

# Best Story You Ever Heard

## Journal Prize Competition

### PRIZES FOR "BEST" STORIES AWARDED BY LEW DOCKSTADER

To the editor of the "Best Story" department, Sunday Journal, Minneapolis, Minn.

I award prizes in your competition as follows:

**First prize**—The lazy darkey story signed by Harry Thomas, 1928 Fourth avenue S., Minneapolis. It is well told and anybody familiar with the south will appreciate that it is very likely a true story. It seems true to life anyhow. I award this story also the complimentary box, good for any performance at the Metropolitan opera house during my next week's engagement in Minneapolis.

**Second prize**—The horse story from Fargo. This is another story that pleases me because it sounds true. It won a laugh from me, at any rate.

**Third prize**—The Abe Lincoln story. An old one, I presume, but I never heard of it before, and it's one of the best of the hundreds of good stories attributed to Lincoln.

I don't suppose that all of you readers will agree with my decisions. People differ too much in their tastes to be easily suited. You can't label a story "best" like a sack of flour. I judge a story from a story teller's standpoint, simply.

By the way, I met a great many old friends in the collection of stories submitted to me, among them the first story ever told in public. It is a story submitted by a Minneapolis lady, who appropriately enough lives on Chestnut avenue, about a ventriloquist who apparently has his dog talk and sold him to a tavernkeeper as a canine wonder. To make his get-away, the ventriloquist has the dog declare that in revenge for the desertion of his master he would now speak another word. This story I told when I was 16 years old. It was my father's favorite story, and his father's before him. And here it is now as fresh as ever, unchanged by time—while I, but you must pardon my emotion. Yours,  
—Lew Dockstader.

Duluth, Minn., May 12.

Prizes for stories printed on this page are awarded as indicated. For the coming week I award a \$10 prize, \$5, \$3, \$2, \$1, and \$0.50, for the "best story you ever heard."

It is not required that stories be original, but new and good stories, retold in the writer's own words, will be considered in the competition. Write only on one side of the paper, giving name and address with each story. Specify if you want your initials used as signature. Do not send clippings or enclose stamps, as manuscripts will not be returned. Stories should not exceed 300 words, and should be of a humorous nature. Omit introductions, and be brief. Checks will be sent prize winners. Address, Best Story Editor, Journal, Minneapolis, Minn.

**FIRST PRIZE**  
This story gets \$5 and a box to Dockstader's Minstrel Show.

**The Limit of Laziness.**  
In order temporarily to forget all about courts and legal tomes, Merritt Starr went for a trip to West Virginia in one of his rambles thru the country. Mr. Starr came upon a tumble-down cabin, in front of which, on a rudely constructed bench, sprawled a big negro lazily smoking a pipe. Not a sign of industry was visible in any direction, and Mr. Starr, curious to learn the system that enabled this darkey to live in apparent indolence, opened conversation with him and finally asked:

"What do you do for a living?"  
The negro grinned as he pointed to a lean and hungry-looking hog in a patch of trees the other side of the road.

"Dar' my hivin'?" he replied.  
"But you don't seem to raise anything with which to feed the animal," pursued Mr. Starr. "How does the hog get his living?"

"Oh," said the darkey, "the hog makes out on roots and acorns."  
"But," argued the lawyer, "that's a pretty slow process. You ought to have some good Illinois corn to feed him. It'll take a hog a long time to get fat on what he can pick up."

"At the moment or two the negro seemed a bit dubious, but he quickly solved the problem to his own satisfaction. "Oh, well," said he, "what's time to a hog, anyway?"  
—Harry Thomas, 1928 Fourth Ave. S.

**SECOND PRIZE**  
This story gets \$3.

**He Quit After That.**  
Hank Brown of Fargo, the prosperous contractor, might have become a famous driver of fast horses had he not attended a racing meet back in the early days. There was a large crowd out and our old friend Doble was in the grandstand.

Hank had a horse that he had entered in the two-something class. The horse was a big rangy fellow with not too much speed, but Hank thought he was the goods.

All the horses except Hank's had plenty of cash.

Large purchases and big discounts have brought together here a stock of strictly high grade

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that will win your admiration and approval as soon as you look at them, while our specially low prices will cause amazement.

There are more artists, musicians and musical people using our pianos than any others.

