

# The Adventures of Meg

## The Birthday

by M. M. McCallum

Meg and Rex awoke at the same instant. Sunshine was flooding the room. "Good morning Rex" sang Meg; "it's my birthday, my birthday, my birthday!"

"So it is" said Mum from the doorway. "Such a beautiful warm day for your party dear". "It's lucky that Spring is so early this year. The lawn is nice and dry and green. We'll need all the room in and out of the house, for your guests."

"Oh yes Mum; girls and boys and all the games will make it special and happy, but I am a little bit sad about it too".

"I know" said Mum. "It will be your last party in this house, but when we move, you will be busy meeting new friends; I am sure your chums here will be glad to come and visit at the new house. After all there is a playground and a beach too. Come along now; your brother Marty has your materials for your kite-flying. You don't need long stockings or heavy sweater today Meg. It really is Spring".

By mid-morning, all the family and Meg's Grandmother (she came to help) were bustling around, giving Meg birthday hugs and kisses quite often as they worked.

There was a large park next to Meg's home. It was a perfect place to fly kites. No trees or poles in the center and always a breeze; and Meg had kite-flying in mind.

There would be ten girls and ten boys at the party. Meg knew she would need ten kites if her guests paired up, a boy and girl to each team.

Dad and Marty had selected nice light laths at the lumber yard, strong thin brown wrapping paper from the hardware store and had made plenty of flour and water paste. They placed the four side pieces and the two crosspieces on the diamond shaped paper, glueing all securely. By doing this early in the day, they would be sure to be dry by the time the guests arrived.

The boys and girls were bringing their own tail ties and string. Kite strings and tails were very important and nearly everyone had their own idea of what was needed to get their kite highest, and keep it up longest.

Mum and Gram set the table, with the birthday cake in the centre. "Oh, oh, its a beautiful cake" cried Meg. "thank you, thank you, thank you. Oh my; then fat pink candles. Will I really be able to blow them all out?"

The guests arrived all carrying gifts for Meg. Thanking her friends as she opened each one kept Meg busy for awhile, then it was time for the kites.

The group grinned and giggled their way out to the field. After all this was the very first time boys and girls were pairing off together. Almost like a date, but of course; ten years old was still too young for that.

"Everyone ready? All tails on tight? All strings rolled and ready? On your mark, -get set, -go!" cried Dad and ten kites and twenty kids took off down the field. They spread out, looking for a good clear space; pulling the string to tilt the kite this way or that, to get the best breeze.

"Oh Joe; look at Bill and Marie's! Its really up there. Yeh, those red ties really show up against the blue sky. Awh! - mine is coming down; its slipped the wind. Gee, everyone's is coming down. No, no, Tommy's is still up there. Oh look! he's falling. There goes his kite. Why doesn't he get up? Oh Dad, come quick. Tom's foot is bleeding. Tom, where are your shoes?"

"Meg, Meg, take it easy" said Dad. "Give us a chance to see what happened here. "Why Tom; your foot is really bleeding - lets get you to the house. Marty; make a fireman's seat with me. You know, cross your hands with me; holding wrist to wrist on the square. Now Tom; this clean handkerchief will help the bleeding. Up you come. Hold on to our shoulders. Meg, run

ahead, tell Mother to call Tom's Mum and the doctor.

It was an hour before things got sorted out. Tom's Mum and the doctor took him off to the hospital. The kites were stacked neatly against the wall, and everyone agreed that Tom and Donna had kept theirs up highest and longest, but Tom had lost part of his big toe in the process.

"I would never run in my bare feet" piped Georgie as he helped himself to more lemonade and another sandwich.

"Oh Georgie; have some more cake and don't criticize" said Meg. "I am sure, we have all learned a lesson from Tom's accident".

It was just starting to turn dark. The birthday guests had all left. Dad asked Meg to come with him to the park, to look for Tom's Toe. There it was; and there just five feet away was the broken bottle that had done the damage. Dad placed the toe in the little tin box he had brought along, and later he buried the box, toe and all, at the bottom of the garden so that a stray cat or dog would not get it.

Meg cried a bit and marked the spot with a pretty stone.

Next day; Mum and Meg took some birthday cake, a book and Tom's kite-flying prize to Tom at the hospital. He was quite cheerful and already making plans for Meg's overnight visit to his house during the following week. She would stay for tournament playground day, while her family settled the furniture, in the new house across town.

