

Young Canada Club

By DIXIE PATTON

INTERESTING THINGS IN NATURE

A brand new story contest begins this week and ends June 20. The subject—“Interesting Things in Nature”—is one that it should be very easy to write on during the summer months, when all nature is doing the funniest things imaginable.

You will notice that I took a big title so that you might be able to write on anything that happened to tickle your fancy in the way of nature's doings. You may tell us about any especially interesting thing you know about birds, animals or plants, any clever thing that a bird or animal has done, any strange behavior on the part of a plant.

Tell it brightly and entertainingly if you can, and write it out carefully in pen and ink. Then you must get your teacher or one of your parents to certify that the story is original and that the age is correct.

Address your story to Dixie Patton, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Man.

If yours should happen to be judged one of the three best stories sent in to this competition you will receive an interesting story book and in any case, if your story is good enough to print, you will receive one of the pretty maple leaf buttons of the Young Canada Club.

Any boy or girl under seventeen years is eligible to enter this competition, whether or not The Guide is taken in their home.

DIXIE PATTON

EXAMPLES

Below we give two examples of such stories as we want. These were written for St. Nicholas Magazine:

A Raccoon as a Pet

My uncle has a pet 'coon which washes everything he eats; you give him a nut and he will wash it, and then he eats it. This 'coon is very mischievous, and has to be kept chained. He seems to know when they have ice-cream, for he hears them freezing the cream, and whines until they give him some. If you give him a pan of clear water and some soap, he will wash his face and hands with the soap. Then give him some more clear water, and he will wash the soap off and wipe his hands and face. He always likes to play with someone, but when there is no one to play with him, he goes to sleep.

If he is let loose, he climbs into a little hole in the roof, and stays in there all day and sleeps, and comes out at night. I don't think it would be better to let him roam in a cage, for he loves to play in the grass. We feed him anything, mostly nuts and bread, and he likes everything sweet.

He is kept chained in the garden in the shade in the summer, and under the house in the winter, and sometimes on the back porch. Your friend,

EDWARD W. HAMILTON

Speckaldy

We have a great many old hens, with little chickens, two of which I am going to tell you a story about.

My hen, who is called “Speckaldy,” has a family of fourteen little chicks which she is so proud of that she hires a nurse to help her take care of them all. The mother is a black and white-spotted hen, and the nurse is an old yellow hen. The nurse is never more than three or four feet away from her mistress. The two hens together provide food for the little ones, and keep them warm at night. The mother never allows her babies to feed with other chickens, but the pigeons eat with them every day.

MYLA HARE, Age 10

ON THE GATINEAU

Long years ago my grandparents went up the Gatineau river to make a home for themselves in the backwoods. They had to chop down the trees and clean up the land to build their house on. They hewed the logs that they cut down to build their houses and made their own shingles.

They had three children, then pretty

soon my Mamma was born. Years went by, and by good management and hard work they soon became very prosperous and were able to build a sawmill.

One day, when they were building the sawmill, Mamma and her oldest sister went down to the bottom of the mill to see how the water wheel worked. My Mamma saw a crawfish in the water and went to point it out to her sister. In doing so she stepped on a square block which she mistook for a solid piece of piling, it being floating on the water. Down she went, over head in the water. Her sister caught her by the hair and pulled her out. She was all wet and dripping like a drowned rat.

After the mill was built and running they had lots of men working in the mill, day and night.

One summer when my Mamma was twelve years old she went down to the mill to cook meals for the men. The bears being very plentiful at that time of the year the men went out to hunt at night and left my Mamma alone. She was very brave to stay in the house alone and hear them shooting all around.

One night her little sister came down to stay with her, and she was so frightened that every time she would hear them shooting she would grab hold of Mamma and say, “What's that looking in at the window? Is it a bear?” Every noise she heard, she thought it was something coming to eat them up. She made Mamma so nervous she never wanted her to stay with her any more.

Another day my Mamma went on a board to get some water and she slipped and fell into the water, but she soon got out and ran to the house to change her clothes, before the men would see her.

As I had nothing important to tell in my short days I told a true story about my Mamma.

LILA MCGUNIGAL

Simpson, Sask.

ROUGH RIDER

My father bought me a bicycle for forty dollars. It was just my size and was worth the money. He said I was to take good care of it, and I did not even ride it for a week, for fear I might break it. One morning I was going to ride it to school. I got it against the side of the house and got on, but when I started out I pedalled the wrong way and went backwards. When I started forward my feet went too fast for me and I forgot to steer with the handles. It ran off the road, struck a telephone pole and sent me on my head. I got on again and went down the road towards town all right.

The school was in the centre of the town. When I came near town my wheel began to buck again and as I was going down the street it turned and went right on the car track and the car nearly struck me. This made me so excited I went on the pavement. I went so fast that I struck a dog and killed him, and his master chased me with a stick but gave up the chase disgusted and began to shout very angrily. Then, as I turned the corner of the street, my wheel slipped and I slid about twelve feet, but was still alive. I then started home, not waiting to go to school because the whole town was after me.

When I reached home the truant officer was there inquiring why I was not at school. I got red, white and blue stripes on my pants and did not get to school for three months. All damages cost my father fifty dollars.

The next time I rode the bicycle I knew how to regulate it. I rode it to school every day and was called the champion rider of Millet. A year later I rode a race at seventy miles in two hours and took a prize of fifty dollars, which I gave to my father to pay the damages of the former year.

EUGENE PINYON, Age 12

Millet, Alta.



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