

Young Canada Club

By DIXIE PATTON

THE PRIZE WINNERS

After reading and re-reading your stories, little folk, I have finally decided upon the prize winners. The honors in this contest go to two boys and a girl. A very surprising thing to me was that, in spite of the very difficult subject, some of the best stories were written by little people of eight and ten years.

The prize winners are: Linden Bolton, age 8, Bellhampton, Man.; Frederick Johnston, age 10, Stranraer, Sask., and Alcemena Bolton, age 12, Bellhampton, Man.

Having decided this contest on the merits of the stories wholly, I never noticed until this minute that two prizes are going to one family. I don't feel that it would be fair to either of these little people to cheat them out of a prize because they happened to be related.

Those who deserve especially honorable mention are:

Alvin Hefty, age 13, Taber, Alta.; Dorothy E. Johnston, age 8, Stranraer, Sask.; Christina Hope MacIver, age 15, Plenty, Sask.; Bernice Waugh, age 11, Stonybrook, Sask.; Muriel Fasson, age 10, Zelma, Sask.; Freda Fletcher, age 10, Brant, Alta.; Willie Chicken, age 10, Culross, Man.; Mary Frances Yates, age 14, Bedfordville, Sask.

DIXIE PATTON.

A NIGHT IN A TREE

A Prize Story

A long time ago, in Ontario, my aunt had a young man who use to come to see her. His name was William Johnson.

One time some men and boys thought they would play a trick on him. So they went and hid near the road where he had to go home, and started to yell like wolves. He got frightened and climbed up a tree and hollered all night for someone to come and chase the wolves away. He didn't get down till morning.

After a while the trees were all cut down and the land cleared, but nobody would ever cut down this tree. And people always called it Bill Johnson's tree. But after a while it died, it was so lonesome. Bill Johnson died too.

LINDEN BOLTON.

Bellhampton, Man., age 8.

THE OLD OAK CHAIR

In a little log shanty, far out on the prairie, is a little oak chair, very pretty, very small, so small that a child of ten could not sit in it. It is only for wee children of two and three. That chair has travelled many miles since it was made, two hundred and fifty-three years ago, in England.

The back of the chair is quaintly carved, and standing in bold relief are the letters D.B. and the date, 1661. And this is the story of the old oak chair:

Long ago there lived a man whose name was Daniel Baron. Civil war had, not so long ago, raged in England, but now Cromwell was dead and the rightful king reigned. Daniel Baron was poor, he was only a poor carpenter, and had several children. The youngest, little Mary, was just one year old. At meal times they all gathered round the large table, but Mary was too small. So her father said he would make her a chair of her own. He took an oak tree, perhaps a monarch of the forest, and cut and sawed it into thick planks. He took one portion to be the back, and chipped and carved day by day, till the oaken surface showed flowers and leaves, with his initials and the date. When the chair was finished he gave it to Mary, who was delighted.

By and by Mary grew up. She had children of her own, and they too sat in the little carved chair, and she told the story of grandpapa's gift. Since then it has descended thru the years, always to the youngest daughter of the family. My grandmother sat in it, and my mother, and I. It is in itself a tradition. It tells its own story, and brings us memories of days long past.

MARY FRANCES YATES.

Age 14.

CHASED BY WOLVES

The tradition in our family is something which happened to my Great-grandfather, a great many years ago, when the country was freshly settled and his family was young. He lived in a wild part of the country. In those days times were hard and he had to work hard all week, about twelve miles from home. He only got home on Saturday night.

One Monday morning he left orders when he went to work for the boys to meet him with the oxen and jumper, as he had to bring home a sack of flour from the mill that Saturday night. But during the week, when let out to brouse, one of the oxen stepped in a hole and sprained his foot and could not walk. Great-grandfather started out to walk home as usual with his sack of flour and, as he did not know about the oxen, he was expecting his boys and team to meet him, but he walked on mile after mile without meeting them.

Great-grandfather began to get tired, for it was getting cold and dark, and he was nearly half-way home and still no boys. He was greatly worried about what could have happened to prevent them coming to meet him. At last, when about two-thirds of the way home, he heard far behind him the plaintive cry of a wolf, which was immediately answered by one and then by several others. At first great-grandfather could not dream they could be trailing him. The howls grew louder and came nearer and he came to the conclusion that it was he they were trailing. He had no weapon and it was so cold he knew he would freeze before morning if he climbed a tree, so he knew his only chance was to get home before they could catch him. So he threw his bag of flour on a hollow fallen log beside the road and started to run for his life. In spite of his best efforts the dreadful howls came nearer and nearer. Great-grandfather threw off his coat and vest while running, which delayed the wolves, as when they came to them they stopped to fight and tear them up.

Great-grandfather was now almost in sight of the home clearing. At the edge of the clearing, just where the forest ended, there was an old dead stump, broken either by wind or lightning, up several feet from the ground. Two or three large slivers or sticks were loosened and hanging down. As he burst into the clearing the wolves were close behind. How he did it he never knew, but as the wolves rushed out behind him great-grandfather climbed to the top of the old stub. One great brute sprang and caught him by the heel, but great-grandfather wrenched off one of the large slivers and struck the brute on the head, which made it let go. He was now safe out of their reach and had a weapon to beat them down. He could see the lights in his own house at the other end of the clearing, perhaps half a mile away, and below him were the glowing eyes and gleaming white fangs of the wolves. He never forgot that dreadful sight. Great-grandmother and the boys had been expecting him home and when they heard the wolves they were afraid they were after him. A neighbor was there, so he and the boys made torches of cedar and pitch pine and hurried out with the gun. When the wolves saw the lights coming they ran away. Next great-grandfather knew he was on the ground at the foot of the stub. They took him home. It was a long time before he got over his fright.

BERNICE WAUGH.

Age 11 years.

A PRAIRIE FIRE

About six years ago there were two brothers plowing with an engine and the fire flew out of the pipe. It took fire on some prairie grass and went a mile and we nearly got burnt out.

Father had seven horses, but was working a mile from where we live and by the time he got here the fire was past. The man who set it came behind the fire to see if it did any damage.

NORAH M. ASHDOWN,

Age 13.



Every farmer should hire him

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