

Polly Evans' Story Page

For Boys and Girls

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How Willie Won the Baseball Game for Public School No. 45

ELLIE, listen to mother, won't you, dear?" and Mrs. Batten's soft brown eyes pleaded more effectively with her only son than the soft voice of the caring fingers. "Sure, ma'am," was Willie's final surrender, for he was fated like his father to be able to refuse nothing to the fair autocrat of the household.

But in this case Willie began to fear that his promise would be harder to keep than any he had heretofore made. For Mrs. Batten had been pleading with him to give up baseball, and baseball was as the breath of life to Willie. He played better than the other fellows in his school, a fact generally conceded by making him captain. The year before he had pitched his team into victory and himself into the doctor's hands with a strained wrist, this latter misfortune convincing Mrs. Batten that baseball was quite as dangerous as football, and was the cause of her earnest request to Willie.

The occasion of her request was upon Willie's appearing grieved for the first practice day of the new season, and he was allowed, reluctantly, by Mrs. Batten to depart in his baseball rig to impart the news to the "fellows" that they must choose a new captain and even a new pitcher.

It wasn't a pleasant thing to have to do. The boys of Public School No. 45, who practiced in a big open lot next to the schoolhouse, have no use for mollycoddles. And Willie remembered how long and painful had been the process before he had made them understand that in spite of his soft brown eyes and gentle voice, he was not one. He did not want any revival of the odious opinion as to his courage which had heralded his coming to the school, which opinion he had thrashed out of more boys than he could remember.

So all the way to the lot he tried and tried in vain to think of some good excuse to drop out of baseball. "Hang women's nerves, anyhow," he growled to himself, repeating a pet phrase of his father's.

TELLING THE BOYS

By the time he had reached the lot and had been hailed with shouts of "Hurry up, we're waiting for you," he had not thought of anything to say, so in despair he called the boys together and told them he had something important to tell them.

"Mother says I've got to quit," "Oh, nothing like it!" cried Ike Dreen. "Always be a mother's boy and you'll never get hurt." Willie's face reddened. Here at the outset, sure enough, he saw danger of the boys thinking he wanted to quit of his own accord.

"Mother made me promise to quit," he went on, quietly, "but I'm not going to."

"Hoory! Hoory for Willie Batten!" cried the other boys in unison. "That's 'tuff, Willie. Don't be tied to your mother's apron strings."

"But," said Willie, "it's got to be

done without her knowing it, and you've got to help me."

"Of course we will," chorused a dozen willing boys, nothing delighting them so much as a chance to get even with one of those despotic elders who strive to keep a boy's spirit down.

It was arranged that Willie should leave his baseball rig at Jimmie Wynne's, and so there to dress on the days when the team practiced. To leave them there he was obliged, of course, to go home in a suit of Jimmie's, which he explained to his mother by saying he had lent his clothes to the new captain, who's suit was very threadbare, until after the great match with School No. 15.

Mrs. Batten approved of his generosity, of course, and hoped, cordially enough, that School 45 would win the coming contest. She was, indeed, very much interested in school affairs, and at every game played by Willie's school, had been an enthusiastic "rooter," although not understanding the game at all.

A LETTER TO VIOLET

When Mr. Batten heard what his wife had done, he did not approve at all. "It gave the boy a little harmless exercise, and kept him out of other mischief." But as the days and even weeks elapsed and Willie grew wiser and his appetite larger, Mr. Batten was forced to admit that Willie must have found other and equally healthful exercises.

Willie had faint twinges of conscience at times, but he made it all right with that uncomfortable member by promising that the day after the great battle with School No. 15 he would "confess."

"Willie," said Mrs. Batten, in her very best "mother's darling" voice one morning, "I am going to take you to see Aunt Rachel and your Cousin Violet on the 20th of next month."

Willie started violently, as the owner of a guilty conscience should start, and unintentionally said:

"Why that's the day of the game between our school and No. 15."

"I know it," replied his mother, "and I want to take you away, so that you will not feel badly at seeing another boy in your place."

"But I won't feel badly, mother, honest I won't," he appealed, perfectly frightened at what his mother's plans might be and how they might interfere with his.

"My dear boy," his mother, shaking her head, went on, "allow me to know a little more about human nature than you. You gave in so quickly and so beautifully when I asked you to stop playing baseball, that it would have been very unkind of me, knowing as I do, how fond you are of the game, if I had not watched the effect of this self-denial upon you. And I have noticed that you seem as much interested in the game as ever, and have, I am sure, been watching the team practice."

Willie's guilty conscience made him gasp. If his mother had guessed as much as that, what else might she not



MRS. BATTEN WAVED HER PARASOL

Game of Guilty or Innocent

ONE of the company gets him-selt up to represent the Old Man of the Woods, the rest take the names of the various animals, such as lion, tiger, leopard, etc.

