

= Jack and Jill (nursery rhyme) =

" Jack and Jill " (sometimes " Jack and Gill " , particularly in earlier versions) is a traditional English nursery rhyme . The Roud Folk Song Index classifies this tune and its variations as number 10266 . The rhyme dates back at least to the 18th century and exists with different numbers of verses each with a number of variations . Several theories have been advanced to explain its origins and to suggest meanings for the lyrics .

= = Lyrics and structure = =

The first and most commonly repeated verse is :

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water .
Jack fell down and broke his crown ,
And Jill came tumbling after .

Many verses have been added to the rhyme , including a version with a total of 15 stanzas in a chapbook of the 19th century . The second verse , probably added as part of these extensions has become a standard part of the nursery rhyme . Early versions took the form :

Up Jack got , and home did trot ,
As fast as he could caper ;
To old Dame Dob , who patched his nob
With vinegar and brown paper .

By the early 20th century this had been modified in some collections , such as L. E. Walter 's , Mother Goose 's Nursery Rhymes (London , 1919) to :

Up Jack got and home did trot ,
As fast as he could caper ;
And went to bed and bound his head
With vinegar and brown paper .

A third verse , sometimes added to the rhyme , was first recorded in a 19th @-@ century chapbook and took the form :

Then Jill came in , and she did grin ,
To see Jack 's paper plaster ;
Her mother whipt her , across her knee ,
For laughing at Jack 's disaster .

Twentieth @-@ century versions of this verse include :

When Jill came in how she did grin
To see Jack 's paper plaster ;
Mother vexed did whip her next
For causing Jack 's disaster .

The rhyme is made up of quatrains , with a rhyming scheme of abcb (with occasional internal rhymes) , using falling rhymes (where the rhyming sound is on a relatively unstressed syllable : de @-@ emphasising the rhyme) and a trochaic rhythm (with the stress falling on the first of a pair of syllables) , known as a ballad form , which is common in nursery rhymes . The melody commonly associated with the rhyme was first recorded by the composer and nursery rhyme collector James William Elliott in his National Nursery Rhymes and Nursery Songs (1870) . The Roud Folk Song Index , which catalogues folk songs and their variations by number , classifies the song as 10266 .

= = Meaning and origins = =

The rhyme has traditionally been seen as a nonsense verse , particularly as the couple go up a hill to find water , which is often thought to be found at the bottom of hills . Vinegar and brown paper were a home cure used as a method to draw out bruises on the body . The phrase " Jack and Jill " , indicating a boy and a girl , was in use in England as early as the 16th century . A comedy was

performed at the Elizabethan court in 1567 @-@ 8 with the title Jack and Jill and the phrase was used twice by Shakespeare : in A Midsummer Night 's Dream , which contains the line : " Jack shall have Jill ; Nought shall go ill " (III : ii : 460 @-@ 2) and in Love 's Labour 's Lost , which has the lines : " Our wooing doth not end like an old play ; Jack hath not Jill " (V : ii : 874 ? 5) , suggesting that it was a phrase that indicated a romantically attached couple , as in the proverb " A good Jack makes a good Jill " .

Jack is the most common name used in English language nursery rhymes and by the 18th century represented an archetypal Everyman hero , while by the end of the Middle Ages Jill or Gill had come to mean a young girl or a sweetheart . However , the woodcut that accompanied the first recorded version of the rhyme showed two boys (not a boy and a girl) , and used the spelling Gill not Jill . This earliest printed version comes from a reprint of John Newbery 's Mother Goose 's Melody , thought to have been first published in London around 1765 . The rhyming of " water " with " after " , was taken by Iona and Peter Opie to suggest that the first verse may date from the first half of the 17th century .

= = Interpretation = =

While the true origins of the rhyme are unknown there are several theories . As is common with nursery rhyme exegesis , complicated metaphors are often said to exist within the lyrics of Jack and Jill . Most explanations post @-@ date the first publication of the rhyme and have no corroborating evidence . These include the suggestion by S. Baring @-@ Gould in the 19th century that the events were a version of the story told in the 13th @-@ century Prose Edda Gylfaginning written by Icelandic historian Snorri Sturluson , who stated that in Norse mythology , Hjúki and Bil , brother and sister (respectively) , were taken up from the earth by the moon (personified as the god Máni) as they were fetching water from the well called Byrgir , bearing on their shoulders the cask called Saegr and the pole called Simul . Around 1835 John Bellenden Ker suggested that Jack and Jill were two priests , and this was enlarged by Katherine Elwes in 1930 to indicate that Jack represented Cardinal Wolsey (c.1471 ? 1530) ; and Jill was Bishop Tarbes , who negotiated the marriage of Mary Tudor to the French king in 1514 .

It has also been suggested that the rhyme records the attempt by King Charles I to reform the taxes on liquid measures . He was blocked by Parliament , so subsequently ordered that the volume of a Jack (1 / 2 pint) be reduced , but the tax remained the same . This meant that he still received more tax , despite Parliament 's veto . Hence " Jack fell down and broke his crown " (many pint glasses in the UK still have a line marking the 1 / 2 pint level with a crown above it) " and Jill came tumbling after " . The reference to " Jill " (actually a " gill " , or 1 / 4 pint) is said to reflect that the gill dropped in volume as a consequence .

The suggestion has also been made that Jack and Jill represent Louis XVI of France , who was deposed and beheaded in 1793 (lost his crown) , and his Queen , Marie Antoinette (who came tumbling after) , a theory made difficult by the fact that the earliest printing of the rhyme pre @-@ dates those events . There is also a local belief that the rhyme records events in the village of Kilmersdon in Somerset in 1697 . When a local spinster became pregnant , the putative father is said to have died from a rock fall and the woman died in childbirth soon after .