortune in the principality of Wales, where lived a beautiful lady possessed with seven evil spirits. The king tried all he could do to persuade him to alter his determination, but it was all in vain, so at last he granted his request, and the prince set out with two horses, one loaded with money, the other for himself to ride upon. Now, after several days' travel, he came to a market-town in Wales, where he beheld a vast concourse of people gathered together. The prince demanded the reason of it, and was told that they had arrested a corpse for several large sums of money which the deceased owed when he died. The prince replied that it was a pity creditors should be so cruel, and said, "Go bury the dead, and let his creditors come to my lodging, and there their debts shall be discharged." They accordingly came, but in such great numbers, that before night he had almost left himself penniless.

Now Jack the Giant-killer happened to be in the town while these transactions took place, and he was so pleased with the generosity exhibited by the prince, that he offered to become his servant, an offer which was immediately accepted. The next morning they set forward on their journey, when, as they were just leaving the town, an old woman called after the prince, saying, "He has owed me twopence these seven years; pray pay me as well as the rest." So reasonable and urgent a demand could not be resisted, and the prince immediately discharged the debt, but it took the last penny he had to accomplish it. This event, though generally ridiculed by heroes, was one by no means overlooked by the prince, who required all Jack's assuring eloquence to console him. Jack himself, indeed, had a very poor exchequer, and after their day's refreshment, they were entirely without money. When night drew on, the prince was anxious to secure a lodging, but as they had no means to hire one, Jack said, "Never mind, master, we shall do well enough, for I have an uncle lives within two miles of this place; he is a huge and monstrous giant with three heads; he'll fight five hundred men in armour, and make them flee before him." "Alas!" quoth the prince, "what shall we do there? He'll certainly chop us up at a mouthful. Nay, we are scarce enough to fill his hollow tooth!" "It is no matter for that," quoth Jack; "I myself will go before, and prepare the way for you; therefore tarry and wait till I return." Jack then rides off full speed, and coming to the gate of the castle, he knocked so loud that the neighbouring hills resounded like thunder. The giant, terribly vexed with the liberty taken by Jack, roared out, "Who's there?" He was answered, "None but your poor cousin Jack." Quoth he, "What news with my poor cousin Jack?" He replied, "Dear uncle, heavy news." "God wot," quoth the giant, "prithee what heavy news can come to me? I am a giant with three heads, and besides thou knowest I can fight five hundred men in armour, and make them fly like chaff before the wind." "Oh, but," quoth Jack, "here's the prince a-coming with a thousand men in armour to kill you, and destroy all that you have!" "Oh, cousin Jack," said the giant, "this is heavy news indeed! I will immediately run and hide myself, and thou shalt lock, bolt, and bar me in, and keep the keys till the prince is gone." Jack joyfully complied with the giant's request, and fetching his master, they feasted and made themselves merry whilst the poor giant laid trembling in a vault under ground.

In the morning, Jack furnished the prince with a fresh supply of gold and silver, and then sent him three miles forward on his journey, concluding, according to the story-book, "he was then pretty well out of the smell of the giant." Jack afterwards returned, and liberated the giant from the vault, who asked what he should give him for preserving

the castle from destruction. "Why," quoth Jack, "I desire nothing but the old coat and cap, together with the old rusty sword and slippers which are at your bed's head." Quoth the giant, "Thou shalt have them, and pray keep them for my sake, for they are things of excellent use; the coat will keep you invisible, the cap will furnish you with knowledge, the sword cuts asunder whatever you strike, and the shoes are of extraordinary swiftness. These may be serviceable to you: therefore take them with all my heart."

Jack was delighted with these useful presents, and having overtaken his master, they quickly arrived at the lady's house, who, finding the prince to be a suitor, prepared a splendid banquet for him. After the repast was concluded, she wiped his mouth with a handkerchief, and then concealed it in her dress, saying, "You must show me that handkerchief to-morrow morning, or else you will lose your head." The prince went to bed in great sorrow at this hard condition, but fortunately Jack's cap of knowledge instructed him how it was to be fulfilled. In the middle of the night she called upon her familiar to carry her to the evil spirit. Jack immediately put on his coat of darkness, and his shoes of swiftness, and was there before her, his coat rendering him invisible. When she entered the lower regions, she gave the handkerchief to the spirit, who laid it upon a shelf, whence Jack took it, and brought it to his master, who showed it to the lady the next day, and so saved his life. The next evening at supper she saluted the prince, telling him he must show her the lips tomorrow morning that she kissed last this night, or lose his head. He replied, "If you kiss none but mine, I will." "That is neither here nor there," said she, "if you do not, death is your portion!" At midnight she went below as before, and was angry with the spirit for letting the handkerchief go: "But now," quoth she, "I will be too hard for the prince, for I will kiss thee, and he is to show me thy lips." She did so, and Jack, who was standing by, cut off the spirit's head, and brought it under his invisible coat to his master, who produced it triumphantly the next morning before the lady. This feat destroyed the enchantment, the evil spirits immediately forsook her, and she appeared still more sweet and lovely, beautiful as she was before. They were married the next morning, and shortly afterwards went to the court of King Arthur, where Jack, for his eminent services, was created one of the knights of the Round Table.

