

The pedlar of Swaffham

Once, in the village of Swaffam, there lived a poor pedlar called John Chapman. He was so poor, there were holes in the roof of his cottage, no glass in his windows and no money in his pocket. In the summer months, John Chapman would snooze at the bottom of the garden under the old apple tree. One night he had a dream. He dreamed that he should travel to London Bridge where he would find his fortune. The next day he travelled. He travelled day and night, night and day and day and night again until at last he was standing on London Bridge.

John Chapman stood there a whole day and nothing happened except that his toes grew cold. He waited another day and again nothing happened except that his stomach became empty. He waited almost the entire third day when a policeman passed by. "What are you doing hanging around here all the time?" he asked.

"I had a dream that I needed to come to London Bridge to find my fortune," John Chapman told the policeman.

"You're stupid," scoffed the policeman. "Dreams don't mean anything. Why, last night I had a silly dream about a place called Swaffam! I mean where's Swaffam? and a chap I've never heard of called John Chapman. I dreamed that at the bottom of his garden was an old apple tree where a pot of gold was buried. What nonsense!"

"I see," said John Chapman. "Thank you for your advice."

John Chapman went straight home. He travelled day and night, night and day and day and night again until he got home. He found a spade and indeed dug up that pot of gold.

Now, John Chapman's cottage has a roof that doesn't leak, windows with glass and money in his pocket. 'How strange,' he thought, soon after. "To think I dreamed for so many years of finding my fortune and it was there at home all the time."

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