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## The Story of Waitstill Baxter

By KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

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### SYNOPSIS

Waitstill Baxter and her sister, Patience (Patty), keep house for their widowed, mean father. Ivory Boynton, whose father disappeared, is interested in Waitstill. He takes care of his dead mother.

Mrs. Boynton expects her husband to return. Rodman, a young boy, is a member of the Boynton household.

Ivory's father abandoned his family to follow Jacob Cochrane, a mystic. Patience chafes under her father's stern rule.

Patty has two admirers—Mark Wilson, an educated young man, and Cephas Cole, who is unlearned. Mark kisses her.

Waitstill is spending her life in loving care of Patience. Aunt Abby and Uncle Bart Cole are friends of the whole community.

Cephas Cole, tending store for Baxter, proposes to Patty and is rejected. In his agitation he lets the molasses run all over the store floor.

Although they love each other, Waitstill and Ivory suppress their affection because of their household cares.

Patty and Waitstill go to church, although their father is too mean to give them fitting garments. Waitstill sings in the choir.

A strange young woman in the Wilson pew, a visitor from Boston, makes Patty jealous. Haying time arrives.

Waitstill decides to disobey her father by paying a visit to Mrs. Boynton. Uncle Bart discourses to Cephas on woman's ways.

Mrs. Boynton confides in Waitstill, telling the girl she believes Rodman is not her sister's child, but she cannot be sure.

To punish Waitstill for disobedience Deacon Baxter locks her out all night. She spends the night in the barn. Patience sympathizes.

Patience Baxter is embarrassed amid a multitude of suitors. She thinks Mark is fickle.

Trying to trace his father, Ivory writes to Waitstill a long account of Boynton's following of Cochrane, with which Mrs. Boynton was not in full sympathy.

The village gossips are busy with the names of Waitstill and Ivory, but in a friendly and sympathetic manner.

In Ivory's absence young Rodman ministers to Mrs. Boynton. She is ill and sends Rodman for Ivory.

Ivory receives proof of his father's death and succeeds in convincing his mother of it. Waitstill volunteers her help in the Boynton housekeeping.

Despairing of winning Patty, Cephas turns his affections elsewhere. Patty and Mark are now sweethearts.

Patty and Mark know Deacon Baxter will not consent to their marriage, so they plan an elopement to New Hampshire.

Deacon Baxter is more than usually "difficult." Patty runs off with Mark, is married and returns and tells Waitstill.

The deacon turns Patty out into the cold. She finds shelter with Aunt Abby and Uncle Bart.

Waitstill rises against her father and tells him she will marry Ivory as soon as he is ready to have her.

Left by his daughters, the deacon cannot manage his household. Waitstill visits the Boyntons.

Patty is welcomed by the Wilsons. Ivory will wed Waitstill. Mrs. Boynton tells of a summons received years before to go to her husband's side.

Rodman is the son of Boynton and another woman for whom he had left his wife. The woman, who had called for Mrs. Boynton, had left Rodman in her care before dying. Waitstill at a neighbor's.

To spite his daughters Deacon Baxter proposes to a widow and is accepted. Patty and Mark leave for their new home.

Waitstill and Ivory are married before Mrs. Boynton dies. Waitstill and Ivory start a happy home with Rodman.

"I would 'a' served old Levi right if nobody else had gone," said Rish Bixby. "When his wife died he refused to come into the house till the last minute. He stayed to work in the barn till all the folks had assembled and even the men were all settin' down on benches in the kitchen. The parson sent me out for him, and I'm blest if the old skunk didn't come in through the crowd with his sleeves rolled up—went to the sink and washed, and then set down in the room where the coffin was, as cool as a cucumber."

"I remember that funeral well," corroborated Abel Day. "An' Mis' Day heard Levi say to his daughter, as soon as they'd put poor old Mrs. Baxter in the grave, 'Come on, Marthy; there's no use cryin' over spilt milk; we'd better go home an' husk out the rest o' that corn.' Old Foxy could have inherited plenty o' meanness from his father, that's certain, an' he's added to his inheritance right along, like the thrifty man he is. I hate to think o' them two fine girls wearin' their fingers to the bone for his benefit."

"Oh, well, 't won't last forever," said Rish Bixby. "They're the han'somest



"I remember that funeral well."

couple o' girls on the river, an' they'll get husbands afore many years. Patience 'll have one pretty soon, by the looks. She never budges an inch but Mark Wilson or Phil Perry are follerin' behind, with Cephas Cole watchin' his chance right along too. Waitstill don't seem to have no beaux; what with flyin' around to keep up with the deacon an' bein' a mother to Patience, her hands is full, I guess."

"If things was a little mite dif'rent all round I could prognosticate what Waitstill could keep house for," was Peter Morrill's opinion.