Our hero, having been successful in all his undertakings, and resolving not to remain idle, but to perform what services he could for the honour of his country, humbly besought his majesty to fit him out with a horse and money to enable him to travel in search of new adventures; for, said he, "there are many giants yet living in the remote part of Wales, to the unspeakable damage of your majesty's subjects; wherefore may it please you to encourage me, I do not doubt but in a short time to cut them off root and branch, and so rid all the realm of those giants and monsters in human shape." We need scarcely say that Jack's generous offer was at once accepted. The king furnished him with the necessary accoutrements, and Jack set out with his magical cap, sword, and shoes, the better to perform the dangerous enterprises which now lay before him.

After travelling over several hills and mountains, the country through which he passed offering many impediments to travellers, on the third day he arrived at a very large wood, which he had no sooner entered than his ears were assailed with piercing shrieks. Advancing softly towards the place where the cries appeared to proceed from, he was horror-struck at perceiving a huge giant dragging along a fair lady, and a knight her husband, by the hair of their heads, "with as much ease," says the original narrative, "as if they had been a pair of gloves." Jack shed tears of pity on the fate of this hapless couple, but not suffering his feelings to render him neglectful of action, he put on his invisible coat, and taking with him his infallible sword, succeeded, after considerable trouble, and many cuts, to despatch the monster, whose dying groans were so terrible, that they made the whole wood ring again. The courteous knight and his fair lady were

overpowered with gratitude, and, after returning Jack their best thanks, they invited him to their residence, there to recruit his strength after the frightful encounter, and receive more substantial demonstrations of their obligations to him. Jack, however, declared that he would not rest until he had found out the giant's habitation. The knight, on hearing his determination, was very sorrowful, and replied, "Noble stranger, it is too much to run a second hazard: this monster lived in a den under yonder mountain, with a brother more fierce and cruel than himself. Therefore, if you should go thither, and perish in the attempt, it would be a heart-breaking to me and my lady: let me persuade you to go with us, and desist from any further pursuit." The knight's reasoning had the very opposite effect that was intended, for Jack, hearing of another giant, eagerly embraced the opportunity of displaying his skill, promising, however, to return to the knight when he had accomplished his second labour.

He had not ridden more than a mile and a half, when the cave mentioned by the knight appeared to view, near the entrance of which he beheld the giant, sitting upon a block of timber, with a knotted iron club by his side, waiting, as he supposed, for his brother's return with his barbarous prey. This giant is described as having "goggle eyes like flames of fire, a countenance grim and ugly, cheeks like a couple of large flitches of bacon, the bristles of his beard resembling rods of iron wire, and locks that hung down upon his brawny shoulders like curled snakes or hissing adders." Jack alighted from his horse, and putting on the invisible coat, approached near the giant, and said softly, "Oh! are you there? it will not be long ere I shall take you fast by the beard." The giant all this while could not see him, on account of his invisible coat, so that Jack, coming up close to the monster, struck a blow with his sword at his head, but unfortunately missing his aim, he cut off the nose instead. The giant, as we may suppose, "roared like claps of thunder," and began to lay about him in all directions with his iron club so desperately, that even Jack was frightened, but exercising his usual ingenuity, he soon despatched him. After this, Jack cut off the giant's head, and sent it, together with that of his brother, to King Arthur, by a waggoner he hired for that purpose, who gave an account of all his wonderful proceedings.

The redoubtable Jack next proceeded to search the giant's cave in search of his treasure, and passing along through a great many winding passages, he came at length to a large room paved with freestone, at the upper end of which was a boiling caldron, and on the right hand a large table, at which the giants usually dined. After passing this dining-room, he came to a large and well-secured den filled with human captives, who were fattened and taken at intervals for food, as we do poultry. Jack set the poor prisoners at liberty, and, to compensate them for their sufferings and dreadful anticipations, shared the giant's treasure equally amongst them, and sent them to their homes overjoyed at their unexpected deliverance.

It was about sunrise when Jack, after the conclusion of this adventure, having had a good night's rest, mounted his horse to proceed on his journey, and, by the help of directions, reached the knight's house about noon. He was received with the most extraordinary demonstrations of joy, and his kind host, out of respect to Jack, prepared a feast which lasted many days, all the nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood being invited to it. The knight related the hero's adventures to his assembled guests, and presented him with a beautiful ring, on which was engraved a representation of the giant dragging the distressed knight and his lady, with this motto:

> We were in sad distress you see,
> Under the giant's fierce command,
> But gain'd our lives and liberty

By valiant Jack's victorious hand.

But earthly happiness is not generally of long duration, and so in some respects it proved on the present occasion, for in the midst of the festivities arrived a messenger with the dismal intelligence that one Thunderdell, a giant with two heads, having heard of the death of his two kinsmen, came from the north to be revenged on Jack, and was already within a mile of the knight's house, the country people flying before him in all directions. The intelligence had no effect on the dauntless Jack, who immediately said, "Let him come! I have a tool to pick his teeth;" and with this elegant assertion, he invited the guests to witness his performance from a high terrace in the garden of the castle.

