

If Puckaster Cove, on the Isle of Wight, is named after Puck, King of the Fairies, surely there must be a fairy tale to go along with it?

Indeed there is such a fantastical tale, penned by Abraham Elder and published in the pages of Bentley's Miscellany in 1839. It tells of a kindly soul, John Kann, who warns a neighbour not to build on the fairies' playground. The fairy-folk are grateful, and one night treat John Kann, magically reduced in size, Alice in Wonderland like, by a pinch of snuff, to a wonderful feast. And also to a secret that will bring him great reward. But what was that secret? And what happened when John Kann told that secret to another?

The original tale is republished here, along with a more recent retelling of it, and a short historical note on Puckaster Cove.

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ISLAND TALES

A Legend of Puckaster Cove