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Regular meetings of the Chautauqua Park Club first and third Fridays of each month at 2:30 p. m. Mrs. E. J. Van Sant, Pres. Mrs. Jennie Faucett Greer, Sec.

**Civic Improvement Club.**  
The regular meeting of the Ladies Civic Improvement Club will be held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 2:30 p. m., at the Carnegie Library lecture room.

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# HEM BIDDLE'S HOBBY

## It Lost Him His Bride

By KATHARINE GRAY

"Our fellow townsman, the well known aeronaut," was the manner in which the Finchville Banner always referred to Hem Biddle. Mr. Biddle was the editor of the Banner, and in the great shed back of the printing office was anchored his big balloon.

On clear days after the paper had gone to press Mr. Biddle might be seen tinkering away at his balloon or else in the act of soaring over the heads of his neighbors in the car attached to the gas inflated craft.

Hem Biddle himself soared skyward because he liked the strange sensation of hanging between earth and heaven with the ever present element of danger attached thereto. As a counter-irritant to editing a country weekly newspaper he believed there was nothing like it, excepting always Amabel Paine.

At this particular moment the Banner had gone to press and was in the hands of its eager readers. Hem Biddle was scaling the airy heights, and Amabel Paine was swinging in a hammock under the apple tree in her front yard.

Amabel's eyes, blue as the sky above, were fixed dreamily on the green canopy of leaves overhead. There was one spot where she could see the sky. Suddenly across this bit of sky there raced a black blot.

"Oh, bother!" pouted Amabel, all at once remembering that she was engaged to Hem Biddle. It was rather disconcerting to recollect it, for at that very moment she had been dreamily reliving a few delicious hours spent in the company of Peter Lamb the previous evening.

The gate creaked inward, and Peter Lamb's massive form plodded sturdily down the shell path to the apple tree. Amabel watched him, delighting in the glint of sunshine on his blond head and the answering gleam in his brown eyes when they met hers. She blushed and her eyes hid themselves under drooping lids as she sat up in the hammock and allowed her little hand to rest an instant in his big one.

"I accepted your invitation to call," he laughed rather awkwardly as he sat down in a big rustic chair and tossed his hat to the grass. "You can see that I haven't waited."

Amabel's mouth curved deliciously. "I am glad," she murmured, soothing the seam of her white duck skirt.

"I'm that sort. When I want to do a thing I can't wait," he went on earnestly. "I don't believe I understand the pleasures of anticipation. I know what I want when I see it, and then I want it right away."

"Yes?" Amabel smoothed another seam.

"I'm going to shock you, Miss Paine," went on this startling young man in a determined tone.

"Please don't," she murmured. "It sounds foolish on such short acquaintance, but you know I used to live in Finchville, and we played together when we were children. Why, we went to school together! The wonder of it all is that I should come back again and meet you at the schoolhouse dance last night and not remember your name. I suppose I used to call you Amy," he ended darily.

Amabel said nothing, and Mr. Lamb, taking a fresh grip on his courage, leaned forward eagerly. His handsome face was quite crimson with embarrassment, but his brown eyes were pools of flaming determination.

"Don't laugh, please, but I love you, Amabel. I want to marry you," he said briefly.

The girl's eyes flashed up with a startled question in their blue depths. It was as if she were questioning his sincerity. His eyes answered her.

"I can't," she whispered sadly.

"Why not?" His voice was tense.

A shadow passed between them and the sun.

"That," she pointed upward.

"Why, what do you mean? It's a balloon, isn't it?" he asked in a startled tone.

She nodded. "There's a man in it," she explained.

His jaw tightened. "Ah! It's the man, I suppose?"

"I am engaged to Mr. Biddle," she said with dignity.

"Biddle! Hem Biddle of the Banner?"

"Yes."

He got upon his feet, and his white lips curved in a wry smile. "Just my luck to get here too late. I hope you will be very happy, Miss Paine. Is it to be very soon?"

Amabel reddened from brow to chin, but she held her head haughtily. "It is indefinite," she stammered.

"Thank you for your good wishes."

He was holding her hand tightly and looking quite unconscious of that fact.

Something small and dark hurtled down through the branches and fell at Peter's feet.

"What's that?" he gasped.

"It's mine!" cried Amabel sharply.

"Mr. Biddle often amuses himself by dropping messages down to me from the balloon as he circles above. His poetry is very good."

Peter Lamb read the lines distinctly,

and it is to his credit that he did not smile, for the provocation was great:

"Soaring high in heaven's blue,  
Dearest, now I think of you,  
Are you thinking now of me  
Swinging 'neath the apple tree?"

She stood there looking half wistfully, half defiantly, at Peter Lamb when there sounded steps on the foot-path beyond the thick screen of lilacs that hedged the fence.

"Hem Biddle's sailing around. What do you make of it, Anna?" The woman's sharp voice was eagerly curious.

Another voice beyond the hedge answered. "Pretty doings, I say, to go ballooning the afternoon he's going to get married!"

"There ain't many girls would wait any longer for Hem Biddle. He's been going with Amabel six years, and any one can see that the child's tired to death of him and his freakish ways. But she's got grit, and she'll stick by her promise."

"Is what they said true?" he demanded hotly.

"Every word."

"Why do you stand it?" he blurted out.

"I was quite fond of him, and I promised, you know, and he is always so sorry. I was wondering if we could signal to him now. Ah, here comes mother!" She clasped her hands and looked apprehensively at the little roly poly gray haired woman hastening toward the apple tree.