It is now necessary to inform the reader that the knight's house or castle was situated in an island encompassed with a moat thirty feet deep, and twenty feet wide, passable by a drawbridge. Now Jack, intending to accomplish his purpose by a clever stratagem, employed men to cut through this drawbridge on both sides nearly to the middle; and then, dressing himself in his invisible coat, he marched against the giant with his well-tried sword. As he approached his adversary, although invisible, the giant, being, as it appears, an epicure in such matters, was aware of his approach, and exclaimed, in a fearful tone of voice—

Fi, fee, fo, fum!
  I smell the blood of an English man!
Be he alive or be he dead,
  I'll grind his bones to make me bread!

"Say you so," said Jack; "then you are a monstrous miller indeed." The giant, deeply incensed, replied, "Art thou that villain who killed my kinsman? then I will tear thee with my teeth, and grind thy bones to powder." "But," says Jack, still provoking him, "you must catch me first, if you please:" so putting aside his invisible coat, so that the giant might see him, and putting on his wonderful shoes, he enticed him into a chase by just approaching near enough to give him an apparent chance of capture. The giant, we are told, "followed like a walking castle, so that the very foundations of the earth seemed to shake at every step." Jack led him a good distance, in order that the wondering guests at the castle might see him to advantage, but at last, to end the matter, he ran over the drawbridge, the giant pursuing him with his club; but coming to the place where the bridge was cut, the giant's great weight burst it asunder, and he was precipitated into the moat, where he rolled about, says the author, "like a vast whale." While the monster was in this condition, Jack sadly bantered him about the boast he had made of grinding his bones to powder, but at length, having teased him sufficiently, a cart-rope was cast over the two heads of the giant, and he was drawn ashore by a team of horses, where Jack served him as he had done his relatives, cut off his heads, and sent them to King Arthur.

It would seem that the giant-killer rested a short time after this adventure, but he was soon tired of inactivity, and again went in search of another giant, the last whose head he was destined to chop off. After passing a long distance, he came at length to a large mountain, at the foot of which was a very lonely house. Knocking at the door, it was opened by "an ancient man, with a head as white as snow," who received Jack very courteously, and at once consented to his request for a lodging. Whilst they were at supper, the old man, who appears to have known more than was suspected, thus addressed the hero: "Son, I am sensible you are a conqueror of giants, and I therefore inform you that on the top of this mountain is an enchanted castle, maintained by a giant named Galligantus, who, by the help of a conjuror, gets many knights into his castle,

where they are transformed into sundry shapes and forms: but, above all, I especially lament a duke's daughter, whom they took from her father's garden, bringing her through the air in a chariot drawn by fiery dragons, and securing her within the castle walls, transformed her into the shape of a hind. Now, though a great many knights have endeavoured to break the enchantment, and work her deliverance, yet no one has been able to accomplish it, on account of two fiery griffins which are placed at the gate, and which destroyed them at their approach; but you, my son, being furnished with an invisible coat, may pass by them undiscovered, and on the gates of the castle you will find engraven in large characters by what means the enchantment may be broken." The undaunted Jack at once accepted the commission, and pledged his faith to the old man to proceed early in the morning on this new adventure.

In the morning, as soon as it was daylight, Jack put on his invisible coat, and prepared himself for the enterprise. When he had reached the top of the mountain, he discovered the two fiery griffins, but, being invisible, he passed them without the slightest danger. When he had reached the gate of the castle, he noticed a golden trumpet attached to it, under which were written in large characters the following lines:

> Whoever doth this trumpet blow,
> Shall soon the giant overthrow,
> And break the black enchantment straight,
> So all shall be in happy state.

Jack at once accepted the challenge, and putting the trumpet to his mouth, gave a blast that made the hill re-echo. The castle trembled to its foundations, and the giant and conjuror were overstricken with fear, knowing that the reign of their enchantments was at an end. The former was speedily slain by Jack, but the conjuror, mounting up into the air, was carried away in a whirlwind, and never heard of more. The enchantments were immediately broken, and all the lords and ladies, who had so long been cruelly transformed, were standing on the native earth in their natural shapes, the castle having vanished with the conjuror.

The only relic of the giant which was left was the head, which Jack cut off in the first instance, and which we must suppose rolled away from the influence of the enchanted castle, or it would have "vanished into this air" with the body. It was fortunate that it did so, for it proved an inestimable trophy at the court of King Arthur, where Jack the Giant-killer was shortly afterwards united to the duke's daughter whom he had freed from enchantment, "not only to the joy of the court, but of all the kingdom." To complete his happiness, he was endowed with a noble house and estates, and his *penchant* for giant-killing having subsided, or, what is more probable, no more monsters appearing to interrupt his tranquillity, he accomplished the usual conclusion to these romantic narratives, by passing the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of every domestic felicity.

Jack the Giant Killer: a *c.* 1820 Penny Book

Introduction

This short book, published in Banbury around 1820 by John Golby Rusher (a leading producer of chapbooks), provides a good illustration of the later popular versions of this tale. The book itself is housed – as a single uncut sheet – in the de Grummond Children's Literature Research Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi.[1]

Text

Kind Reader, Jack makes you a bow,
The hero of giants the dread;
Whom king and the princes applaud
For valour, whence tyranny fled.