**EASY TERMS.**  
**HOWARD, 107 NICOLLET AVE.**  
**FARWELL & CO.**  
RELIABLE MUSIC DEALERS.

### THIRD PRIZE

This story gets \$2.

**Not Mud Enough.**  
President Lincoln told this story before a delegation of clergymen:

"Once in Springfield, I was going off on a short journey. Leaning against the fence, just outside the depot, was a little darkey boy—Dick, by name—busily digging with his toe in the mud. As I came up, I said:

"Dick, what are you about?"  
"Making a church," said he.  
"Where, church," I said, "What do you mean?"

"Why, yes," said Dick, pointing with his toe, "don't you see? There's the steps and front door, here's de pew and here's de pulpit."

"Yes, I see," said I, "but why don't you make a minister?"  
"Laws, ministered Dick with a grin, "I hain't got mud enough."  
—Friedman Weiss.

**Called "Time."**  
As the young man was taking leave for the night, his voice, as he stood at the door, rose passionately on the still night air.

"Just one," he pleaded, "just one."  
Then the young girl's mother interrupted, calling from her bedroom window.

"Just one!" she cried. "No, it ain't quit, but it's close on to twelve, and so, I think you'd better be goin' just the same."  
—Mae Hanson, 44th St. and France Ave.

**Those Girls.**  
"So you have really broken off your engagement with Jack?"  
"I have indeed."  
"And you hate him, dear?"  
"Every bone in his body. I shall never speak to him again if I live to be a thousand years old."  
"You mean that?"  
"I do, and I shall tell him so the next time I see him."  
—H. O.

**A Very Bad Lot.**  
A vagrant had been taken before the police judge for drunkenness.

"Well, what have you to say for yourself?"  
The prisoner squared his shoulders, lifted his head and began in a softly moderated tone, "Man's inhumanity to man has made countless thousands mourn, but if I were as ragged as Goldsmith, as dissipated as Poe, as extravagant as Fox, as immoral as Byron—"

"That's enough—thirty days," shouted the judge. "Take down those names, officer, and run the balance of 'em in; I've no doubt they are a bad lot."  
—Mrs. C. S.

**Reliable, but Not Talented.**  
Two Irishmen were talking about one of their friends who had been killed the day before by a premature blast.

"It is an awful thing, Paddy, the way poor Dinny was tuk," observed Casey. "It is, it is," replied Paddy feebly. "A fine mon was Dinny."  
"He was that."  
"And a fine shoveler, sure he was, the finest shoveler on the job."  
"He was a good shoveler," admitted Paddy.

"As good a shoveler as youse find in a year's lookin'?"  
"No, he was a good shoveler, a good shoveler he was, but he was not what you would call a fancy shoveler."  
—H. J. Brundidge, 823 Twelfth Ave. S.

**Bryan and the Goat.**  
William Jennings Bryan tells the following story on himself:

"Once out in Nebraska I went to protest against my real estate assessments, and one of the things of which I particularly complained was assessing

**Drunkenness Cured.**  
It is gratifying to all lovers of temperance and a happy home to know that a simple and safe habit has been discovered. Ours never fails to cure drunkenness if it is used in accordance with the simple directions in the package, and the discoverer has so much confidence in the treatment that we are authorized to sell it with an absolute guarantee, to effect a cure or the money will be refunded.

It is in two forms, No. 1, to be given secretly, and No. 2, for those who wish to be cured. Each case is handled with the utmost care. Mothers and sisters have told us of the many cases where their loved ones have been cured of their habit. We have had a great deal of success in curing those who are addicted to the use of the bottle. The Orlin Co., Washington, D. C.

a goat at \$25. I claimed a goat was a real property in the legal sense of the word, and should not be assessed. One of the assessors, a very pleasant-faced old man, obligingly said I could go upstairs with him and together we would look over the rules and regulations and see what could be done.

"We looked over the rules and finally the old man asked:

"Does your goat run loose on the roads?"  
"Well, sometimes," said I, wondering what the penalty was for that dreadful offense.

"Does he butt?" again queried the old man.  
"Well," said the old man, looking at me, "this rule says—that all that certain property running and abutting on the highway, I don't see how I can do anything for you. Good day, sir."  
—J. J. C.