"You mean Ivory Boynton? Well, if the deacon was asked he'd never give his consent, that's certain, an' Ivory ain't in no position to keep a wife anyways. What was it you heard 'bout Aaron Boynton up to New Hampshire, Peter?" asked Abel Day.

"Consid'able, one way an' another, an' none of it would 'a' been any comfort to Ivory. I guess Aaron 'n' Jake Cochrane was both o' 'em more interested in savin' the sisters' souls than the brothers'. Aaron was a fine appearin' man, and so was Jake for that matter, 'n' they both had the gift o' gab. There's nothin' like a lumber tongue if you want to please the women folks. If report says true, Aaron died of a fever out in Ohio somewhere. Cortland's the place, I believe. Seems 's if he hid his trail all the way from New Hampshire somehow, for as a usual thing a man o' book learnin' like him would be remembered wherever he went. Wouldn't you call Aaron Boynton a turrible l'arned man, Timothy?"

Timothy Grant, the parish clerk, had just entered the store on an errand; but, being directly addressed and judging that the subject under discussion was a discreet one and that it was too early in the evening for drinking to begin, he joined the group by the fire-side. He had preached in Vermont for several years as an itinerant Methodist minister before settling down to farming in Edgewood, only giving up his profession because his quiver was so full of little Grants that a wandering life was difficult and undesirable. When Uncle Bart Cole had remarked that Mis' Grant had a little of everything in the way of baby, stock now—black, red an' yaller haired, dark and light complected, fat an' lean, tall an' short, twins an' singles—Jed Morrill had observed dryly, "Yes, Mis' Grant kind o' reminds me of charity."

"How's that?" inquired Uncle Bart. "She beareth all things," chuckled Jed.

"Aaron Boynton was indeed a man of most adhesive larnin'," agreed Timothy, who had the reputation of the largest and most unusual vocabulary in Edgewood. "Next to Jacob Cochrane I should say Aaron had more grandeloquence as an orator than any man we've ever had in these parts. It don't seem 's if Ivory was goin' to take after his father that way. The little feller, now, is smart 's a whip an' could talk the tail off a brass monkey."

"Yes, but Rodman ain't no kin to the Boyntons," Abel reminded him. "He inhales from the other side o' the house."

"That's so. Well, Ivory does for certain, an' takes after his mother, right enough, for she hain't spoken a dozen words in as many years, I guess. Ivory's got a sight o' book knowledge, though, an' they do say he could talk Greek an' Latin both, if we had any o' 'em in the community to converse with. I've never paid no intention to the dead languages, bein' so ockerpilled with other studies."

"Why do they call 'em the dead languages, Tim?" asked Rish Bixby.

"'Cause, all them that ever spoke 'em has perished off the face o' the land," Timothy answered oracularly. "Dead, an' gone they be, lock, stock and barrel; yet there was a time when Latins an' Crestaceans an' Hebrews an' Poochians an' Australians an' Siemesians was chatterin' away in their

own tongues, an' so powful that they was wallopin' the whole earth, you might say."

"I bet yer they never tried to wallop these United States," interpolated Bill Dunham from the dark corner by the molasses hog-head.

"Is Ivory in here?" The door opened and Rodman Boynton appeared on the threshold.

"No, sonny, Ivory ain't been in this evenin'," replied Ezra Simms. "I hope there ain't nothin' the matter over to your house?"

"No, nothing particular," the boy answered. "only Aunt Boynton don't seem so well as common, and I can't find Ivory anywhere."

"Come along with me, I'll help you look for him, an' then I'll go as far as the lane with yer if we don't find him." And kindly Rish Bixby took the boy's hand and left the store.

"Mis' Boynton's had a spell, I guess!" suggested the storekeeper, peering through the door into the darkness. "Tain't like Ivory to be out nights and leave her to Rod."

"She don't have no spells," said Abel Day. "Uncle Bart sees consid'able of Ivory, an' he says his mother is as quiet as a lamb. Couldn't you git no kind of a certificate of Aaron's death out o' that Enfield feller, Peter? Seems 's if that poor woman oughter be stopped watchin' for a dead man; tucker-in' herself all out an' keepin' Ivory an' the boy all nerved up."

"I've told Ivory everything I could gather up in the way of information and give him the names of the folks in Ohio that had writ back to New Hampshire. I didn't dilate on Aaron's goin's on in Edgingham and Portsmouth, 'cause I dassay 'twas nothin' but scandal. Them as hates the Cochranes 'll never allow there's any good in 'em, whereas I've met some as is servin' the Lord good an' constant an' indulgin' in no kind of foolishness an' deviltry whatsoever."