In Cornwall, on Saint Michael's Mount,
A giant full eighteen feet high,
Nine feet round, in cavern did dwell,
For food cleared the fields and the sty.

And, glutton, would feast on poor souls,
Whom chance might have led in his way;
Or gentleman, lady, or child,
Or what on his hands he could lay.

He went over to the main land, in search of food, when he would throw oxen or cows on his back, and several sheep and pigs, and with them wade to his abode in the cavern.

Till Jack's famed career made him quake,
Blew his horn, took mattock and spade;
Dug twenty feet deep near his den,
And covered the pit he had made.

The giant declared he'd devour
For breakfast who dared to come near;
And leizurely did Blunderbore
Walk heavily into the snare.

Then Jack with his pickaxe commenced,

[1] 'The Jack and the Beanstalk and Jack the Giant-Killer Project', edited by Michael N. Salda, at *www.usm.edu/english/fairytales/jack/jackhome.html*.

The giant most terribly did roar;
He thus made an end of the first–
The terrible Giant Blunderbore.

His brother, who heard of Jack's feat,
Did vow he'd repent of his blows,
From Castle Enchantment, in wood,
Near which Jack did shortly repose.

This giant, discovering our hero, weary and fast asleep in the wood, carried him to his castle, and locked him up in a large room, the floor of which was covered with the bones of men and women. Soon after, the giant went to invite his friend Rebecks, to make a meal of Jack; who saw the monsters approaching, and put on his cap of knowledge, to consider how he might best extricate himself from portending dangers.

The giant and friend, arm in arm,
John liked not the look of Rebecks;
He found a strong cord with a noose,
And briskly slipt over their necks.

He fastened the cord to a beam,
And boldly slid down with his sword;
He severed their heads in a trice;
To free all confined he gave word.

History informs us that he took the keys of the castle from the girdle of Giant Blunderbore, and made search through the building; where he found three ladies tied up by the hair of their heads to a beam; they told him their husbands had been killed by the giants, and themselves were condemned to death, because they would not partake of the remains of their deceased husbands. Ladies, said Jack, I have put an end to the wicked monster and his giant friend Rebecks!

Great lords and fine ladies were there,
Suspended or tied to great hooks;
Most heartily thanked our friend John;
Recorded his fame in those books.

The ladies all thought him divine,
The nobles invited him home:
The castle he gave for their use,
And he for adventures did roam.

At length John came to a handsome building, he was informed was inhabited by an enormous Welchman, the terror of the surrounding neighbourhood, not very likely to prove friendly to our hero, and gave a genteel rat, tat, too, at the door.

At this Giant-castle, most grand,
The Welchman meets John at the door;
Gives welcome, and food, and a bed,
But Jack saves his life on the floor.

The old account of the difficult season informs us that John overheard the giant Welchman utter the following not very agreeable lines:–

Though here you lodge with me this night,
    You shall not see the morning light;
My club shall dash your brains out quite!

John's considering cap is again in request, and finding a log of wood he placed it between the sheets, and hid himself, to witness the giant's anger and club law.

Mid darkness, the giant his bed
    Belabours the post John put there;
And safe in the corner he crept,
    Behind the great giant's arm chair.

Early in the morning Jack walked into the giant's room, to thank him for his lodging. The giant surprised to see him, so early he appeared to say, and continued–

You slept well, my friend, in your bed?
    Did nought in your slumbers assail?
John did to his querist reply,
    A rat gave some flaps with his tail.

Jack thanked the giant for his excellent night's sleep, and although the Welchman was surprised that he had not killed him, he did not express more, but fetched two large bowls of pudding, for his own and his lodger's repast, thinking Jack never could empty one of them.

Hasty pudding for breakfast was brought,
    And John took much more than his friend;
Which slipt in his large leather bag,
    The giant could not comprehend.

Says Jack, Now I'll shew you a trick–
    "A tat" for a giant's trap-door!
He ript up his large leather bag,
    And breakfast bespatter'd the floor.

Ods splutter hur nails, says his host,
    Hur can do that too, without dread;
But Taff made a fatal attack,
    And Jack in a trice doff'd his head.

John seized all his riches and house,
    And bountiful was to the poor;
The pris'ners released from their chains,
    Which bound them in pain to the floor.

In search of new adventures, our hero beheld a relative of the late highlander,

dragging to the abode Jack had made his own by stratagem, a noble Knight and his affianced lady, and soon determined his mode of deliverance for them.

A cousin, not heard of his fate,
    Seized Sir Knight and a lady so fair,
When coming to see giant friend,
    And dragg'd them with force by the hair.

Jack donn'd his invisible coat,
    Sharp sword and swift shoes for the fray;
He rescued the knight and the fair,
    And great mighty giant did slay.

His cap for much knowledge and skill,
    He used in encounters most rare;
His sword all the giants did kill,
    For speed none his shoes could compare.

Jack having hitherto been successful,determined not to be idle; he therefore resolved to travel, and to take his horse of matchless speed, his cap of knowledge, his sword of sharpness, his elastic shoes of swiftness, and invisible coat, over hill and dale.