**How He Got There.**  
Two Germans met in San Francisco. After an affectionate greeting, the following dialogue ensued:

"Can you say you've arrived?"  
"Yesterday."  
"You came dot Horn around?"  
"No."  
"Oh, I see; you came dot isthmus across."  
"No."  
"Oh! den you come dot land over?"  
"No."  
"Den you hev not arrived?"  
"Oh, yes, I hev arrived. I come dot Mexico thro'."  
—E. H., Crookston, Minn.

**A Distinguished Trio.**  
The Hon. Joseph Chamberlain is fond of relating an incident that occurred while he and Lord Roseberry were returning from the theater one night.

While crossing the street they were accosted by a ragged crossing boy who, after sweeping the mud from their path, asked for alms.

Lord Roseberry was about to give the boy a coin when an idea struck him. "My boy," said Roseberry, "if you will hit that policeman a swab on the back with your muddy broom, I will give you ten shillings." Prompt to the word the boy crept in back of the officer and raising his broom, struck him in the back, then turned and ran, but to the dismay of Roseberry the officer caught the boy after chasing a few yards.

Not wanting to leave the boy in a fix Roseberry tried to fix things up with the officer, but the worthy gentleman would not listen, and took them all three up to the station.

They were then taken before the judge of the station and after surveying them thru his glasses he took down a book and turning to Chamberlain

asked "his name." "Hon. Joseph Chamberlain," was the reply, and the judge smiled.

Roseberry responded also with his full title, "The Earl of Roseberry." "Ispond only a certain time here every day. My home is on Fifth avenue."  
"You're married, ain't you?"  
"No, I am not married."  
The woman opened her bruised eyes in amazement.  
"Gee!" she said sympathetically. "I'm awful sorry. Ain't it fierce to be an old maid!"  
—C. J.

**The Rules of Golf.**  
An Irishman was walking along by a golf course, and was suddenly struck between the shoulders by a golf ball. The player hurried up saying: "Are you hurt? Why didn't you get out of the way?"

"And why should I get out of the way?" asked the Irishman. "How there were murderers round here?"  
"But I called, 'Fore,'" said the player, "and when I say, 'Fore,' that is a signal for you to get out of the way."  
"Oh, if it is, well then, when I say, 'foive,' it is a sign you're going to get hit on the nose. 'Foive!'"  
—C. M., Iowa Falls, Iowa.

**Black Hen's Eggs.**  
The other afternoon a woman entered a grocery store and stepping up to the proprietor said:

"I want two dozen eggs, and prefer those laid by black hens."  
"Well, I'd like to accommodate you, madam, but as long as I have been in the business I never learned to tell the eggs of a black hen from a speckled or a white one."  
"Yes," continued the woman, "there is a great difference, and the egg laid by the black hens are easily distinguished."  
"If that is so, just pick them out for yourself, please," said the proprietor.

"Oh, yes, I will," replied the woman, "but I have a large audience, and the negroes in the gallery. During his speech he became a little too ardent to suit his democratic hearers and after the republican usually telling party of the day gave out an impulsive 'Hallelujah!'"

Wolcott stopped short and quietly surveyed the sea of colored faces in the gallery. He looked for aid. Finally he singled out one and beckoning him with his finger he said:

"Will the waiter please come down and take the Chairman's order?"  
—Hector, Minn.

**When Fighting Begins.**  
Louisville Courier-Journal.  
"What's the new novel about?"  
"It's a story of love and war."  
"All it follows the hero and heroine into their married life, eh?"

**RAILWAY BUILDING IN NORTH DAKOTA**  
Tremendous Work of Construction That the Big Systems Are Carrying On for the Development of the Greatest of Wheat States.

**GREAT NORTHERN TO CUT ITS COAST LINE 50 MILES**  
Not Only Shortens Its Route to the West, but Opens a New Section and Will Build Seven New Towns in Rich Country.

Special Dispatch to The Journal.  
Larimore, N. D., May 12.—Nearly every body here is talking about the railway development that is taking place in North Dakota—a development that places the state at the head of all others in railway development for the year 1906. But unless one is on the ground it is almost impossible to comprehend what this means for the state.

Fracture in this work of railway construction is the Great Northern railway, the head and front of which is the city of Hill, the farthest north town in the Great Northern, and one to which it has never hitherto had direct access.

Opening a New Country.  
A good illustration of this fact is found in the line which the road is building from here to Devils Lake. When this extension is completed it will not only become the main line of the Great Northern for all traffic to the west, but it will reduce the thru haul of the road about fifty miles. It will also open up an entirely new section, and one of the richest of the state, to the Great Northern, and one to which it has never hitherto had direct access.

