When the Crossby Heir Came Home

BY BEATRICE McDONALD

The town of Hillsboro was agog over the coming of Wilbur Crossby's nephew. Wilbur had died suddenly and now Dean, his nephew, heir to his fortune, was coming to settle his uncle's affairs. Crossby's lawyer had given out no statement as to the extent of his wealth, but intimations had been sufficient to send every mother with eligible daughters scurrying to make them pretty before the nephew's arrival.

"Going to make yourself smart for the Crossby heir?" asked Mrs. Gates of Amy Phelps, the pretty school mistress who lived with her. "You could give the others hereabouts all kinds of handicaps when it comes to looks. Why don't you doll up and go after him?"

Amy's silvery laugh was a tonic for all who came within earshot of it. Mrs. Gates said it always made her feel a few months younger every time she heard it. "Doll up?" laughed the girl. "How silly! It's my idea of no way to win a husband. Think of what you lay out for yourself Why—he'd expect to see you looking like a fashion plate every time he came down to dinner, and we know, don't we, Auntie Gates, that it can't be done."

"Maybe not," answered Mrs. Gates with a twinkle in her eye; "but there's a right smart of mothers in Hillsboro's going to start their daughters out trying hard anyway. Mrs. Prentis says she's counting on the heir for Easter dinner. What do you say to cutting in ahead of her and inviting him.

"Not on my account," Amy laughed again. "If he isn't here there'll be that much more chicken for me."

"Mrs. Prentis ain't calculating to have chicken. She says she's got what newspapers call a scoop. She remembers when the nephew was little and visited his uncle and how he loved baked rabbit, so she's counting on having that, if she can find one."

With no particular reason, Miss Phelps' thoughts reverted to Bobby Raine, one of her pupils, and his pet rabbit. How he did love it! She recalled helping him remove its foot from a trap one day and the look of tenderness upon his face. That brought her to a much mooted question in her own mind—some way to remove Bobby from the unpleasant environment in which he lived, with a woman who called herself his aunt, but whom the majority of the natives believed was no relation to him whatever.

After supper that evening, as Amy was passing a vacant lot on her way to the regular Monday night teachers' meeting, Bobby Raine, jumping out from behind a clump of bushes, clutched at her skirt, and whispered, "Walk down this street with me, Miss Phelps—I want to talk to you."

Had it not been for her bump of humor, Amy Phelps would have wept at the look of tragedy in the upturned, tear-wet eyes when Bobby looked at her under the street lamp. As it was the path left by two vagrant tears coursing their way through grime and freckles aroused an inward chuckle instead. She wouldn't have hurt the boy, by laughing outright.

"It's about Bunny," he told her when they had reached a spot a little more aloof from the heart of things. "Mrs. Prentis says to me this morning that she wants to buy him for a little Easter dinner, and I says he's not for sale, and she says she'll see my aunt. Aunt Sophy'll do anything for money you know, Miss Phelps, and rabbits is scarce now and Bunny's all I got to love since Aunt Sophy shot Shep 'cause he ate too much."

The child blinked and choked, his pinched face trembling so pathetically Amy Phelps would have helped him even if she hadn't known the conditions. "I—I thought maybe you'd keep him for me over to Miss Gates till Easter's over—aunt'll think he's run off," the boy went on.

"Of course I'll help you, Bobby. Run back now and when you come to school to-morrow I'll have a plan."

Wilbur Crossby's nephew was due to make his triumphal entry into Hillsboro on Thursday, the following Sunday being Easter, so there was need of speed. Tuesday afternoon after school Amy turned Elizabeth into the highway and went ostensibly to make sick calls on some of her pupils. Elizabeth was her trusty little runabout which had conveyed her on many an errand of mercy.

To-day, strange to say, her road lay past Aunt Sophy's where Bobby lived and, still strange to say, Bobby was waiting for her behind the big maple tree with an old basket in his arms. It was covered with a cloth and he handed it lovingly to Miss Phelphs as she slowed down, muttering in an undertone, "Aunt Sophy's in the henhouse—keep him under the seat!"

Then Miss Phelps rode on, enjoying the sharp tang in the spring air, out onto the country road and back toward town again. Just as she came abreast of the old Crossby place she killed her engine and got out to do a little coaxing. Meanwhile Bunny, having tired of his close quarters, started on a tour of investigation and when Amy looked up was jumping along toward an open gate.