Tradition states, that Jack passed through the counties of Oxford, Warwick, and Northampton; and visited the University, Crouchhill, Banbury-cross and Castle, the Amphitheatre in Bear-garden, Wroxton, Edge-hill, &c.

He travelled the country around,
    East, west, north and south, far and near;
Abroad or at home he was found,
    Where he of a giant could hear.

Jack was informed by an old hermit, at the foot of a high mountain, of an enchanted castle, at the top of the mount inhabited by Galligantus and a magician, where they had imprisoned a duke's daughter and her companions: he soon climbed to the summit, and read these lines:–

Whoever can this trumpet blow,
    Shall cause the giant's overthrow.

Jack blew a loud shrill blast, having on his invisible dress, with his trusty sword by his side: the giant and magician looked for the intruder, but soon exhibited each an headless trunk, when he released the inmates, whom he wished to share the vast riches of the magician's treasury. The duke's daughter plainly informed him that she would willingly do so on one condition, which was speedily arranged on the arrival of the duke and his duchess.

St. George the great dragon did slay,
    Hunters wild boars make compliant,
And beasts of the forest way-lay;
    Jack is the dread of the giant.
Pray who has not heard of his fame?

His actions so bold and unpliant;
The friend of the rich and the poor,
But never afraid of a giant.

A monster had heard of his fame,
And vowed he would render him pliant;
He sat on a stone at his door,
Jack cut off the nose of the giant.

He soon found the edge of his blade,
Became a most humble suppliant;
And, while he complained of the pain,
Jack took off the head of the giant.

Jack threatens,–all braggarts beware!
And coward poltroons he makes pliant;
And thus all vain-glorious puffs
Are silenced as Jack served the giant.

The Castle-enchantment he razed,
Magician is made more compliant,
Duke's daughter he rescues from harm,
Lords, ladies, he saves from the giant.

Duke's daughter, with riches in store,
To admire our hero not slack;
In marriage they soon did unite,
The king gave great riches to Jack.

His wife and his children were kind,
Friends place in him great reliance;
His boys were at college refined,
His girls told the tale of the giants.

FINIS.

Some Arthurian Giant-Killings

Introduction

Presented below are a number of Arthurian giant-killings, ranging from those belonging to the earliest stratum of the legend through to Welsh folklore of the seventeenth century. In general, Arthur and his men – like Jack – killed their gigantic enemies through a mixture of cunning and extreme violence. Indeed, as both I and others have argued, such tales as these ought to be considered essential source material for Jack's role as the exterminator of all Britain's giants.[1] Certainly, this seems to have been originally a role assigned to Arthur in Welsh and Cornish folklore, with Jack only taking it over in English chapbooks from the early eighteenth century. As one old Cornishman put it, the whole land at one time 'swarmed with giants, until Arthur, the good king, vanished them all with his cross-sword'.[2]

Texts

a. Culhwch ac Olwen [3]

[Arthur's men[4] go in search of the first item that they need to complete their quest, the sword of Wrnach the Giant]

All that day they journeyed until the evening, and then they beheld a vast castle, which was the largest in the world. And lo, a black man, huger than three of the men of this world, came out from the castle. And they spoke unto him, "Whence comest thou, O man?" "From the castle which you see yonder." "Whose castle is that?" asked they. "Stupid are ye truly, O men. There is no one in the world that does not know to whom this castle belongs. It is the castle of Wrnach the Giant." "What treatment is there for guests and strangers that alight in that castle?" "Oh! Chieftain, Heaven protect thee. No

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1 T. Green, 'Tom Thumb and Jack the Giant-Killer: Two Arthurian Fairy Tales?', *Folklore*, 118.2 (2007), pp. 123-40; C. Grooms, *The Giants of Wales. Cewri Cymru*. Welsh Studies volume 10 (Lampeter: Edwin Meller, 1993), who says of Arthur's giant-killing that it is 'a tradition that precedes and informs the popular chap-book tales of Jack the Giant-killer' (p. l).

2 R. Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England. The Drolls, Traditions and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, two volumes (reprint of 1881 edition, Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1993), II, p. 307. It should be noted that Arthur as a giant-killer was present in the early to mid-nineteenth-century folklore collected by Hunt, but Jack was nowhere to be found.

3 *The Mabinogion*, translated by C. Guest (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1877), pp. 243-45, 249-50; Wrnach's name has been put into its correct form, rather than Guest's 'Gwrnach'.

4 In *Culhwch ac Olwen* Arthur is not present at this killing, but it seems likely that he was in fact present in the underlying tale that was being used by the author of *Culhwch* and has been simply omitted; thus in the arguably earlier poem *Pa gur?*, Arthur is described as fighting in 'Awarnach's hall', this Awarnach almost certainly being *Culhwch*'s Wrnach: see T. Green, *Concepts of Arthur* (Stroud: Tempus, 2007), pp. 84, 109, 112-15.

guest ever returned thence alive, and no one may enter therein unless he brings with him his craft."