Seven Towns Laid Out.  
It is confidently expected that this line will be ready for operation by August, and seven new towns have been laid out on the right-of-way. The towns are now being platted and it is expected that lots will be offered for sale in these towns about May 22. The towns are: Already 100 people are coming in swarms to take advantage of the opening of these towns, which are destined to become important trade centers, not only because of their location on what is to become the main line of the railway, but because of the importance they are destined to acquire thru the incomparable fertility and richness of the country round about them.

The new towns have been placed in the hands of D. N. Tallman of Willmar, Minn., one of the most expert and best posted land men of the northwest, to handle, and any information about them will be gladly furnished by him. The man who is looking for a new location, and one that is bound to develop rapidly, cannot do better than consult Mr. Tallman.

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er after recounting at length the injuries she had borne at the hands of her lord and master, asked a few questions in her turn.

"Live here!" she inquired.  
"No," answered Miss S.—"I spend only a certain time here every day. My home is on Fifth avenue."  
"You're married, ain't you?"  
"No, I am not married."  
The woman opened her bruised eyes in amazement.  
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**Going Some.**  
A party were viewing the remains of a huge maskalongo which had just been brought to town. A countryman started the ball-rolling by soberly telling of an experience in which a fish on the end of his line had pulled his boat some distance over the water.

"That's nothing," said another bystander. "I hooked a pike one day that gave me the ride of my life. He started across the lake at a distance of a mile and a half, dragging the boat and all, including the forty-pound anchor, which was down. I took up the oars and made an effort to stop the mad pace, breaking them both in the attempt. About this time we were going so fast that I had to hang on to my hat. Before we had gone a mile I was forced for safety to the bottom of the boat, clinging desperately to the ribs. I had no longer sense enough to cut the line. After what seemed an eternity I came to with a jolt, the boat flying into thousands of splinters. We had hit the bank. The pike had been moving so fast that it couldn't stop; there it lay, its gills sides heaving painfully and completely covered with foam from sweat."  
—R. L. L., Hennepin, Minn.

**A Job for the Waiter.**  
The late Senator Wolcott of Colorado, who was an ardent republican campaigner, was delivering a stump speech in a red-hot democratic community of the white people occupying the gallery, and the negroes in the gallery. During his speech he became a little too ardent to suit his democratic hearers and after the republican usually telling party of the day gave out an impulsive "Hallelujah!"

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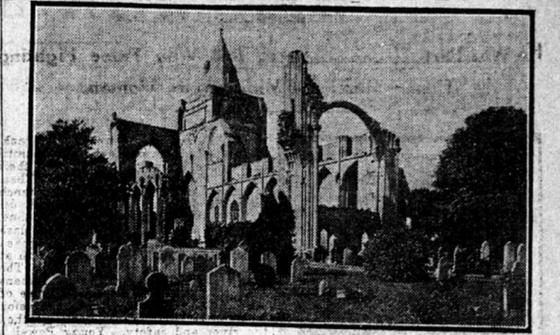
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# Once Famous Abbey Tumbling to Pieces



CROWLAND ABBEY.

Special Correspondence of the Journal.  
London, April 31.—What remains of the famous Crowland Abbey in Lincolnshire, one of the sights of the Fen country, which is annually visited by hundreds of American tourists, is threatened with speedy collapse, unless funds can be obtained to repair it. Owing to the subsidence of the foundations, which are built over a bed of peat, the north wall of the Abbey church has buckled and cracked, and extensive underpinning will be necessary to prevent it from falling.

Of the once vast pile of buildings, there are now left only the northwestern tower, the ruins of the nave and north aisle, which is used as the parish church, but these remnants are of singular beauty and would be well worth preserving if only for the historic associations which cluster around them. The abbey was founded in 706 A. D. by King Ethelbald, who endowed the monastery royally. For a long time it prospered, but with Peterborough, was destroyed by the Danes in 870, and many of its inmates were killed. There were only three monks left there when Thurketil set about his great work of restoration. Thurketil restored the monastery to more than its former condition of prosperity and left a large community there provided with an ample income. His successor added a chime of bells, and from them, it is said, were rung the first peal ever heard in England. In 1091 the abbey was burned down, but was rebuilt in 1118 by Abbot Joffrid, whose begging appeals, in