The players seat themselves around the room, and the old man, standing in the center, tells them that some of their number have committed a crime and he is about to question them, in order that he may discover the guilty ones.

He then begins: "Now, Mr. Lion, where have you been hunting, and what have you eaten today?"

"I hunted in the forest and caught an antelope."

"Then you are twice guilty and must pay two forfeits," says the old man; and the lion must pay his forfeit without veing told the crimes he has committed.

The old man passes on to a Polar bear.

"Where did you hunt and what have you eaten?" he asks.

"I hunted in the water and had a fine fish to eat."

The Polar bear is pronounced innocent. Why?

Because the secret of the game is that no animal is to bring in the letter "o" either in their hunting ground



The Dancing Lesson

"NOW, boys and girls, each point your toe— Just look at me, and point it so. You know, my dears, I learnt to dance In that graceful country, France; And having been so nicely taught,

I move, of course, as dancers ought. And only think how grand 'twill be To have it said you dance like me. So, now, my dears, each point your toe. Just look at me, and point it so."

ELIZA GROVE.

Hoity-Toity and the Mouse

TEWIT, tewoo, tewit-tewoo!" called old Mother Owl as she flew out of the ivy, and settled herself on a branch of the elm tree.

"I'm coming! I'm coming!" piped little Hoity-toity, as he also flew out of the ivy and fluttered down beside Mother Owl in the moonlight.

They had been asleep all day, but now Hoity-toity was as wide awake. He was hungry, too, for owls, you know, only begin that day when the stars come out, and little Hoity-toity was wondering what there'd be for breakfast.

"Now, dear," said Mother Owl, setting her feathers, "you stay here while I go and search for something to eat. Wait patiently, and I will soon bring back a few dainties for our breakfast."

"Why shouldn't I go and hunt, too?" said Hoity-toity to himself, as Mother Owl flew off. "I am quite able to look after myself now, and I'm sure I should find something just as nice as mother could."

No sooner thought than done, and off he flew, trying in his squeaky baby voice as he went, "Tewit-tewoo! tewit-tewoo!"

Now that was foolish, far, of course, it told all the civility-crawling things that owls think nice to eat of Hoity-toity's coming, so they all disappeared in a twinkling. It was not very surprising then that the little owl looked everywhere without finding even a beetle.

"This is terribly disappointing," said poor Hoity-toity mournfully, as he stepped to rest for a minute on the top of a rosebush.

Determined to have one last look around, he flew out into the path, when what should he see, just inside the summer house, but a little gray mouse!

"Oh!" said Hoity-toity. "Oh!" And he blinked again to make sure he wasn't mistaken.

No, there it stood, quite still, in a patch of moonlight, and within easy reach of Hoity-toity's little claws. In another second the baby owl had pounced down upon the mouse and succeeded with some difficulty in carrying off his prize.

"Is that you, Hoity-toity?" cried his mother, as she heard him whirring through the air toward the elm tree. "Come and see what a nice fat cockroach I have found for your breakfast!"

"Oh, I've something far nicer than that!" cried Hoity-toity proudly. "Look, isn't that fine?" And he laid his captive down.

"A mouse?" cried Mother Owl. "Well, I never! You clever boy to find it!"

But alas for poor Hoity-toity's pride! No sooner had Mother Owl set eyes on the mouse than she turned away, blinking first one eye then the other, and said slowly, in mournful tones:

"Alas, my poor boy! How greedy you have been! This is nothing more than—a clockwork mouse!"

But poor Hoity-toity had to eat the breakfast his mother had brought him

after all, and Little Boy Blue, of the House-in-the-Garden, is still wondering how his clockwork mouse came to be lying under the elm tree when he is quite sure he left it in the summer house the night before.

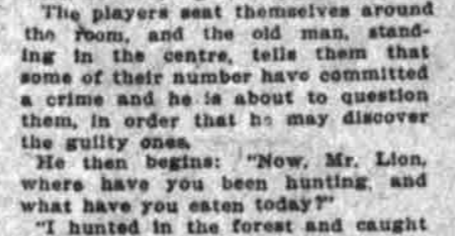
Day Dreams

"WHEN I'm a man," said Johnny, "I'll be a sailor bold, And I'll sail the mighty ocean in search of wealth untold. And I'll build myself a castle with a fearful donjon keep. And I'll have ten thousand vessels who will guard me in my sleep."

"Then I'll rescue some fair princess from a robber, don't you see? And she will thank me sweetly and say she'll marry me. And when I wed the princess I'll be a king, you know, And I'll have a mission subjects who will bow before me lower."