Then they proceeded towards the gate. Said Gwrhyr Gwalstawd Ieithoedd ['Interpreter of Tongues'], "Is there a porter?" "There is. And thou, if thy tongue be not mute in thy head, wherefore dost thou call?" "Open the gate." "I will not open it." "Wherefore wilt thou not?" "The knife is in the meat, and the drink is in the horn, and there is revelry in the hall of Wrnach the Giant, and except for a craftsman who brings his craft, the gate will not be opened to-night." "Verily, porter," then said Kai, "my craft bring I with me." "What is thy craft?" "The best burnisher of swords am I in the world." "I will go and tell this unto Wrnach the Giant, and I will bring thee an answer."

So the porter went in, and Wrnach said to him, "Hast thou any news from the gate?" "I have. There is a party at the door of the gate who desire to come in." "Didst thou inquire of them if they possessed any art?" "I did inquire," said he, "and one told me that he was well skilled in the burnishing of swords." "We have need of him then. For some time have I sought for some one to polish my sword, and could find no one. Let this man enter, since he brings with him his craft." The porter thereupon returned and opened the gate. And Kai went in by himself, and he saluted Wrnach the Giant. And a chair was placed for him opposite to Wrnach. And Wrnach said to him, "Oh man! is it true that is reported of thee that thou knowest how to burnish swords?" "I know full well how to do so," answered Kai. Then was the sword of Wrnach brought to him. And Kai took a blue whetstone from under his arm, and asked him whether he would have it burnished white or blue. "Do with it as it seems good to thee, and as though wouldest if it were thine own." Then Kai polished one half of the blade and put it in his hand. "Will this please thee?" asked he. "I would rather than all that is in my dominions that the whole of it were like unto this. It is a marvel to me that such a man as thou should be without a companion." "Oh! noble sir, I have a companion, albeit he is not skilled in this art." "Who may he be?" "Let the porter go forth and I will tell him whereby he may know him. The head of his lance will leave its shaft, and draw blood from the wind, and will descend upon its shaft again." Then the gate was opened, and Bedwyr entered. And Kai said, "Bedwyr is very skilful, although he knows not this art."

And there was much discourse among those who were without, because that Kai and Bedwyr had gone in. And a young man who was with them, the only son of Custennin the herdsman, got in also. And he caused all his companions to keep close to him as he passed the three wards, and until he came into the midst of the castle. And his companions said unto the son of Custennin, "Thou hast done this! Thou art the best of all men." And thenceforth he was called Goreu ['best'], the son of Custennin. Then they dispersed to their lodgings, that they might slay those who lodged therein, unknown to the Giant.

The sword was now polished, and Kai gave it unto the hand of Wrnach the Giant, to see if he were pleased with his work. And the Giant said, "The work is good, I am content therewith." Said Kai, "It is thy scabbard that hath rusted thy sword, give it to me that I may take out the wooden sides of it and put in new ones." And he took the scabbard from him, and the sword in the other hand. And he came and stood over against the Giant, as if he would have put the sword into the scabbard; and with it he struck at the head of the Giant, and cut off his head at one blow. Then they despoiled the castle, and took from it what goods and jewels they would. And again on the same day, at the beginning of the year, they came to Arthur's Court, bearing with them the sword of Wrnach the Giant.

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[The obtaining of the leash made from Dillus' beard]

As Kai and Bedwyr sat on a beacon carn on the summit of Plinlimmon [*i.e.* Carn Gwylathyr on Pumlumon], in the highest wind that ever was in the world, they looked around them, and saw a great smoke towards the south, afar off, which did not bend with the wind. Then said Kai, "By the hand of my friend, behold, yonder is the fire of a robber!" Then they hastened towards the smoke, and they came so near to it, that they could see Dillus Varvawc ['the Bearded'] scorching a wild boar. "Behold, yonder is the greatest robber that ever fled from Arthur,"[1] said Bedwyr unto Kai. "Dost thou know him?" "I do know him," answered Kai, "he is Dillus Varvawc, and no leash in the world will be able to hold Drudwyn, the cub of Greid the son of Eri, save a leash made from the beard of him thou seest yonder. And even that will be useless, unless his beard be plucked alive with wooden tweezers; for if dead, it will be brittle." "What thinkest thou that we should do concerning this?" said Bedwyr. "Let us suffer him," said Kai, "to eat as much as he will of the meat, and after that he will fall asleep." And during that time they employed themselves in making the wooden tweezers. And when Kai knew certainly that he was asleep, he made a pit under his feet, the largest in the world, and he struck him a violent blow, and squeezed him into the pit. And there they twitched out his beard completely with the wooden tweezers; and after that they slew him altogether.

And from thence they both went to Gelli Wic, in Cornwall, and took the leash made of Dillus Varvawc's beard with them, and they gave it into Arthur's hand.

b. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae[2]

In the meantime Arthur had news brought him, that a giant of monstrous size was come from the shores of Spain, and had forcibly taken away Helena, the niece of Duke Hoel, from her guard, and fled with her to the top of that which is now called Michael's Mount; and that the soldiers of the country who pursued him were able to do nothing against him. For whether they attacked him by sea or land, he either overturned their ships with vast rocks, or killed them with several sorts of darts, besides many of them that he took and devoured half alive.

