

Social Events
Club Events
Other Events

FEATURES FOR THE HOME AND FAMILY

Fashions
Personals
Weddings

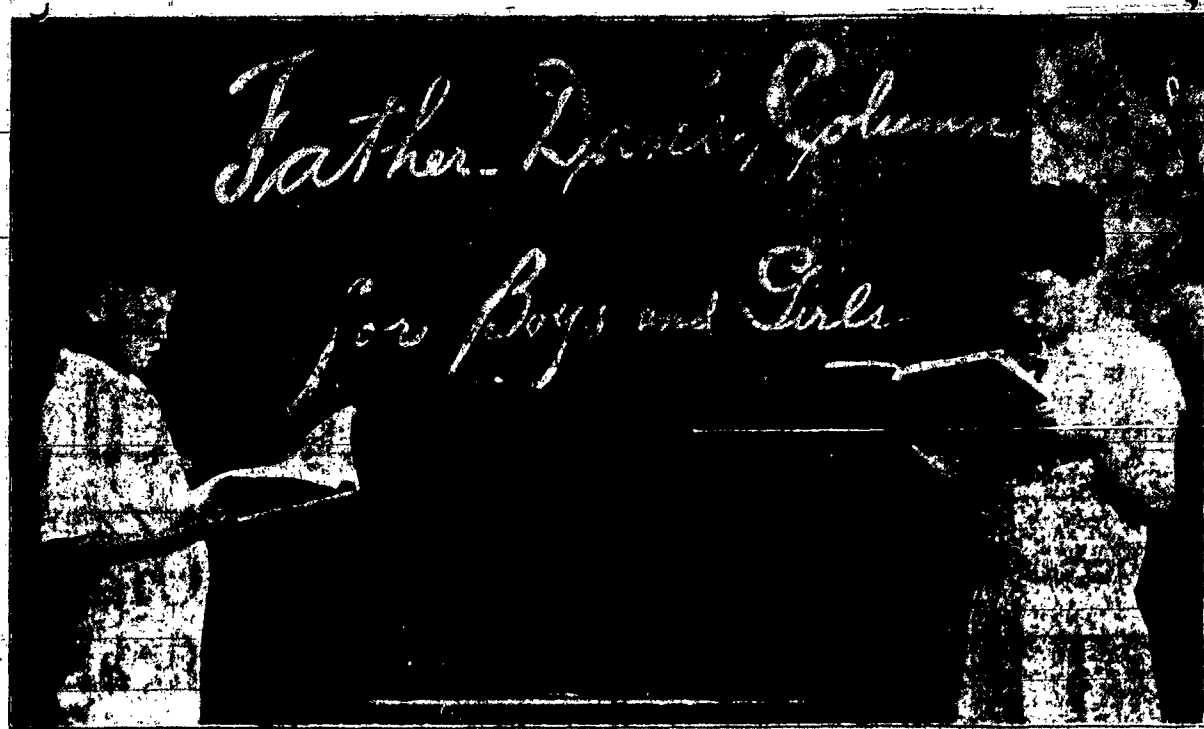
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FUN AND NO FUN

(Chapter Three—In which John and Kevin Meshra plan to give some of their companions a real scare.)

On a little-used road, running like a cow path off from the main highway, and about half a mile inland from the shore of Lake Ontario in this particularly interesting section we are writing about, stands an abandoned grist mill. It has not been used for any purpose within the memory of the oldest inhabitant of the region. Old residents tell strange tales about the place. These strange tales, handed down from father to son through several generations, have served to invest the old mill with a mysterious character. In short, it is regarded by most every one as haunted.

Few structures could be more uninviting in appearance than the old brick flour mill falling to decay. A high wire fence around the place and the tall straggling bushes that almost hide it, render it still more forbidding. Even sensible grown-ups make it their business to steer clear of the unearthly place. Not a few, and among them some of the most staid heads of the district, believe that three or four insane men inhabit the mill. When the wind howls through the partially dismantled roof, it is mistaken for the maniacal ravings of the madmen. Country boys, coming home late at night from town, are wont to drive past the place at a furious rate.

Scene of a Murder
It is quite certain that in days gone by a murder was committed in this old building. Tradition says that the last owner of the mill was a tall, thin gaunt old creature, with

claw-like fingers and eyes sunk deep in his head. He was a notorious miser. By pinching and grasping, he had managed year by year to lay aside a considerable fortune, and being distrustful of banks, had hidden all his wealth in the attic and walls of the mill. He paid his mill hand the smallest wages, and sometimes didn't pay him at all.