Straight into the Crossby yard he ran, stopping behind a lilac bush to see if he was pursued. He was, for Amy, true to her trust, followed the furry fugitive as fast as she could. On and on her ungrateful protege led her, hopping aggravatingly just beyond her reach, circling the house twice, finally dashing to the porch and through the door, opened at that psychological moment by an extremely good-looking young man.

"Why—how do you do!" he greeted cheerily. "What was it that just decided to partake of my hospitality? Is it yours? Won't you join it—and me—inside? I am—"

"You aren't—are you—"

"Dean Crossby—at your service. Came on a few days ahead of myself—just to get the lay of the land—unaided, as it were. And may I have the pleasure of knowing you?"

"I'm Amy Phelps, a school teacher, out trying to abduct your Easter dinner."

The twinkle in Dean Crossby's eye, his coming ahead of schedule just to be alone, revealed a man entirely opposite to the millionaire aristocrat Hillsboro was expecting and Amy soon found herself telling Bobby's story. The boy was terribly cut up when informed that his pet had escaped, but lived in the hope he would return of his own volition.

When Dean Crossby decided to remain in Hillsboro and made known his desire for a small boy to live with him and help about the place, he was carefully paving the way to asking for Bobby. A fat roll of bills completed the transfer entirely to Aunt Sophy's satisfaction, and when the boy was shown his clean white bed in a sunny south room he sighed and said, "Everything would be grand if I only had bunny back."

"Perhaps some of the live things outside will help you to forget," smiled Dean tenderly, taking his hand. "Let's go see."

He led the way to a new hutch behind the barn, where a bunch of animated white fur was devouring a carrot. "Bunny!" exclaimed the delighted youngster. "However did you find him, sir?"

When Crossby told him the story Bobby sighed again and remarked regretfully. "She's the best friend any fellow ever had. Gee—I wish she was going to live here with us."

"That's my wish exactly, old man. Suppose we go and ask her!"

"Oh dear," sighed Mrs. Prentis when the engagement was announced. "If we only could of had rabbit for Easter dinner things might have been different!"

The Easter Rabbit

BY EMMA BUGBEE.

"She's right here," she whispered, drawing aside a tuft of dead grasses.

Mrs. Peter looked, and sure enough, sitting on a nest of curly ping crepe paper was the most beautiful rabbit that ever was. She was pure white, and much larger than Peter or Mrs. Peter, and she wore an extremely handsome straw bonnet trimmed with pink feathers. But what surprised Mrs. Peter was not the bonnet, though no one in the Green Forest had ever worn anything like that, but the fact that the white stranger was sitting on a nest of eggs. They were such strange eggs, too, all striped with pink and green. Some were covered with flowers, and there was a big one with a glass window in one end, and through it Mrs. Peter could see pictures of flowers and rabbits, all sparkling like ice.

"What are those?" she asked.

"Those are Easter eggs, of course," answered the stranger. "They hatch out Easter bunnies."

"But I never saw any bunnies come out of eggs," said Mrs. Peter. "And I've raised a good many fine, healthy families, too. Who are you, anyway?"

The stranger pulled a little powder puff out of her apron pocket, and before Mrs. Peter's scandalized eyes she powdered her nose.

"I am Madame Easter Rabbit," she said, "and I have the most beautiful families that ever were. Come here, lovies."

She whistled a little tune, and in answer to it a strange procession came from behind the pussy willow bushes. It was led by a big chocolate rabbit walking on his hind legs, carrying a red egg in his paws, and after him came tumbling six little yellow chicks, all fluffy and fat like the ones Peter had once seen wandering in Farmer Brown's orchard. But every little chick wore a straw bonnet trimmed with pink bows, just like her mother's.

"But—but," stammered Mrs. Peter, "how can there be a chocolate rabbit in the same family with chickens? All my children are just alike, and Old Mother Nature told me——"

"Never mind Old Mother Nature," laughed the Easter Rabbit. "She has no control over me. I really belong to Mistress Spring. Did you never hear the story of the Easter rabbit?"

