

An "Old Boy's" Response

By Ed. W. Sandys

WOULD I lend a hand? Would a ducklet swim?

If tossed a yard from the old creek's brim?

That dear old creek—sweet in Summer-time—
With its deep-dyed flood and its soapy slime,
From Taylor's Woolen Mills pouring down
And helping the Old Boys "paint the town."
Talking of paint—my mind runs crack
When Old Boy Harper was quite a crack,
When Old Jack Oswald and Old Bob Fry
Used a brand of paint which resembled dye,
(It could fade like blazes and not half try!)
Apropos—Fred Harper, with brush and can
Tinting Wess Jackson's "Little Old Man,"
(This prior to day of Sam Heffernan)
Wess Jackson vowed that it "wouldn't do,"
Fred called him down and the paint-brush flew—

Why all the row? let the truth be said
The hair on the figure was painted red
And all who knew Jackson also know
'Twas a raw, red sore—but let it go!
Old Cy. Merriam carved that sign
From a butt of cross-grained, old red pine
And "Wess" didn't like it, you see, because
'Twas more like Jackson than Jackson was!

To change. Go 'way back, sit down and stare.

There are smoke and flames, and a world of care,
And the last dull cinder blackens slow
On the steaming ruins of Old "Pork Row."
Another fire—a thing of fear—
A good Old Boy was the gallant Weir—
Fit as the best to be mentioned here.
Again, chin-high to the window sill,
Watching the end of Van Allen's mill,
Of the old frame church, just above our place,
Of old "Belmont House," as it passed to grace.

Mighty little your smart fire laddies knew
Of "Break-Her-Down-Number-One!"
"Break-Her-Down-Number-Two!"

The town then stood like the straw to flame,
Till the day when the Hyslop and Ronald came.

And the testings there were—"twas uncivil war"
"Twixt the "Silsby" and the old "Hand R."
But Old Boys found life a pleasant dream
While tossing their hats to the hissing stream,
Till now and then Old Boys too bold
Got the stream in the back—and it knocked them cold!

Were there schools? You bet! Well the Old Boys know

There were schools and *gods*, to our lasting woe!

For most Old Boys were dyed in sin,
Most Old Boys' teaching was hammered in,
And it seems, looking back to that distant day,

That most Old Teachers earned their pay!
Steadfast and earnest, leal and true
Were Old Dames Little and Barclay too,
But the one who leathered me most of all
Was a sterling teacher—Old Miss McColl.
She hammered me North and warmed me South,

She tanned me proper from heels to mouth,
But she carried the point she had in view,
I own to it here—and gladly too!

The treatment was lasting—I'd almost bet
When the wind is East, I can feel it yet.
Rare Old Boy Birch never had a crack
At the raw Sun-burn on my erring back,

But Old Boy Marling and Dickson too
Had the knack of changing the red to blue.

They knew the deadliest spot to strike
And most Old Boys fared all alike.
Old Ed. Stoddart, Old Billy McCrae,
Old Sid. Stephenson too, they say,

Old "Jack" Abram, Old Bill Vaughn,
Old Lee Williams—these Old Boys saw
Old Boy Marling just slicing through
Old Dick Holmes and Old George McKewen,

Old Boys McPherson, "Lafe" and "Graham,"
Old Woods and Eberts—all fared the same—
Old McGarvins, Wilsons—up-creek
"fellers"—

Down-river Dolsons, ditto McKellars,
All got it across the back and hands
Just the same as did Old Boy Sandys!

There was sport galore in that olden Day,
For each Old Boy had some game to play.

Long ages ago, the old Barracks frowned
On what then was, as now, a choice play-ground.

There were soldiers then, and Old Boys and Maids

Were always on hand for the dress parades.
And later, after the soldiers' rule,
The old Barracks served as a riding-school,
Where most of the Old Boys learned to speed
The old bone-shaker velocipede.

For a time lacrosse—for a time baseball,
But good old cricket outlasted all.
For points on this game Dame Rumor tells,
I should refer you to Old Bill Wells.

Never a better, fawn or lad,
Ever covered a wicket or donned a pad.
Though he's still an athlete—just in his prime—
Remember he's been there *all the time*,

And he's very wise—he should surely know
How Noah sailed, how Ham used to row,
The cut of Diana's sporting tops,

And how Nimrod broke his field-trial jogs,
If on any point he should be in doubt,
There is an Old Boy libellal to help him out,
And other Old Boys, if would seem to me
Who have been around since some time B. C.

And, lastly, the River! I almost cried
When I found the St. Lawrence was quite as wide,

For surely no grander stream are rolled
Than the Noble Thames in the days of old,
Not even the Hudson makes me forget
The dear old Thames, which at least was *set*.

It is sweet to think of that glorious day
When the bridge swung wide for the *Silver Sloop*,

When with Old Tap. Larwell, I risked a grave
As we paddled out just to "get her wave."

And the skating! Skating was *abating* then
When some of the Old Boys were almost men,
When Old Newt. Eberts cut pigeon-wings,
And Old "Nettie" Kirby made fancy rings,

While Old Joe Taylor and Old Dick Gill,
And Old Jim McLean were never still,
Then Old Bink Farrell could dodge them all
And fool Old Wells with a shiny ball,

And Old Joe Oldershaw did his best
To trip some fellows and *fool* the rest.

Then Old Dick Monek was considered fast
And Old John McGarvin was good to last,
And Old "Jack" Wadball, and "Ham," and
"Hank!"

And the two Old Bennets, Bill and Frank
Held places all in the foremost rank.

Too bad, Old Boys, but the white will show,
And Time is a stepper by no means slow,
He is trotting now, as though he had wings,
At a clip ne'er seen at Old Mineral Springs.

So let's have fun—we've no time to lag,
If we do, we surely will get the flag.

So here's a health and good wishes true
To the game Old Boys of the brave old crew—
And three times three—are you ready?—So!

To the Dear Old Home of the Long Ago—
To the Dear Old Friends that we used to know,
To the Dear Old Lost Ones lying low,
To the Dear Old Girls we used to beean

All together!—Let her go!



FRESHET AND SIXTH STREET BRIDGE, SPRING, 1867

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