But while he was a-dreaming of the time that was to be, The teacher asked him gently the simple rule of three; Then his castle and his kingdom faded into air at once, And the crown that Fate decreed him was the tail cap of a dunce.

—St. Nicholas.



Babyland

HOW many miles to Babyland? Any one can tell; Up one flight, To the right— Please to ring the bell.

What can you see in Babyland? Little folks in white— Downy heads, Cradle-beds, Faces pure and bright.

What do they do in Babyland? Dream and walk and play, Laugh and grow, Shout and grow— Jolly times have they.

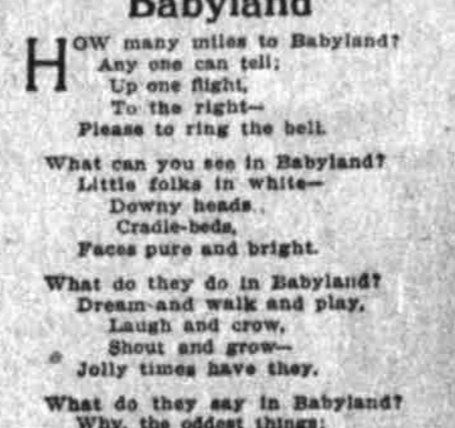
What do they say in Babyland? Why, the oddest things; Might as well Try to tell What a birdie sings.

Who is Queen of Babyland? Mother, kind and sweet; Mother, kind and sweet; From above, Guides the little feet.

Perhaps Penn Was! Willie's mother had just addressed a letter to her father, who was staying in a town in Pennsylvania. Willie also had been asked to write to his grandfather. He did so, and before addressing his envelope he consulted closely with his mother had written. First there was his grandfather's name, then "Greenville, Pa."

"Taking an envelope, he wrote his grandfather's name and under it the address: "Greenville, Grandpa."

Left its Trail Behind It. My sister and her friend were sweeping their playhouse. A piece of the broom fell upon the floor. Seeing this, my sister exclaimed: "Oh, the broom is leaking."



Doggie in Church

THERE was once a little doggie whose ideas were somewhat foggy. For he thought to go to church he was permitted. So he walked sans invitation "Midst a pious congregation, And their efforts to remove him quite outweighed."

And in dogged aggravation he sat there, watching his haunches in the corner. Till his bright black eye alighted on his mistress, when, delighted, He resolved of his small presence there to warn her.

So around her chair he bounded, But his feelings were quite wounded. When, perceiving her embarrassing position, He seized him by the collar. She seized him by the time to holler. Ere the rope had time to holler, And expelled him, spite his glance of mute contrition.

grew, perhaps, out of the fact that each had mothers who were a little too strict.

The letter which Willie wrote to Aunt Rachel was a queer one, considered from any viewpoint, and queerest of all was the way it wound up:

"Now, be sure, Violet, and have something that breaks out. You can do it easy enough by watering red ink and splashing it all over you. Let them sink in well, and then hold your head over the kitchen stove to get it

good and hot. The thing that would clinch the whole business would be if you could get out of your head, talk crazy, you know. But be sure and do it so Aunt Rachel will write us by the 15th not to come out, as you may have something. Act it well and I'll give you my new camera the next time I see you."

You can imagine what Willie's scheme was from the above extract from his letter, and, though in the short space allowed for this story we may not make the acquaintance of his clever cousin, we may be sure that Violet acted her part well, for on the morning of the 20th, just as Mrs. Batten and Willie were starting for the station (and Willie was by that time getting pretty anxious) a note arrived from Aunt Rachel, which put an end to the projected journey.

Willie announced that he would at once write to Violet and tell her how sorry he was that she was ill. He did go upstairs and he did scribble four words all over a sheet of note paper: "You are a brick." Then he sealed his letter up and went to the corner to mail it.

That was the last Mrs. Batten saw of Willie until late that afternoon.

Of course, about luncheon time she began to grow anxious, and when Mr. Batten returned from the office, surprised at finding her at home, she told him her worst fears—that Willie was staying out so that he might go and see the baseball game.

Mr. Batten said: "Well, what of it? Surely he may look at a game."

MOTHER SEES THE GAME

His wife, finding him so unympathetic with her views, refused to go to the beach with him, and after a while, feeling rather lonely with both husband and son out, she decided to go and see the game. Besides, she had a sneaking desire to see that Willie's school won.

Consternation struck a group of No. 45 sympathizers when they saw Mrs. Batten approaching the "bleachers." Luckily, though, they found she had not discovered Willie in the captain's uniform, but was only looking for him among the spectators.

Very obligingly they told her how matters stood, and admitted that 45 was getting the worst of it. They even insinuatingly hinted that Willie had been allowed to remain in the team there would have been a different story to tell.