"Speakin' o' Hushshons," said Bill Dunham from his corner, "I remember—"

"We wa'n't a'ttudin' to no Hushshons," retorted Timothy Grant. "We was dealin' with the misfortunes of Aaron Boynton, who never fit valorously on the field o' battle, but perished out in Ohio of scarlet fever, if what they say in Enfield is true."

"'Tis an easy death," remarked Bill argumentatively. "Scarlet fever don't seem like nothin' to me! Many's the time I've been close enough to fire at the eyeball of a Hushshon an' run the risk o' bein' blown to smithereens—calm and cool I alters was too! Scarlet fever is an easy death from a warrior's pint o' view!"

"Speakin' of easy death," continued Timothy, "you know I'm a great one for words, bein' something of a scholar in my small way. Mebbe you noticed that Elder Boone used a strange word in his sermon last Sunday? Words air cur'ous things sometimes, as I know, bevin' had consid'able leisure time to read when I was joggin' 'bout the country an' bein' brought into contact with men o' learnin'. The way I worked it out, not wishin' to ask Parson any more questions, bein' something of a scholar myself, is this: The youth in Ashy is a peculiar kind o' youth, 'n' their religion disposes 'em to lay no kind o' stress on huming life. When anything goes wrong with 'em an' they get a set back in war or business, or affairs with women folks, they want to die right off, so they take a sword an' stan' it straight up wherever they happen to be, in the shed or the barn or the henhouse, an' they pint the sharp end right to their waist line, where the bowels an' other vital organisms is located, an' then they fall on to it. It runs 'em right through to the back an' kills 'em like a shot, and that's the way I calculate the youth in Ashy dies, if my entomology is correct, as it gen'ally is."

"Don't seem an easy death to me," argued Ezra, "but I ain't no scholar. What college did you attend to, Tim?"

"I don't hold no diploma," responded Timothy, "though I attended the Wareham academy quite a spell, the same time as your sister was goin' to Wareham seminary where eddication is still bein' disseminated though of an awful poor kind compared to the old times."

"It's live an' larn," said the storekeeper respectfully. "I never thought of a seminary bein' a place of dissemination before, but you can see the two words is near kin."

"You can't allers tell by the sound," said Timothy instructively. "Sometimes two words 'll start from the same root an' branch out different, like 'critter' an' 'hyppocritter.' A 'hyppocritter' must natcherally start by bein' a 'critter,' but 'hyppocritter' ain't obliged to be a 'hyppocritter' 'thout he wants to."

"I should hope not," interpolated Abel Day piously. "Entomology must be an awful interestin' study, though I never thought of observin' words myself, 'cept to avoid vulgar language an' profanity."

"Hushshons' a curious word for a man," interjected Bill Dunham with a last despairing effort. "I remember seein' a Hushshon once that—"

"Perhaps you ain't one to observe closely, Abel," said Timothy, not taking note of any interruption, simply using the time to direct a stream of tobacco juice to an incredible distance, but landing it neatly in the exact spot he had intended. "It's a trade by itself, you might say, observin' is, an' there's another sing'lar corruption! The Whigs in foreign parts, so they say, build stone towers to observe the evil machinations of the Tories, an' so the word 'observatory' come into general use! All entomology; nothin' but entomology!"

"I don't see where in thunder you picked up so much larnin', Timothy!" It was Abel Day's exclamation, but every one agreed with him.

### CHAPTER XVIII.

#### The Rod That Blossomed.

IVORY BOYNTON had taken the horse and gone to the village on an errand, a rare thing for him to do after dark, so Rod was thinking as he sat in the living room learning his Sunday school lesson on the same evening that the men were gossiping at the brick store. His aunt had required him from the time when he was proficient enough to do so to read at least a part of a chapter in the Bible every night. Beginning with Genesis, he had reached Leviticus and had made up his mind that the Bible was a much more difficult book than "Scottish Chiefs" notwithstanding the fact that Ivory helped him over most of the hard places. At the present juncture he was vastly interested in the subject of "rods" as unfolded in the book of Exodus, which was being studied by his Sunday school class. What added to the excitement was the fact that his uncle's Christian name, Aaron, kept appearing in the chronicle as frequently as that of the great law-giver Moses himself, and there were many verses about the wonder working rods of Moses and Aaron that had a strange effect upon the boy's ear when he read them aloud, as he loved to do whenever he was left alone for a time. When his aunt was in the room his instinct kept him from doing this, for the mere mention of the name of Aaron, he feared, might sadden his aunt and provoke in her that dangerous vein of reminiscence that made Ivory so anxious.

"It kind o' makes me nervous to be named Rod, Aunt Boynton," said the boy, looking up from the Bible. "All the rods in these Exodus chapters do such dreadful things! They become serpents, and one of them swallows up all the others, and Moses smites the waters with a rod, and they become blood, and the people can't drink the water and the fish die! Then they stretch a rod across the streams and ponds and bring a plague of frogs over the land, with swarms of flies and horrible insects."