One evening when the poor weak-
kneed man went to his home and found his wife and children crying for food and his larder empty, he came back to the mill and demanded his wages. The old skinflint refused to give him a penny. Whereupon the mill hand is reported to have cut his employer's throat and thrown his body into a nearby well. There is no living man who actually knew the old miller; but there are several who declare that they have repeated seen his ghost hovering around the old spot at night.

Two Skeptical Boys

Now there are two boys, at least in this region who don't believe in ghosts. Until quite recently they would scoff at any stories about the haunted mill. They had made up their minds they were going to the old mill at the first opportunity, and they were going to go on the first dark, moon-like day that came along. One of their school holidays turned out to be just such a day, and John and Kevin decided to put down at once any suspicions they might have about the haunted structure and to come back home with something interesting to tell the boys about. The lads were not particularly anxious to make the trip of inspection all by themselves. They suggested to an Irishman who worked for their father that he take a day off and go with them. He was a husky fellow,

and looked as though he might be able to handle three or four ghosts. If any turned up. But this man was Irish, right from the old sod, with the Irish way of thinking about spirits. His answer to the boys' suggestion was characteristic. "The fairies are down at the old mill, in the name of common sense leave them stay there."

Two Helpful Friends Found

Trudging along the road looking for a companion, the boys met Ben Wolehan and Henry Baumann, two young men who were returning from an early hunting trip. Unknown to John and Kevin, these lads had often visited the forbidden mill; and had long cherished a desire to lead a more lively party to the tumble-down place. Here was the chance of a lifetime. The McShea kids' wanted to see the old mill. Ben suggested that it would be great sport for the boys to go about during other boys to take the trip with them, while they, Ben and Henry, would go ahead and prepare a real scare for those who were brave enough to take the "dare." Kevin was delighted. John was fairly dancing. What a chance to get even with fellows like Louise Bemish, Ray Resch and Jim Baumann for many an old score.

No time was lost in finding Louie, and it was not long before John's remarks about that young individual being "afraid of his shadow" had the desired effect. Louie would show the old mill so rapidly that the conspirators couldn't keep up with him. Ray Resch and Jim Baumann were located on the Bauman "family diamond," engaged in a two-man game of baseball. Louie Bemish had courage enough to go, "did anyone suppose they didn't?" At all events the whole world was going to be "showed" without delay.

A Lonely Lane

Before the ruin was reached a lonely lane had to be traversed. Great trees, together with other overhead, and both sides of the narrow wagon-tracks were thickly overgrown with horse-wood. It was a cool spot, and should have been a welcome one, since the day was sultry. But that very coolness was depressing. "It seems cold" said John, himself a bit frightened, while Louie was already shivering with fear. A jack-rabbit, white as the snow, shot across the path and courageous Kevin almost fainted. "You're a pretty fellow to go ghost-hunting" taunted his brother. If you saw a white cow you'd die. His brother's remarks caused Kevin to control his emotions, and helped him to conceal his own growing timidity. John wished at that moment he had never engineered the scare. He would rather have been home with mother. But of course it wouldn't do to let the "scary cats" know how he felt.

Louie insisted on being the first to enter the ruin. He was still ahead of the others, since he had not noticed the well where "old skinnin" was buried, and John was thoughtfully leading the others in a wide circle around that spot. The three followed Louie into the damp mill.

Strange, Weird Noises

"There're no ghosts down here, at all events" said John, relieved that he had not encountered a supernatural manifestation at the very threshold. "If there are any above, let's wake them up," and taking a stick he began to pound on the old grist chute. As soon as the reverberations had died away the boys heard a low moaning cry as of some one in distress. It seemed to come from one corner, then jump to another, then from all corners at once. Kevin looked at his brother. They were not sure that their older fellow-conspirators had reached the mill; and if they had it was difficult to see how they could make sounds come from so many different places at once.

The feeling was anything but comfortable. The other lads were almost paralyzed with fear. Raymond, the little red-head, was unable to move. One could actually hear his teeth chattering across the sticky old room. Louie demanded that John lead the way to the second floor to see what was causing the sounds; and again John wished that he had stayed home with mother. But, of course, he had had to lead the way to the dark second floor. The mysterious noises had ceased for the moment; and Louie was already explaining how it could have been the wind to his incredulous companions. As a matter of fact brave Louie was not at all certain about the wind theory. "Look, look, what's that?" exclaimed Jim, as he pointed to the handle of which was protruding from beneath some straw. John seized the weapon, drew it out for "his" and started to discuss the mill. But John, the brave one, still maintains that there is no such thing as a ghost.