"Amabel Paine!" cried the lady in a shocked tone. "Here on your wedding afternoon entertaining company! Oh, how de do! Peter Lamb, did you say? Little Peter Lamb, bless your heart! The last time I saw you you were in knee pants and calico blouses. You'll excuse Amabel, won't you? She's going to be married at 6:30, and it's after 5 now. Come, Amabel."

She tucked her hand under the girl's arm and smiled, but it was plain that she was shocked at the unconventional behavior of the bride to be. "Have you seen Hem?" she asked quickly.

Amabel pointed upward where the balloon circled lazily against the blue sky. Mrs. Paine's eyes narrowed, and her face flushed. "Amabel!" she cried, with tears in her eyes. "If he forgets again I shall die of mortification. I can't stand it."

Amabel's lips trembled in a smile that was near to tears.

Peter Lamb suddenly brought one fist into the palm of his open hand. "Mrs. Paine, if Hem Biddle isn't on hand at 6:30 the wedding can go on just the same if you will listen to reason."

"What do you mean?" demanded the puzzled lady.

Peter Lamb explained volubly, and Amabel added timid words of consent. "If Hem isn't here at 6:30," said Mrs. Paine, "Peter, you can take his place. Come, Amabel!" And she bore the blushing bride away down the path to the house.

It was deliciously cool and pleasant up there in the evening sky. Delicate tints of primrose and pale rose flecked the blue and silver sunset sky. Hem Biddle, sunburned and frowny with disheveled hair, leaned against the side of the car and dreamily scanned the green earth below.

Most of the afternoon had been spent in hovering over the vicinity of the Paine place, where a certain white speck in the garden represented Amabel. An uneasiness had prevailed in his mind the last hour. There was some task unfulfilled, some promise he had not kept. What was it? He gazed dreamily at the sunset and composed another poem.

The balloon drifted a little lower in the unstirred air. There came the tinkling sound of church bells from below. It was Wednesday evening. He glanced at the little calendar in the cover of his notebook as he closed it, and his eyes bulged with horror.

It was Wednesday, the 17th, and he was to be married this evening to Amabel.

For the third time he had forgotten it. Twice Amabel had forgiven him. But now!

He looked at his watch. It was half past 6, the hour for the ceremony. He leaned over the car in an agony of fear. There was much activity about the Paine place. Little groups of people dotted the lawn, some in white. Those were women, and the dark ones were men. He guessed they were gazing up at him, waiting for him. Poor Amabel! He snatched at the rope that released the gas, and the balloon dropped earthward. Again he looked over, and now he saw that the people had streamed into the house. There was a carriage before the gate!

At exactly 7 o'clock the balloon landed in the middle of Ebenezer Paine's cornfield and destroyed about 100 stalks of prized corn.

Within the house Mr. and Mrs. Peter Lamb were receiving congratulations and answering the questions of dazed wedding guests. Mrs. Paine was explaining matters to Hem Biddle's indignant relatives and friends.

Ebenezer Paine, stiffly garbed in his Sunday clothes, creaked across the lawn, through the orchard and into the cornfield. He frowned at the broken corn, and a quizzical look came into his eyes when he saw Hem Biddle crawling out from the folds of silk that enveloped the basket of the balloon. Hem was disgracefully untidy.

"Better late than never," he said apologetically.

Ebenezer Paine smiled grimly. "You've said that three times, Hem, and I reckon the proverb's worn out. This time it's better never come at all than to be late."

"But Amabel," murmured the crest-fallen aeronaut, wiping his grimy hands on his coat.

"Amabel," remarked the bride's father thoughtfully—"why, Amabel waited till 6:55, and then she married an old sweetheart who was interested enough to be there on time."

# The People's Forum

Sierra Madre, Cal., May 15, 1914.  
Editor Tidings: I think the people of Ashland are hitting the nail square on the head by having the springs piped in to the city. Depending, of course, on the artistic setting of the landscape, in my judgment it will add immensely to the city's prosperity. I think a large natatorium would pay well. I lived in Ashland six years, and the idea of piping in those valuable mineral springs often occurred to me.

Respectfully,  
W. M. GIES.

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There's something wrong somewhere, the present year's crop of spring poetry is coming in slow.

The Tidings for artistic printing

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION.

04454.  
Department of the Interior, U. S. Land Office at Roseburg, Oregon, April 27, 1914.

Notice is hereby given that George E. Plaisted of Ashland, Oregon, who, on March 23, 1908, made Homestead Entry, Serial No. 04454, for the S½ SE¼ and S½ of SW¼ of Section 12, Township 39 S., Range 2 E., Willamette Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make Final Five-Year Proof, to establish claim to the land above described, before W. H. Canon, U. S. Commissioner, at his office at Medford, Oregon, on the 8th day of June, 1914.

Claimant names as witnesses:  
William M. Hockett of Ashland, Oregon.  
John B. Leach of Ashland, Oregon.  
Milton F. Gregg of Ashland, Oregon.

John H. Bogue of Ashland, Oregon.  
J. M. UPTON, Register.  
97-6t-Thur.\*

LOCAL S. P. TIME CARD.		
	Northbound.	Leave
No. 14	Grants Pass motor (main line depot)	8:00 a.m.
	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	9:30 a.m.
	Grants Pass motor (main line depot)	9:40 a.m.
	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	3:40 p.m.
	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	3:50 p.m.
No. 16	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	4:30 p.m.
Southbound. Arrive.		
	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	9:00 a.m.
	Grants Pass motor (main line depot)	9:20 a.m.
No. 13	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	11:35 a.m.
	Grants Pass motor (main line depot)	3:10 p.m.
	Grants Pass motor (main line depot)	3:20 p.m.
No. 15	Grants Pass motor (city depot)	4:50 p.m.

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