

ALBERT AND THE 'EADSMAN

by Marriott Edgar (1937)

On young Albert Ramsbottom's birthday
His parents asked what he'd like most;
He said, "To see Tower of London,
And gaze upon Anne Boleyn's Ghost."

They felt this request were unusual,
And at first to refuse were inclined,
'Til Pa said, "A trip to t'metrollopse
Might broaden the little lad's mind."

They took 'charrybank' up to London,
And got there at quarter to 'fower',
Then seeing that pubs wasn't open
They went straightaway to the Tower.

They didn't think much to the building,
'Tweren't what they'd been led to suppose,
And the 'Bad Word' Tower didn't impress 'em,
They said Blackpool 'ad got one of those.

At last Albert found a Beefeater,
And filled the old chap with alarm
By asking for t'Ghost of Anne Boleyn,
As carried 'er 'ead 'neath 'er arm.

Said Beefeater, "You ought to come Fridays,
If it's Ghost of Anne Boleyn you seek,
Her union now limits her output,
And she only gets one walk a week."

"But", he said, "if it's ghosts that you're after,
There's Lady Jane Grey's to be seen,
She runs around chased by the 'Eadsman
At midnight on th'old Tower Green."

They waited on t'green 'til near midnight,
Then thinking they'd time for a 'sup',
They took out what food they'd brought with them
And waited for t'ghost to turn up.

On first stroke of twelve, up jumped Albert,
His mouth full of cold dripping toast,
With his stick with the 'orse's 'ead 'andle
He pointed and said, " 'Ere's the Ghost!"

They felt their skins going all goosey
As Lady Jane's Spectre drew near,
And Albert fair swallowed his tonsils
When the 'Eadsman an' all did appear.

The 'Eadsman chased Jane round the grass patch,
They saw his axe flash in the moon,
And seeing as poor lass were 'eadless
They wondered what next he would prune.

He suddenly caught sight of Albert,
As midnight was on its last chime;
As he lifted his axe Father murmured,
"We'll get the insurance this time."

At that mother rose, taking umbridge;
She said, "Put that cleaver away.
You're not cutting our Albert's 'ead off,
Yon collar were clean on today."

The brave little lad stood undaunted,
'Til the Ghost were within half a pace,
Then taking the toast he were eating,
Slapped it, dripping side down, in Ghost's face.

'Twere a proper set back for the 'Eadsman;
He let out one howl of despair,
Then taking his lady friend with him
He disappeared - just like that there.

When Pa saw the way as they vanished,
He trembled with fear and looked blue,
'Til Ma went and patted his shoulder
And said, "It's alright love, we saw it too."

Some say 'twere the dripping that done it,
From a roast leg of mutton it came,
And as th' 'Eadsman 'ad been a Beefeater,
They reckoned he vanished from shame.

And the round Tower Green from that moment,
They've ne'er seen a sign of a ghost,
But when t'Beefeaters go on night duty
They take slices of cold dripping toast.