The Holiday Season
By WINTON V. KENFIELD
In the Pathfinder

The world without is fast asleep;
The moon alone its vigil keeps.
Her bill and dale of snowy white
Le faintly casts its silvery light.

A distant sleighbell's tinkling note
From some white hillside far remote
Comes floating o'er the peaceful dell
As if to bid that all is well.

The world within a contrast lends
As mirth and gaiety extends
To carefree hearts both young and old
As they themselves in joy enjoy.

Christmas trees in gay display
Cast their colorful array
Of tinsel hues, and thus comprise
The cynosure of babies' eyes.

Music, dancing, fill the room;
Young folks have no time for gloom
Gliding gracefully along,
Filled with laughter, cheer and song.

Now and then, quite unaware,
Amid the fun, a youthful pair
Will pause beneath the mistletoe
Hanging about where lights are low.

Babies—young folks—old folks—all
Heed the season's cheerful call—
Heed that adage once again,
"Peace on earth, good will toward men."

Heart's Desire
By Barton Reese Pogue
In Farmer's Guide

I wish we had some youngsters,
But we ain't;
We'd like to have somebody
Daub and paint
His initials on the wagon shed,
Put a turtle in our bed,
Shave his little sister's head—
But we ain't.

It would surely be a pleasure
Havin' them,
A-fixin' Christmas presents
All for them,
A-makin' ships and what-me-nots,
Lizle frocks with polka dots,
And entertainin' little tots,
Just for them.

Seems some folks that have them
Rather'd not,
And some, the worse they are,
The more they've got.
Funny how this life is made,
Some of us shine, some of shade
But poorly mixed for some who've
prayed
A lot.

Oh, wish we had some kiddies
But we ain't;
I suppose we've not a reason
For complainin',
But to see you buyin' toys
For you laughin' girls and boys,
Seems we ought to share your joys
But we can't.

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faces now completely disappeared. "Put it down," shouted Louie, now thoroughly overwhelmed with fright. Kevin and little Ray had jumped down a grate chute onto a pile of hay and were making their trembling way rapidly towards the tall fence. No grass was growing under their feet.

A Shower of Bricks

"Look here fellows" said the arch-conspirator, Johnnie. "I don't think it is safe for us to stay here any longer. Lou and Jim were not disposed to differ with him, and each was scrambling to be the first down stairs. Lou and Jim go down safely, but the "brave one" was cut off by a shower of bricks that seemed to fall out of blank space, and had to take the method of escape used by Ray and Kevin. When he dashed from the building he was surprised to see the red-headed one suspended in mid air his trousers firmly entangled in a barb of the fence, and his lusty lungs repeating loud cries for "Mamma!" Lou and Jim had taken a cross-cut to the main road and had not noticed Ray's predicament. Poor Kevin was trying, with trembling fingers, to release his comrade. The combined efforts of the brothers soon had "Red" safely on his feet on the opposite side of the enclosure, where no time was lost. At that very moment something mysterious, human being or brute, was running along on all fours along the ridge-boards of the roof.

Some months have passed since the haunted mill. John and Kevin have been careful to avoid meeting Henry and Ben. They do not care to know whether the "big guys" were in the building that afternoon. It is said that Ray is still disturbed in his sleep by frightful dreams, and often awakens the household with his cries for "Ma." Jim and Lou will not discuss the mill. But John, the brave one, still maintains that there is no such thing as a ghost.

(Continued Next Week)

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When Making Out
the List
is the Matter
of the
Moment

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Eleven months a year our Gift Shop supplies apt answers to your gift problems, so that in the twelfth it can answer your "want" petitions with all of the assurance that comes from being "experienced help." It now has tripled its dimensions for December—more than three times as large, more by many times as helpful. Gifts it is ready with—a thousand and one—delightful gifts, practical gifts, thoughtful gifts, unique gifts, beautiful gifts—gifts to wrap into big enticing packages, gifts to slip into holiday envelopes—gifts gathered with care at home, and with the assistance of a network of our own representatives abroad—gifts that will be sure of a warm reception not only because they come from you but also because they come from here! (Street Floor)

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