

1889

MAGGIE'S VISIT TO OXFORD (June 9th to 13th, 1889)

Lewis Carroll

Carroll, Lewis (pen name of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) (1832-1898) - English novelist, poet, photographer, and mathematician, best known for his fantastical childrens' classics. He was a mathematical lecturer at Oxford. Maggie's Visit to Oxford (1889) - One of Lewis Carroll's poems. Written for Maggie Bowman. Opening lines: When Maggie once to Oxford came, / On tour as "Bootles Baby," ...

MAGGIE'S VISIT TO OXFORD (Written for Maggie Bowman.)

WHEN Maggie once to Oxford came, On tour as "Bootles' Baby",
She said, "I'll see this place of fame, However dull the day be."

So with her friend she visited The sights that it was rich in: And
first of all she popped her head Inside the Christ Church kitchen.

The Cooks around that little child Stood waiting in a ring: And
every time that Maggie smiled Those Cooks began to sing
Shouting the Battle-cry of Freedom!

"Roast, boil and bake, For Maggie's sake: Bring cutlets fine For her
to dine, Meringues so sweet For her to eat
For Maggie may be Bootles' Baby!"

Then hand in hand in pleasant talk They wandered and admired
The Hall, Cathedral and Broad Walk, Till Maggie's feet were tired:
To Worcester Garden next they strolled, Admired its quiet lake:
Then to St. John, a college old, Their devious way they take.

In idle mood they sauntered round Its lawn so green and flat, And
in that garden Maggie found A lovely Pussy-Cat!

A quarter of an hour they spent In wandering to and fro: And
everywhere that Maggie went, The Cat was sure to go
Shouting the Battle-cry of Freedom!

"Maiow! Maiow!

Come, make your bow, Take off your hats, Ye Pussy-Cats!
And purr and purr, To welcome her, For Maggie may be Bootles'
Baby!"

So back to Christ Church, not too late For them to go and see A
Christ Church undergraduate, Who gave them cakes and tea.

Next day she entered with her guide The garden called "Botanic",
 And there a fierce Wild Boar she spied, Enough to cause a panic:
 But Maggie didn't mind, not she, She would have faced, alone,
 That fierce wild boar, because, you see, The thing was made of
 stone.

On Magdalen walls they saw a face That filled her with delight, A
 giant face, that made grimace And grinned with all its might.

A little friend, industrious, Pulled upwards all the while The
 corner of its mouth, and thus He helped that face to smile!

"How nice", thought Maggie, "it would be If I could have a friend
 To do that very thing for me And make my mouth turn up with
 glee, By pulling at one end."

In Magdalen Park the deer are wild With joy, that Maggie brings
 Some bread a friend had given the child, To feed the pretty things.

They flock round Maggie without fear: They breakfast and they
 lunch, They dine, they sup, those happy deer Still, as they munch
 and munch, Shouting the Battle-cry of Freedom!

"Yes, Deer are we, And dear is she!"

We love this child So sweet and mild: We all rejoice At Maggie's
 voice: We all are fed With Maggie's bread...

For Maggie may be Bootles' Baby!"

They met a Bishop on their way...

A Bishop large as life, With loving smile that seemed to say "Will
 Maggie be my wife?"

Maggie thought not, because, you see, She was so very young, And
 he was old as old could be...

So Maggie held her tongue.

"My Lord, she's Bootles' Baby, we Are going up and down", Her
 friend explained, "that she may see The sights of Oxford Town."

"Now say what kind of place it is," The Bishop gaily cried.

"The best place in the Provinces!" That little maid replied.

Away, next morning, Maggie went From Oxford town: but yet The
 happy hours she there had spent She could not soon forget.

The train is gone, it rumbles on: The engine-whistle screams; But
 Maggie deep in rosy sleep...

And softly in her dreams, Whispers the Battle-cry of Freedom.

"Oxford, good-bye!" She seems to sigh.

"You dear old City, With gardens pretty, And lanes and flowers,
 And college-towers, And Tom's great Bell..."

Farewell- farewell: For Maggie may be Bootles' Baby!"

THE END