This rather bothered Mrs. Batten, and she began to feel that if No. 45 lost it would be her fault. She looked about for Willie rather irritably.

"Surely," she thought, "as a loyal member of the school he ought to be there, at least, to inspire by his presence."

When the "Young Wretches," who knew very well that 45 was winning, perceived the effect they had had upon Mrs. Batten, they proceeded to groan at every fresh victory of the school, and finally Burt Coombs cried out: "If only Willie was pitching."

Mrs. Batten grew more and more anxious; she could not see the faces of the players very well and she didn't know much about baseball, besides they were all very dirty. The sun shone straight in her eyes and she was getting angrier with the boys of No. 45 every minute.

Finally Burt Coombs cried out again: "Oh, dear! oh, dear! If Willie were only here."

With that Mrs. Batten jumped upon one of the bleachers, waved her para-

sol in the air and shouted: "Willie Batten, if you care anything for the honor of your school, hang your team to win!"

Mrs. Batten never clearly understood what happened after that, and, as for Willie, it took him some time to realize that his mother, who had begged him to give up his favorite game, had grown so excited over it as to shout out to him in a public place to disregard her commands and help his team to win.

Win it did, however, and Willie was borne home in triumph by his friends. His mother, following, never asked how Willie had gotten into his costume and come out of the field in so short a time.

As Willie told his experience, there was no necessity to confess for his mother had told him in the end to do just what he had done.

When Violet and her mother next visited her cousin, Willie, the little girl found that all of Willie's friends were most anxious to endorse Willie's note, "you are a brick," and to congratulate her upon a quick recovery from the measles.

JEAN RIDDELL.

Game of Bags.

To play this game four cotton bags are required, each of them half filled with dry peas, the bags being secured, fastened at the mouth.

The two players take a bag in each hand and throw the right-hand bag to their opponent, immediately passing the left-hand bag into the right hand, so as to catch the bag the opponent sends in the left hand.

Ripen for Thanksgiving Day.

Russell, a small boy of 8, was out in the garden hoeing. Herbert, passing by, asked him what he was doing.

"Digging," he replied, "and to congratulate her upon a quick recovery from the measles."

"Pumpkin pie."

Optical Illusions

ARE these four vertical lines parallel? The eye says no, but if the sketch is looked at edgewise with the eye, at the bottom of the page, they will be seen to be perfectly parallel.

When you look direct at them they appear to be the angles irregularly curved, but in reality they are perfectly straight.

Here is another optical illusion. When a beam of light passes through a dark room, you think you see the light, but light is invisible. You see only the particles of dust which are always floating in the air, and if those dust motes could be removed, as in a vacuum, for instance, you would see no beam.

To prove this, take a red-hot poker and pass it gently through a beam of light on some sunny day, and a dense black shadow will be seen for a moment where the poker has passed. The beam contains the dust particles, and the light becomes invisible, having no solid matter to reflect it.—Star Monthly.

A BEAM OF LIGHT PARALLEL LINES

Some Puzzles for Your Wits

Picture Puzzles.

The two picture puzzles represent names of well-known novels by squally

Conundrum.

What word is that which if you add a syllable to it will make it shorter?

Riddle.

My first, a pronoun often used:

April 14 Answers

BISHOP WILBERFORCE'S RIDDLE

The human body, which has:

1. A chest	18. Lashes
2. Two eyelids	19. In-soups
3. Drums (ear-drums)	20. Eyes and nose
4. Nails	21. Adam's apple
5. Soles	22. Pupils
6. Muscles	23. Tamps
7. Cheek	24. Ten-arms
8. Nerve	25. Pallet
9. Calves	26. Waste
10. Nerves	27. Or (grooves) (eyebrows)
11. Hands	28. Arms

CONUNDRUMS

1. Because every watch has a spring in it.
2. Lapland.
3. A hole.
4. Because it was an arrow (narrow) escape for his child.
5. Because one you stick with a stick, the other you lick with a stick.
6. Two, inside and out.
7. The letter M.
8. Try attic (attic) (attic).
9. Because it must be ground before it is used.
10. One is to be well shaken before taken, the other must be taken and then well shaken.
11. No pigs.
12. When it is a jar (ajar).

BLANK SPACE PUZZLE.

1. Many eyes may say that under the eaves are hills and valleys just as the garden, watching the busy-bobs as they fly from flower to flower.
2. Don't sit your little brother, Florrie; it is too bad of it.

Conundrums.

Who was the first whistler? The wind.
What time did he whistle? Over the hills and far away.
Why need a traveler never stop? At the hotel because of the sand which is (sandwich) there.
Why is sympathy like blind man's bluff? Because it is a fellow feeling for a fellow-criminal.

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