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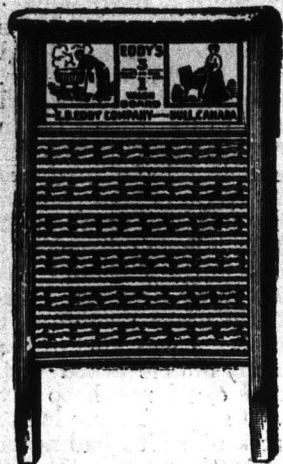
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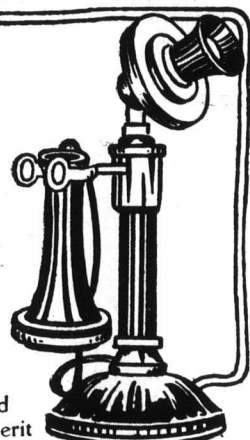
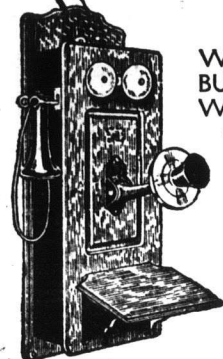
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Sister Madge.

By S. Jean Walker, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

Jack Lennox whistled in a mechanical, pre-occupied way, as he unpacked his trunks, and arranged his various belongings in a room in a new boarding house. He was hot, tired and lonely. With these feelings finally controlling him, he jerked at a stubborn dresser drawer so impatiently that it fell out on the floor. His whistling changed to a prolonged note of surprise, then suddenly ceased. After a few minutes of peculiar stillness he replaced the drawer, and began humming a few bars of a cheerful melody while he arranged some photos on a little table that stood in a prominent corner of the room. He placed and replaced them, and seemed to be in a most critical mood. One claimed more of his attention than the others. He stopped humming and smiled back at the pretty, laughing, pictured face, saying wistfully, "Well, Madge, I'd love to see you." There was a peculiar inflection in his voice that might suggest varying degrees of intimacy. Its intonation was certainly puzzling, when considered with his manner of looking at the picture. He appeared lost in pleasant reverie until certain familiar sounds coming up from below warned him that it was time to make preparation for dinner.

"Things look more cheerful," he soliloquised, "with Madge laughing at me." At dinner he met several old university acquaintances who, like himself, had de-

does he place her photo in such a conspicuous place?"

"Don't know, Tom answered. "Perhaps she was a summer girl who did not care enough to marry him, but would be a sister. You know the kind. This graceful, friendly way of covering a matrimonial retreat with colors flying under cover of sisterly regard. He may, however, have had more than a brotherly feeling for her and so keeps the photo."

"Maybe," drawled Archie, sleepily. "But your explanation does not fit, Jack, neither does the half-sister story for that matter. Jack's not the one to moon over the photo of such a girl, or else he's changed mightily during vacation."

"You can never tell what a man will do when a woman gets him in tow," Tom philosophized. "I expect to play the fool myself some day. I have an uncanny premonition of it now."

"Not very complimentary to the future Mrs. Lester," laughed Archie as he turned to his room.

A few days later there was a new boarder. He was given a place at the table almost opposite Jack. Something in the new comer's face puzzled Jack, and gave him an indefinable feeling of a former acquaintance. When introduced he knew that they had never met before. Yet he could not rid himself of some intangible association in connec-



Indian birch bark tents and canoes and inland boat, of Oxford House.

tion with him. He was somehow pleasantly attracted to him, and invited him to his room with Tom and Archie. When he entered the room he gave a startled look at the photo that was still the most attractive and alluring thing on the corner table. Tom saw the angry light in his eyes and, while wondering greatly why it should be there, managed to whisper in a warning voice, "That's Jack's sister; he doesn't like remarks, so keep 'mum.'"

He certainly kept "mum." Because almost taciturn, and very soon, excusing himself, left the room.

"Well, Howard is rather a queer chap," observed Tom. "Seemed suddenly to be stricken dumb."

"We did not thoughtlessly say or do anything to wound his feelings," Jack wondered anxiously.

"Not a thing," rejoined Archie. "Yet he seemed to crawl into his shell and stay there. Didn't even pop his head out once. Perhaps he had a spasm of indigestion. It attacks people quickly and causes them to act strangely, I'm told."

"I'm sorry if he's offended," said Jack, soberly, "for he seems a fine fellow, much above the average in both brains and appearance."

"Oh, well, don't worry," advised Tom, "wait and see what he will be like to-morrow."

But each to-morrow was the same for about three weeks. His manner towards Jack was decidedly unapproachable. He accepted none of his advances and spoke to him only when it was unavoidable.

"What is the matter with Howard, anyway?" Jack muttered to himself one

day. He was somehow pleasantly attracted to him, and invited him to his room with Tom and Archie. When he entered the room he gave a startled look at the photo that was still the most attractive and alluring thing on the corner table. Tom saw the angry light in his eyes and, while wondering greatly why it should be there, managed to whisper in a warning voice, "That's Jack's sister; he doesn't like remarks, so keep 'mum.'"

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