"Well, once upon a time, long, long ago, when Mistress Spring was a very young girl—and quite silly and sentimental—she wrote a spring poem, all about dear little white lambs and fluffy chicks and downy rabbits in the woods. It was a very silly poem, as you can imagine. Well, Old Mother Nature found this poem hidden in a violet bud. At first she didn't know what to do. Mistress Spring was too big to spank, but she wanted to teach her a lesson. So she made all the animals come to life—just as Mistress Spring had described them in her poem—and she created me to be the mother of them all. I live forever, but I get me a new bonnet every year. Mistress Spring doesn't really love us. She never comes around until after we have disappeared."

Just then Peter heard Mrs. Peter saying:

"It must have been a funny dream, Peter. You giggled twice in your sleep."

Romance of an Easter Bonnet.

"I want a bonnet," said Linda Gray,
"An Easter bonnet with ribbons gay;
But how can I buy an Easter hat
When this poor little purse of mine is flat?
I'll rummage around in the garret though
And see what the place may have to show."
So she climbed the stair to the attic where
The beams were low and the floor was bare,
And mice and spiders played blind man's buff,
And the cobwebs hung like curtain stuff,
And the odds and ends of sixty years
Were stored in a jumble—chandeliers
With dangling prisms, and candlesticks,
And tall glass lamps without any wicks,
And rusty andirons and crippled chairs,
And china vases—a dozen pairs—
And broken plates, and a long quill pen,
And clocks that never would go again,
And ancient bureaus and pictures quaint
Of simpering beauty and solemn saint,
And the trunk that Grandmother Gray with pride
Brought to the house as a fair young bride,
And right on the dusty lid, behold!
A bandbox covered with red and gold
Chintz all ribboned and frilled and shirred
In the old time fashion so absurd,
And tucked away in it lo! a dream
Of an Easter hat, all pink and cream,
A wonderful yellow Tuscan straw
With the widest strings that you ever saw,
And a beautiful fluffy drooping plume
The very tint of a rose in bloom.
"Here's my bonnet," she cried in glee,
"Just the style of a hat for me."
So she wore her grandmother's Tuscan poke
Half in earnest and half in joke,
And dark eyed youth who never knew
Till Easter morning her eyes were blue
Over his hymn book looked at her
And thought of laces and lavender,
And love and music and all things sweet,
And laid his heart at her dainty feet.
—Minna Irving.

Motion Pictures in Saskatchewan.

Agriculture being the basic industry of the province of Saskatchewan, it is only natural that the Department of Agriculture should make wide use of moving pictures in instruction work. They are used in all short course work carried on by agricultural representatives in the province and also by the Extension Department of the University of Saskatchewan in connection with the agricultural courses conducted during the winter at various points in the province. The films exhibited deal with practically all phases of agriculture. Among them are pictures illustrating the co-operative marketing of live stock, showing the progress of the good points of horses, bulls, milch cows, give the observant an education in what to look for when selecting these animals. Farm boys get a lot of useful information from films of this character, and put it to good use at the farm boys' camps when the live the animals from the farm to the stockyards, the care of poultry and the candling of eggs, the construction of trench silos, cream grading, the embryology of an egg. Films showing stock judging competitions are in progress. A combination of the practical and aesthetic is found in the film showing the proper method of tree planting, with the object of demonstrating how farm surroundings can be made more attractive.

Live Stock Movements in Canada.

The movements of live stock in Canada during January and February compared with the corresponding months of last year at the five principal centres were: cattle 123,644 against 118,425; calves 21,058 against 17,440; hogs 236,788 against 228,804, and sheep 35,964 against 51,160.

The supply of select bacon hogs in Ontario and Alberta showed an upward trend in January and February this year compared with the first two months of last year, but Manitoba and Quebec did not do as well. The figures for selects only are: Alberta, this year 3,117, compared with last year 2,143; Ontario 58,545, compared with 27,101; Manitoba 4,625, compared with 5,836, and Quebec 7,708, compared with 11,889. In other classes of hogs, especially in thick smooth, all the provinces showed an increase.

O death, where is thy sting?
O grave, where is thy victory?

RECIPES FOR THE HOLIDAYS

A well-cooked egg dish should be served at Easter time and is always a welcome substitute for meat for the light meal of the day. Escalloped eggs, curried, scrambled, shirred and stuffed eggs, egg salad, omelet—these are some of the ways of serving them. Eggs have a food value comparing favorably with meat, milk, cheese and other animal foods.

