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## Jack Hunter's Thanksgiving

How He Dined on Thanksgiving Day  
By DELIA ELLISON

Jack Hunter, a sailor boy, having come ashore with some companions on the arrival of his ship after a three years' cruise, following sailor customs, proceeded to blow in all his savings within a few days.

Now, this was sowing the wind to reap the whirlwind, for they had all received permission to go to their homes to spend Thanksgiving, and, having spent all his money instead, he had not the wherewithal to pay for a ticket on the railroad to anywhere.

"What'll you do, Jack," asked Joe Baxter, one of his mates—"go back aboard the ship for the ordinary Thanksgiving dinner of salt pork, with plum duff thrown in for Thanksgiving, or walk where you are going?"

"I'll not go to the ship," Jack replied. "I don't like the railroads, anyway. They're dangerous. They swing around the curves in a way to make an old salt sick, and if they don't make him sick they scare him to death, which is worse. There's no sea room on a railroad, and when two trains are comin' together head on on the same track there's no sheerin' off, and there's no savin' of life by jumpin' into the water, for there's nothin' but hard ground below. No, sir. I want an open sea for my meanderin'. I'm goin' to walk."

"What you going to do for grub on the way?"

"Reckon I'll fish in the streams."

"Fish! You can't eat the measly little fish that swim in fresh water."

This staggered Jack. He was born on the ocean, his father having been captain of a schooner, and his knowledge of the land was very meager. His



"YOU CAN'T BE MY MARGIE!"

parents were both dead, and he had no brothers or sisters; consequently he had no reason for going to where his mother had lived. There was no one he cared to see, no one with whom to eat a Thanksgiving dinner after he got there. He was somewhat discouraged at the information that fresh water fish were not eatable, for he could not think of any way to support himself on a journey except by grub out of the water. He hesitated whether to try it or go back on to the ship.

But there was one attraction that decided him to go on. During one year that he had lived on land he had played with a little girl named Margie. What her other name was he didn't know. Margie was the only being living—if, indeed, she did live—who connected him with the past. He longed to see her just once to ask her if she remembered playing hide and seek in the haycocks with him.

So he started out the morning of Thanksgiving day to walk to the village where he had spent this one year. He didn't remember much about the

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are just the right medicine for the children. When they are constipated—when their kidneys are out of order—when over-indulgence in some favorite food gives them indigestion—Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills will quickly and surely put them right. Purely vegetable, they neither sicken, weaken or gripe, like harsh purgatives. Guard your children's health by always keeping a box of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills in the house. They will

## Keep the Children Well

route, but had been told that he must proceed in a northwesterly direction. Baxter had 25 cents left, which he bestowed upon Jack. After a discussion as to how the money had best be spent it was decided that Jack would need a compass even more than food. So they stepped into a shop, bought a compass, and after a farewell handshake Jack started on his journey.

Jack soon found that he could get on better by inquiring the way than by relying on his compass, for sometimes the compass would take him across a bay, and a man he met told him how he could go by road. About noon, getting hungry, he stepped into a small restaurant and traded his compass for a couple of sandwiches. During the afternoon a glimmering of memory came to him as to the route he passed over, and here and there a house, a clump of trees, a meadow, a bridge, struck him familiarly. About dusk he came to the schoolhouse where he and Margie had learned to spell words of one and two syllables, had played at recess and had gone together to their homes after school let out.

After that he didn't need a compass or any one to tell him the way—that is, he wouldn't have needed either had it not been for night coming on. He pursued his way, guided rather by distance than sight, and presently coming to a crossroad, he remembered that Margie used to live down the road to the right for about half a mile. So he turned into it and walked on, though overhanging trees darkened the way.

Jack had proceeded down the crossroad about a quarter of a mile when he came to a house. It couldn't be the house where Margie had lived, for that house, as has been stated, was half a mile from the crossing of the roads. At any rate, it had seemed that distance to Jack sometimes when he trianguled it with his little seven-year-old legs. But what surprised him was that the house looked like the house in which Margie had lived. The only light was one downstairs in the rear. Jack went back where he saw the light and looked in through a window.

The sight he saw excited an appetite already keen. He was looking into a kitchen, and viands were cooking on a stove. There was no sound except the sizzling of the cooking viands. Jack put his hand to the sash and found he could easily raise it. He did so, and the odor of the cooking, mingled with the sound of the sizzling, was delicious to a hungry man. Together they took away every vestige of conscience. He climbed into the window, determined to partake of the refreshment before him.

The first thing he did was to throw open the oven door, and there was a turkey just turning a delicious brown. Jack had served a term in the galleys aboard ship, and he instinctively basted the sizzling bird. Then he uncovered a dish on the rear of the stove and from the delicious odor it emitted judged that it was a mince pie being warmed. Other dishes were in process of preparation, but Jack was so entranced with the turkey and the pie that he took little notice of them.

It was hard for him to wait till the turkey was thoroughly cooked, but he held on to himself and waited. Finally he could refrain no longer, and, "dishing up," he placed the various viands on the table and sat down to eat.

Jack remembered that his mother used to ask a blessing before each meal. He could not repeat a blessing to save his life, but he was so thankful for the delicious dinner provided for him by Providence that he shut his eyes, bent his head and expressed his thanks in his own peculiar way. Then, straightening up and opening his "blinkers," he sat for a few moments rigid. A young woman stood looking at him from the other end of the room. On her face was an expression of consternation at seeing a man sitting at her table about to eat her Thanksgiving dinner.

"Ship ahoy!" said Jack by way of speaking to this person, who had so suddenly appeared on the scene.

"Well, I declare!" was the reply.

"Would you mind tellin' me what port you hail from?"

"Would you mind tellin' me what you mean by making yourself at home in my house and eatin' my dinner?"

"Is this your dinner?"

"My dinner! Goodness gracious, what impudence!"

And Jack had been in his sailor togs

doubtless the girl would have been frightened out of her senses. As it was, she was simply astonished. Besides, Jack was a good looking chap, with an honest eye in his head, and when, realizing the situation, a smile broke out on his comely young face the owner of the dinner could not help responding in kind. Jack rose and in a few words told her how he had just reached port and had been given leave to go home for Thanksgiving; that he had no home and had been looking for a little girl he used to play with called Margie when hungry as a bear he had stumbled on a dinner. Then he begged her pardon for proposing to eat what belonged to her and added that he would go on a quarter of a mile farther to where Margie used to live when he was a boy.

"Why, my name is Margie," said the girl. "I'm Margaret Wharton."

"You can't be my Margie! She was a little bit of a— Anyway, it was farther from the crossroads to her house than this house is."

"Are you Jack Hunter?"

"Of course I am. How did you stumble on that?"

"What's the matter? Is this a story in a book, or am I Jack Hunter, able seaman on the?"

"You're Jack, and I'm Margie, and you're just come in time to eat a Thanksgiving dinner with me. Sit down."

They talked so fast, each constantly breaking in on what the other was saying without stopping from doing justice to the dinner, that it would be impossible to Margie just what they said, but Margie got in information that her parents were dead, her only brother was somewhere else and she was teaching school in a neighboring city. She had come to the old homestead to spend Thanksgiving by herself and while waiting for the dinner to be cooked had gone to a neighbor's to borrow some articles which she had forgotten to provide.

Well, to make a long story short, these two, each being quite alone in the world, decided, as Jack expressed it, to convey each other. Jack concluded not to go back to sea, accepting a position with a boat builder. In time Margie gave up her school, and the couple are now quite contented with their lot and under Margie's able management their finances slowly accumulating funds as well as a family.

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