The next night, therefore, at the second hour, Arthur, taking along with him Caius the sewer, and Bedver the butler, went out privately from the camp, and hastened towards the mountain. For being a man of undaunted courage, he did not care to lead his army against such monsters; both because he could in this manner animate his men by his own example, and also because he was alone sufficient to deal with them.

As soon as they came near the mountain, they saw a fire burning upon the top of it, and another on a lesser mountain, that was not far from it. And being in doubt upon which of them the giant dwelt, they sent away Bedver to know the certainty of the matter. So he, finding a boat, sailed over in it first to the lesser mountain, to which he could in no other way have access, because it was situated in the sea. When he had begun to climb up to the top of it, he was at first frightened with a dismal howling cry of a

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1 Again Arthur is not present in the telling of this tale in *Culhwch*, but this phrase makes reference to the existence of other tales of Dillus in which Arthur was involved: on this tale, which was also told in Welsh folklore, see Green, *Concepts of Arthur*, pp. 115-16 and Grooms, *Giants of Wales*, pp. 167-68. Furthermore, it is clearly related to the tale of Arthur's killing of Ritho/Retho, found in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and Welsh folklore (Green, *Concepts of Arthur*, p. 116).

2 *Historia Regum Britanniae*, X.3, translated by J. A. Giles in *The British History of Geoffrey of Monmouth* (London: James Bohn, 1842), pp. 205-08. See the following on the two tales contained within this chapter: Green, *Concepts of Arthur*, pp. 116-18, and Grooms, *Giants of Wales*, pp. 214-18.

woman from above, and imagined the monster to be there: but quickly rousing up his courage, he drew his sword, and having reached the top, found nothing but the fire which he had before seen at a distance. He discovered also a grave newly made, and an old woman weeping and howling by it, who at the sight of him instantly cried out in words interrupted with sighs, "O, unhappy man, what misfortune brings you to this place? O the inexpressible tortures of death that you must suffer! I pity you, I pity you, because the detestable monster will this night destroy the flower of your youth. For that most wicked and odious giant, who brought the duke's niece, whom I have just now buried here, and me, her nurse, along with her into this mountain, will come and immediately murder you in a most cruel manner. O deplorable fate! This most illustrious princess, sinking under the fear her tender heart conceived, while the foul monster would have embraced her, fainted away and expired. And when he could not satiate his brutish lust upon her, who was the very soul, joy, and happiness of my life, being enraged at the disappointment of his bestial desire, he forcibly committed a rape upon me, who (let God and my old age witness) abhorred his embraces. Fly, dear sir, fly, for fear he may come, as he usually does, to lie with me, and finding you here most barbarously butcher you."

Bedver, moved at what she said, as much as it is possible for human nature to be, endeavoured with kind words to assuage her grief, and to comfort her with the promise of speedy help: and then returned back to Arthur, and gave him an account of what he had met with. Arthur very much lamented the damsel's sad fate, and ordered his companions to leave him to deal with him alone; unless there was an absolute necessity, and then they were to come in boldly to his assistance. From hence they went directly to the next mountain, leaving their horses with their armour-bearers, and ascended to the top, Arthur leading the way.

The deformed savage was then by the fire, with his face besmeared with the clotted blood of swine, part of which he had already devoured, and was roasting the remainder upon spits by the fire. But at the sight of them, whose appearance was a surprise to him, he hastened to his club, which two strong men could hardly lift from the ground. Upon this the king drew his sword, and guarding himself with his shield, ran with all his speed to prevent his getting it. But the other, who was not ignorant of his design, had by this time snatched it up, and gave the king such a terrible blow upon his shield, that he made the shores ring with the noise, and perfectly stunned the king's ears with it. Arthur, fired with rage at this, lifted up his sword, and gave him a wound in the forehead, which was not indeed mortal, but yet such as made the blood gush out over his face and eyes, and so blinded him; for he had partly warded off the stroke from his forehead with his club, and prevented its being fatal. However, his loss of sight, by reason of the blood flowing over his eyes, made him exert himself with greater fury, and like an enraged boar against a hunting-spear, so did he rush in against Arthur's sword, and grasping him about the waist, forced him down upon his knees. But Arthur, nothing daunted, slipped out of his hands, and so bestirred himself with his sword, that he gave the giant no respite till he had struck it up to the very back through his skull. At this the hideous monster raised a dreadful roar, and like an oak torn up from the roots by the winds, so did he make the ground resound with his fall Arthur, bursting out into a fit of laughter at the sight, commanded Bedver to cut off his head, and give it to one of the armour-bearers, who was to carry it to the camp, and there expose it to public view, but with orders for the spectators of this combat to keep silence.