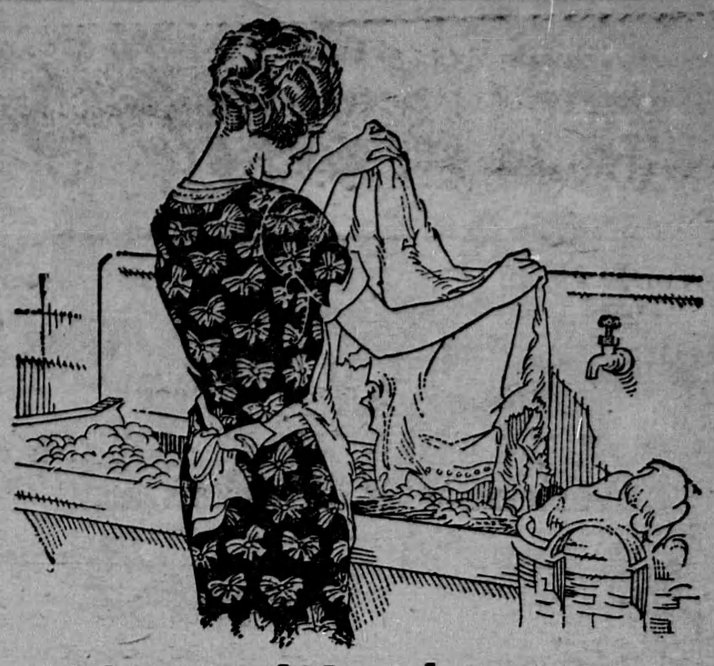
For fruit egg-nogg (individual serving), separate white and yolk of one chilled egg. Beat yolk, add a teaspoonful of sugar (powdered sugar preferred) and a few drops of lemon extract. Mix, turn into a glass and add iced milk, plain or evaporated, until the glass is three-quarters full. Beat egg white and add to this a teaspoonful of sugar and a teaspoonful of grape juice. Pyramid this on top of the glass, and serve ice cold.

Eggs in a nest might be served for an Easter breakfast. Toast slices of bread to a very light brown. Beat the whites of eggs until stiff and pile on the toast, making a depression in the centre to form a nest. Into each nest drop one egg yolk, being very careful not to break the yolks. Sprinkle with a little salt. Place in a flat pan and put into a hot oven and bake until the white of egg is a delicate brown. Drop a small piece of butter on each. Serve very hot.

Chocolate sauce is served hot with cottage or bread puddings or may be served cold with puddings made of corn-starch or gelatine. The sauce requirse one pint of milk, one tablespoonful of corn-starch, two ounces of grated chocolate, one teaspoonful of vanilla extract, and one-half cupful of sugar. Put the milk in a double boiler, add the chocolate and stir until the chocolate is melted and smooth. Moisten the corn-starch with a little cold milk, add it to the hot milk and stir until it becomes smooth and thick. Add the sugar, take from the fire, add the vanilla and stir until well blended.

An Easter pudding which will delight the children requires four cupfuls of scalded milk, one-half cupful of corn-starch, one-quarter cupful of sugar, whites of three eggs, one-half cupful of cold milk, one teaspoonful of vanilla extract and a pinch of salt. Mix the corn-starch, sugar and salt, moisten with the cold milk, add the scalded milk and cook in a double boiler for fifteen minutes, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens, then stirring occasionally. Remove from the fire, add the egg whites, stiffly beaten, and the vanilla. Mix thoroughly, pour into a rabbit-shaped mold and chill. Serve with chocolate sauce.

Foamy omelet requires four eggs, four tablespoonfuls of milk or water, one teaspoonful of salt, a dash of pepper and two teaspoonfuls of butter. Separate the yolks and beat until creamy; add seasonings and milk or water. Then beat the whites until stiff and cut and fold them into the yolk mixture. Place the butter in a pan, heat, and pour the omelet into it. Cook slowly (this is an important rule in good omelet making), occasionally turning the pan so that the omelet may brown evenly. When the omelet is set and delicately browned underneath, place it in a hot oven for a few minutes to dry the top. Fold, turn out on a hot platter and serve immediately. French cooks fold an omelet as soon as the eggs set and the bottom is browned. The partially cooked portion on top is left soft and is called the "sauce."



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