

LITTLE TICH



Hello there! My name's Little Tich. But, if you want my real name, that would be Harry Relph. It's a good job I was only little because I was my dad's 16th child so there wasn't much room in our house! I stopped growing when I was ten and stayed 4 foot 6 inches tall for the rest of my life. I was also born with six fingers on each hand.

 I wanted to make the best of what I'd got so, by the time I was ten, I was dancing and playing the tin whistle round the pubs in Kent where I lived.

CAN YOU THINK OF OTHER ENTERTAINERS WHO PERFORMED AT A YOUNG AGE?

 The extra fingers came in handy playing the tin whistle but some people used to make fun of me and say hurtful things because I was different. That's why, when you see pictures of me, I usually have my hands in my pockets and I always wore gloves on stage.

**CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT
IT'S LIKE TO FEEL
DIFFERENT?**

I know my size was used to attract the crowds at first and it was because I became so famous that the word 'titchy' entered the English language, meaning small. But what I lacked in height, I more than made up for in talent and skill and I became a genius comedian, singer, dancer and character actor, creating hilarious characters as part of my act. By the time I first performed on a London stage, I was already famous – especially for my Big Boot Dance. Well, you try balancing and dancing on wooden boots that are 28 inches long! I looked like I was defying gravity and I was so good that I made it look easy.

DO OTHER PERFORMERS BALANCE ON THINGS?

 I took my act to America and Europe and I was very popular in Paris. I felt at home there because they really appreciated my kind of clowning and character acting. I even won an award for my contribution to French theatre.

LITTLE TICH



{ 'THE WORLD'S GREATEST GENIUS' }

LUCIEN GUITRY (FRENCH ACTOR-MANAGER)

Harry Relph, professionally known as Little Tich was born in Kent on July 21st 1867. He started performing when he was only 10 years old, performing his dance act, accompanied by a tin whistle, in local pubs. Little Tich was born with six fingers on each hand and was 4 foot 6 inches tall. From his earliest professional performances in 1880, his unusually short stature was always used as an attraction to bring in the crowds.

HARRY PROVED HIMSELF TO BE A GENIUS COMEDIAN AND WONDERFUL DANCER; so much so that, by the time he performed for the first time on a London stage in 1884, he was already well-known. Little Tich sang comic songs and could play many instruments but **HIS MOST POPULAR ACTS WERE HIS ECCENTRIC OR ACROBATIC DANCES.** His speciality was an act called the Big-Boot Dance in which he wore 28 inch long wooden boots. He stood on the very tips of his toes then leaned at extraordinary angles, appearing for all the world to defy gravity! By the late 1800s, he was known as one of Britain's best comedians. He travelled to America and Europe, performing in Paris where he became very popular and was honoured by the Académie Française for his services to French Theatre.

Little Tich married three times, twice to dancers, Laurie Brooks and Julia Reci, and finally to Ivy Latimer, an actress and singer. He had two children. In 1927 Little Tich died age 60.

LITTLE TICH



ON 21 JULY 1867 HARRY RELPH
(soon to become known as Little Tich)
WAS BORN IN KENT.

HARRY WAS BORN WITH SIX FINGERS
on each hand and grew to be only
4 FOOT 6 INCHES TALL.

HARRY STARTED PERFORMING WHEN HE WAS ONLY
10 YEARS OLD.

His first professional performance was at
GRAVESEND PLEASURE GARDEN
IN 1880.

LITTLE TICH'S TRADEMARK ACT WAS CALLED THE
BIG-BOOT DANCE
where he would balance on 28 inch-long
wooden boots. He also created a selection of
funny characters that were favourites among
his fans.

HE PERFORMED IN BOTH AMERICA AND EUROPE,
spending a lot of time in Paris, where
he was honoured for his contribution to
FRENCH THEATRE.

LITTLE TICH MARRIED THREE TIMES
AND HAD A SON FROM HIS FIRST WIFE
AND A DAUGHTER FROM HIS THIRD WIFE.

IN 1927 LITTLE TICH HAD A STROKE AND DIED A YEAR LATER AT HIS HOME IN HENDON, AGED 60.