He told them he had found none of so great strength, since he killed the giant Ritho, who had challenged him to fight, upon the mountain Aravius. This giant had made himself furs of the beards of kings he had killed, and had sent word to Arthur carefully

to flea off his beard and send it to him; and then, out of respect to his pre-eminence over other kings, his beard should have the honour of the principal place. But if he refused to do it, he challenged him to a duel, with this offer, that the conqueror should have the furs, and also the beard of the vanquished for a trophy of his victory. In this conflict, therefore, Arthur proved victorious, and took the beard and spoils of the giant; and, as he said before, had met with none that could be compared to him for strength, till his last engagement. After this victory, they returned at the second watch of the night to the camp with the head; to see which there was a great concourse of people, all extolling this wonderful exploit of Arthur, by which he had freed the country from a most destructive and voracious monster. But Hoel, in great grief for the loss of his niece, commanded a mausoleum to be built over her body in the mountain where she was buried, which, taking the damsel's name, is called Helena's Tomb to this day.

c. Malory's Le Morte Darthur [1]

[Arthur comes upon the giant of Mont St Michel]

Then the glutton anon started up, and took a great club in his hand, and smote at the king that his coronal fell to the earth. And the king hit him again that he carved his belly and cut off his genitours, that his guts and his entrails fell down to the ground. Then the giant threw away his club, and caught the king in his arms that he crushed his ribs. Then the three maidens kneeled down and called to Christ for help and comfort of Arthur. And then Arthur weltered and wrung, that he was other while under and another time above. And so weltering and wallowing they rolled down the hill till they came to the sea mark, and ever as they so weltered Arthur smote him with his dagger.

And it fortuned they came to the place whereas the two knights were and kept Arthur's horse; then when they saw the king fast in the giant's arms they came and loosed him. And then the king commanded Sir Kay to smite off the giant's head, and to set it upon a truncheon of a spear, and bear it to Sir Howell, and tell him that his enemy was slain; and after let this head be bound to a barbican that all the people may see and behold it; and go ye two up to the mountain, and fetch me my shield, my sword, and the club of iron; and as for the treasure, take ye it, for ye shall find there goods out of number; so I have the kirtle and the club I desire no more. This was the fiercest giant that ever I met with, save one in the mount of Araby, which I overcame, but this was greater and fiercer. Then the knights fetched the club and the kirtle, and some of the treasure they took to themselves, and returned again to the host.

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[At the Battle of Soissons]

Then the battles approached and shoved and shouted on both sides, and great strokes were smitten on both sides, many men overthrown, hurt, and slain; and great valiances, prowesses and appertices of war were that day showed, which were over long to recount the noble feats of every man, for they should contain an whole volume. But in especial, King Arthur rode in the battle exhorting his knights to do well, and himself did as nobly

[1] Modernised version of Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*, Book V, chapters five and eight, translated by E. Strachey and A. W. Pollard, made available online by the Project Gutenberg: *http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext98/1mart10.txt*

with his hands as was possible a man to do; he drew out Excalibur his sword, and awaited ever whereas the Romans were thickest and most grieved his people, and anon he addressed him on that part, and hew and slew down right, and rescued his people; and he slew a great giant named Galapas, which was a man of an huge quantity and height, he shorted him and smote off both his legs by the knees, saying, Now art thou better of a size to deal with than thou were, and after smote off his head.

d. John Leland's Itinerary [1]

The first River be side *Tyne* that I passid over was Clardue [Claerddu], that is to say *Blak Clare*, no great Streame but cumming thorough Cragges. In the farther Side of hit I saw ii. veri poore Cotagis for Somer Dayres for Catel. and hard by were ii. Hillettes, thorough the wich *Clarduy* passith, wher they fable that a Gigant striding was wont to wasch his Hondes, and that *Arture* killid hym. The Dwellers say also that the Gigant was buried therby, and shew the Place.

e. Siôn Dafydd Rhys on Cewri Cymru ('Welsh Giants') [2]

And all these Giants were of enormous size, and (they were) in the time of Idris Gawr, which Idris was king and chief over them. And in the land of Meirionydd also, and close to Penn Aran in Penllyn, and under the place called Bwlch-y-groes, is a grave of great size, where they say Lytta or Ritta or Rithonwy or Itto Gawr was buried; whose body some of the tribe of Giants moved from Eryri to somewhere near Mynydd Aran Fawr in Penllyn. This Ricca Gawr was the one with whom Arthur had fought and killed in Eryri. And this Giant had made for himself a mantle (pilis) of beards of the kings he had killed. And he sent to Arthur to order him to cut off his own beard and send it to him. And as Arthur was chief of the kings, he would place his beard above the other beards as an honour to Arthur. And if he would not do that, he asked Arthur to come and fight with him, and that the strongest of them should make a mantle from the beard of the other. And when they went to fight, Arthur obtained the victory, and he took the Giant's beard and his mantle.

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1 John Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary, in Nine Volumes*, third edition (Oxford: James Fletcher and Joseph Pote, 1770), V, p. 83.

2 R. Bromwich and D. Simon Evans (ed.), *Culhwch and Olwen. An edition and study of the oldest Arthurian tale* (Cardiff, 1992), p. lvii. Further Arthurian giant-killings recorded from Welsh folklore by Rhys can be found above (pp. 2-3) and in C. Grooms, *The Giants of Wales. Cewri Cymru*, Welsh Studies volume 10 (Lampeter: Edwin Meller, 1993), pp. 300-05, 310-13, 316.

The Arthuriad is a series of brief studies and resource books concerned with lesser-known aspects of the later Arthurian legend. It is published, compiled and written by Caitlin R. Green. The original of this volume is archived at *www.arthuriana.co.uk/arthuriad/Arthuriad_VolOne.pdf* and should be cited from there.

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