

**THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY IN TEN
VOLUMES, INCLUDING POEMS
AND PROSE SKETCHES; VOL. VII,
PP. 1705-1963**

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The Complete Works of James Whitcomb Riley in Ten Volumes, including Poems and Prose Sketches; Vol. VII, pp. 1705-1963 by James Whitcomb Riley

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JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

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"Wunst they wuz a little boy went out in the woods to shoot a bear"

Memorial Edition

The Complete Works of
James Whitcomb Riley

IN TEN VOLUMES

*Including Poems and Prose Sketches, many
of which have not heretofore been pub-
lished; an authentic Biography, an
elaborate Index and numerous Illus-
trations in color from Paintings
by Howard Chandler Christy
and Eitel Franklin Betts*

VOLUME VII



HARPER & BROTHERS PUBLISHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON

The Complete Works of James Whitcomb Riley

CASSANDER

"CASSANDER! O Cassander!"—her mother's
voice seems cle'r
As ever, from the old back-porch, a-hollerin' fer
her—
Especially in airly Spring—like May, two year'
ago—
Last time she hollered fer her,—and Cassander
didn't hear!

Cassander was so chirpy-like and sociable and free,
And good to ever'body, and wuz even good to me
Though *I* wuz jes' a common—well, a farm-hand,
don't you know,
A-workin' on her father's place, as pore as pore
could be!

Her bein' jes' a' only child, Cassander had her way
A good-'eal more'n other girls; and neighbors ust
to say
She looked most like her Mother, but wuz turned
most like her Pap,—
Except *he* had no use fer *town*-folks then—ner *yit*
to-day!

I can't claim she encouraged *me*: She'd let me drive
 her in
 To town sometimes, on Saturd'ys, and fetch her
 home ag'in,
 Tel onc't she 'scused "Old Moll" and me,—and
 some blame' city-chap,
He driv her home, two-forty style, in face o' kith-
 and-kin,

She even tried to make him stay fer supper, but I
 'low
 He must 'a' kind o' 'spicioned some objections.—
 Anyhow,
 Her mother callin' at her, whilst her father stood
 and shook
 His fist,—the town-chap turnt his team and made
 his partin' bow,

"Cassander! *You*, Cassander!"—hear her mother
 jes' as plain,
 And see Cassander blushin' like the peach tree
 down the lane,
 Whilst I sneaked on apast her, with a sort o'
 hang-dog look,
 A-feelin' cheap as sorghum and as green as sugat-
 cane!

(You see, I'd *skooted* when she met her *town-beau*
 —when, in fact,
 Ef I'd had sense I'd *stayed* fer her.—But sense wuz
 what I lacked!

So I'd cut home ahead o' her, so's I could tell 'em
what
Wuz keepin' her. And—*you* know how a jealous
fool'll act!)

I past her, I wuz sayin',—but she never turnt her
head;
I swallered-like and cle' red my th' oat—but that wuz
all I said;
And whilse I hoped fer some word back, it wuzn't
what I got.—
That girl'll not stay stiller on the day she's layin'
dead!

Well, that-air silence *lasted!*—Ust to listen ever'
day
I'd be at work and hear her mother callin' thataway;
I'd *sight* Cassander, mayby, cuttin' home acrost
the blue
And drizzly fields; but nary answer—nary word
to say!

Putt in about two weeks o' that—two weeks o' rain
and mud,
Er mostly so: I couldn't plow. The old crick like
a flood:
And, lonesome as a borried dog, I'd wade them
old woods through—
The dogwood blossoms white as snow, and rebuds
red as blood.

Last time her mother called her—sich a morning
like as now:
The robins and the bluebirds, and the blossoms on
the bough—
And this wuz yit 'fore breckfust, with the sun out
at his best,
And hosses kickin' in the barn—and dry enough to
plow.

“Cassander! O Cassander!” . . . And her only
answer—What?—
A letter, twisted round the cook-stove damper,
smokin'-hot,
A-statin': "I wuz married on that day of all the
rest,
The day my husband fetched me home—ef you ain't
all fergot!"

“Cassander! O Cassander!” seems, allus, 'long in
May,
I hear her mother callin' her—a-callin', night and
day—
“Cassander! O Cassander!” allus callin', as I say,
“Cassander; O Cassander!” jes' a-callin' thataway.