

**WILLIE WESTON'S
WONDERFUL
SIXPENCE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649347056

Willie Weston's wonderful sixpence by D. Baker

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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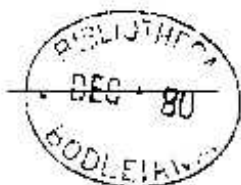
**WILLIE WESTON'S
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SIXPENCE**

WILLIE WESTON'S
WONDERFUL SIXPENCE:

A Story for Boys.

BY

D. BAKER.



London:
NEWMAN AND CO.,
43, HART STREET, OXFORD STREET.
1879.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

251. g. 93.

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He lived in a common-place little red-brick house, which stood in a row of common-place red-brick houses, each one so like the other, that at first you could hardly tell which was which.

But if you were to look closely you would see that Willie's home was not quite like the other houses. In some the doors were always open, and generally there was a steam from washing coming out, filling all the air with the smell of soapsuds.

Out of some of the houses used to come tumbling a whole crowd of noisy children with dirty faces, who rushed out in such a hurry to escape from the

sounds of a scolding voice inside, that they would almost knock down anyone going by.

Some of the houses had broken windows, or the blinds hanging crooked, or had the paint off the doors; but one house had bright clean windows and pretty white curtains hanging inside, and two big china dogs sitting on the window sill, keeping guard over three pots of geraniums, and that was Willie's home.

In that big town the sky was not blue as it is in country villages, and if you went for a walk in the fields near, you would see the trees and hedges all so blackened

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with smoke that you would hardly like to touch them. Even the little flowers which came out in Spring soon got quite black and dusty there.

And if you walked a little way you would soon hear a clattering of chains, and a pumping of water, and a rattle of machinery, and you would come to a big coal mine, with an engine by its side working hard all day and all night to draw up coals and let down the miners who were to work there.

It was not pleasant to go down into the dark mine, away from the fresh air and bright sunshine, and to work hard in breaking out the coal, in narrow, hot

passages, where often there was not room for a man to stand upright. Often, too, the miners were in danger from sudden outbursts of water, or from gas taking fire and making a terrible explosion. But they got high wages, and so they went down into the mine week after week, and worked hard in getting out coal for us to burn.

Samuel Weston, Willie's father, worked in this great pit, and on half-holidays Willie used often to go and wait at the pit's mouth, till the rattling chain and puffing engine drew up the bucket in which his father stood. Such a sight as his father was ! With his face and

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his clothes all black with coal dust, but always with a good-natured smile ready for his little boy. Then Willie would take his father's black hand in his little clean one, and they would go home together to supper.

Very grand suppers they used to have in those days, for Samuel Weston was a good workman and earned high wages, two pounds a week.

Part of the two pounds had, of course, to be put by for the rent, but all the rest Weston and his wife used to spend in enjoying themselves. If Mrs. Weston saw a smart shawl in the shop window, or a bonnet with a long feather, or even

a velvet cloak, she never thought twice about the expense, if she had a fancy to get it. Unfortunately her taste was not very good, for she would have looked far nicer in pretty quiet bonnets than in the gaudy vulgar ones she used to buy, but Willie and his father thought the gay colours beautiful.

Then—to come back to what I was saying before—such grand suppers as they used to have! Spring chickens, and salmon, and ducks, and green peas, and all sorts of other good things.

To be sure, they cost a good bit of money, but then Weston used to say—

“I work hard all day, and I don't see