Home again, Meg called "good night" to everyone including Rex. Wondering if she would dream of winning the "Jacks" contest next week, she decided to get her set out for to-morrow. After all; a little extra practice never hurt anyone. No one knew that she had practiced blowing in secret, all last week; but it had sure helped. All her fat candles out with one breath. Suddenly she was very happy; and very sleepy. Maybe ten was not so old after all.

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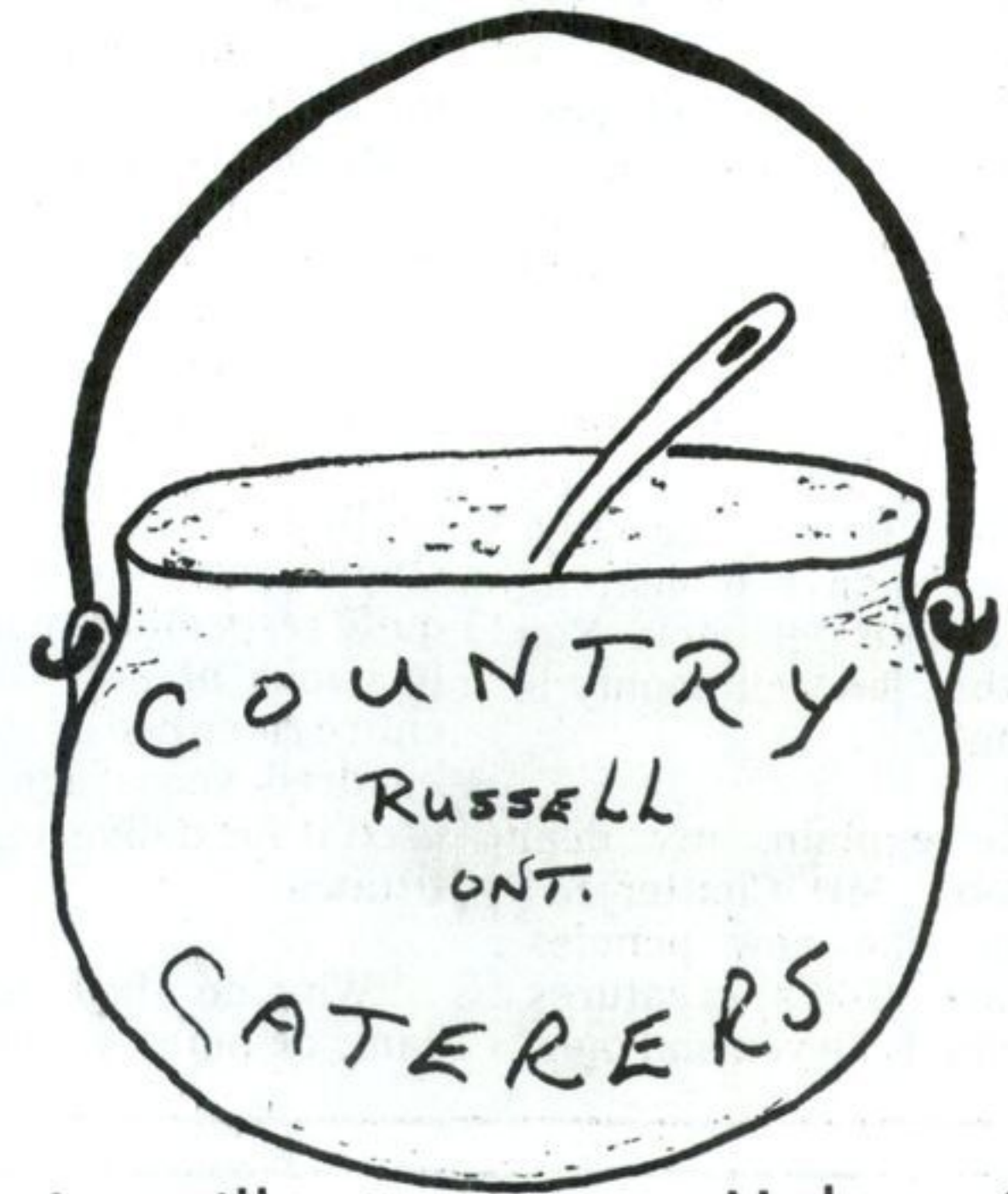
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Entries must be in the hands of Mrs. Ruth Lafortune, Carlsbad Springs by Aug. 1. Telephone number is 822-2648.

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