

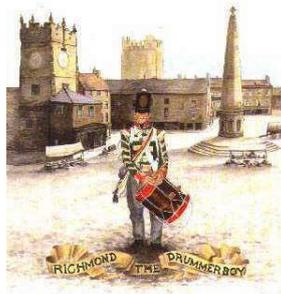


The Myth of 'Richmond's Little Drummer Boy'

Could it be that Lewis Carroll came up with the idea of 'Alice's Adventures Underground' from hearing about 'The Legend of the Drummer Boy'?

Around forty years prior to Lewis Carroll moving to Richmond, North Yorkshire, legend has it that a little drummer boy was lowered underground into a dark deep tunnel that supposedly linked Richmond Castle and Easby Abbey.

As a child Lewis grew up with the legend of the 'Drummer Boy', consequently the book he first wrote was originally called, 'Alice's Adventures Underground' before it was renamed 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'



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RICHMOND North Riding of Yorkshire

Legend has it there used to be a tunnel connecting Easby Abbey to Richmond Castle.

After many hundreds of years, the tunnel was rediscovered at the castle, but had been quite damaged over the passing of time; only a small boy could pass through the fallen rubble.

A very brave drummer boy volunteered to follow the tunnel and beat his drum as he went, so that the soldiers above could hear him and follow the path of the tunnel to Easby, thereby discovering the Abbey entrance.

Half way between the Castle and the Abbey, the drumming came to an abrupt stop, and the brave little soldier was never seen again.

Myth has it that the rhythm of the boys drumming sent shivers through the souls of the brave soldiers who followed the beat above. What was of more interest to the Little Drummer Boy was what lay ahead, had the drumming awoken something in the depths below, every hair on the little Drummer Boy's body tingled electrified by fear, he knew there was something ahead he felt it in every bone in his body, he was only a little boy, but he had the courage of a Lion he continued onward till he came to yet another cavern. He took his torch the smoke slight but still got into his eyes, he managed to light one of the torches that hung on the wall of the cave. The boy heard the scraping of metal on stone even before his eyes could focus; he knew it was the

sound of armour shields and swords scraping against the Cavern walls and floors and as his eyes focused he saw a legion of soldiers awakening from slumber as though they'd slept for a thousand years, yet with banners, swords lance and shields gleaming as though they had been freshly polished.

It is said that the Drummer Boy discovered the cavern where King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table slept awaiting for England in her hour of need.

Realising he had stopped drumming, he was about to start again, before he could one of the Knights raised his hand and gestured halt. Sleepily the Knight nearest asked the Little Drummer Boy 'Is the shoreline of our fair land, England under attack? All the scraping shuffling and scuffling suddenly fell silent all eyes focused on the Little Drummer Boy.

No answered the Boy.

Then now is not the time to awaken our King, Arthur of the Britons, who commands only to be awoken should England's shores be breeched. The knights went back to there slumber inviting the Brave Drummer Boy to join there legion.

Having been brought up listening to Fables around campfires of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, what boy could say no to such an offer?

It is said that even today people have heard the beat of the drum coming from beneath the earth, but do not worry for it be; only the sound of the drummer boy practising as he stirs from his slumber, twice they say every hundred years.

King Arthur his legion of men and the little drummer boy, if needed, will be awakened from their slumbering should the Country call its men to arms.

I believe too that they'd rise again to defend fair England's shores in our hour of need, these brave brothers of our forefathers.



Richmond in the Snow

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