"That was to show God's power to Pharaoh and melt his hard heart to obedience and reverence," explained Mrs. Boynton, who had known the Bible from cover to cover in her youth and could still give chapter and verse for hundreds of her favorite passages.

"It took an awful lot of melting, Pharaoh's heart!" exclaimed the boy. "Pharaoh must have been worse than Deacon Baxter! I wonder if they ever tried to make him good by being kind to him! I've read and read, but I can't find they used anything on him but plagues and famines and boils and pestilences and thunder and hail and fire! Have I got a middle name, Aunt Boynton, for I don't like Rod very much?"

"I never heard that you had a middle name; you must ask Ivory," said his aunt abstractedly.

"Did my father name me Rod, or my mother?"

"I don't really know. Perhaps it was your mother, but don't ask questions, please."

"I forgot, Aunt Boynton! Yes, I think perhaps my mother named me. Mothers 'most always name their babies, don't they? My mother wasn't like you, she looked just like the picture of Pocahontas in my history. She never knew about these Bible rods, I guess."

"When you go a little further you will find pleasant things about rods," said his aunt, knitting, knitting intensely, as was her habit, and talking as if her mind were 1,000 miles away. "You know they were just little branches of trees, and it was only God's power that made them wonderful in any way."

"Oh! I thought they were like the singing teacher's stick he keeps time with."

"No; if you look at your concordance you'll find it gives you a chapter in Numbers where there's something beautiful about rods. I have forgotten the place. It has been many years since I looked at it. Find it and read it aloud to me." The boy searched his concordance and readily found the reference in the 17th chapter of Numbers.

"Stand near me and read," said Mrs. Boynton. "I like to hear the Bible read aloud!"

Rodman took his Bible and read, slowly and haltingly, but with clearness and understanding:

"1. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying,

"2. Speak unto the children of Israel, and take of every one of them a rod according to the house of their fathers, of all their princes according to the house of their fathers twelve rods; write thou every man's name upon his rod."

Through the boy's mind there darted the flash of a thought, a sad thought. He himself was a Rod on whom no man's name seemed to be written, orphan that he was, with no knowledge of his parents!

Suddenly he hesitated, for he had caught sight of the name of Aaron in the verse that he was about to read and did not wish to pronounce it in his aunt's hearing.

"This chapter is most too hard for me to read out loud, Aunt Boynton," he stammered. "Can I study it by myself and read it to Ivory first?"

"Go on, go on, you read very sweetly. I cannot remember what comes and I wish to hear it."

The boy continued, but without raising his eyes from the Bible:

"3. And thou shalt write Aaron's name upon the rod of Levi; for one rod shall be for the head of the house of their fathers."

"4. And thou shalt lay them up in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony, where I will meet with you."

### A Difficult Lesson.

"It is next to impossible for a man to teach a pretty girl how to whistle," said a musician who is a good whistler. "How is that?" he was asked.

"Well, providing she is not your wife or sister, when a pretty girl gets her lips properly puckered she usually looks so bewitchingly tempting that he kisses her, and the consequence is she doesn't have a chance to blow a note."

### Badly Expressed.

"The human moustrosity!" said a young lady attending a fair with her sweetheart. "Threepence! Wouldn't you like to have a look at that, Herbert?"

"No, dear," answered Herbert, anxious to bestow a neat compliment; "I am quite content to look at you."—London Mail.

### Cape Cod.

Cape Cod is wearing away, and the indications are that it will ultimately disappear.

### SUMMONS

In District Court, Tenth Judicial District.

STATE OF MINNESOTA,

County of Mower—ss.

R. W. Roberts,

Plaintiff,

vs.

Dennis Crandall, Chancy Leverich, David Oliver, D. Oliver, Henry C. Bolcom, H. C. Bolcom, Joseph Bolcom, Henry W. Lambertson, H. W. Lambertson, William Windem, William Windom, Thomas Wilson, D. M. V. Stuart, Roger C. Hatch, R. C. Hatch, William Wood, Leonard Standing, Thomas Simpson, Joshua L. Davidson, J. L. Davidson, Herman R. Davidson, Herman Davidson, Augustus B. Davidson, Robert Crippin, William L. Easton, Harvey Davidson, Martin B. Davidson, Andrew C. Smith, A. C. Smith, William Ashley Jones, W. A. Jones, J. H. Jacoby, Elizabeth L. Snow, E. L. Snow, Solomon Snow, Samuel Plummer, M. Wheeler Sargent, H. H. Johnson, John W. French, William T. Mandeville, Charles H. Davidson, Mary A. Davidson, Mary Adella Mandeville, Mary A. Mandeville, E. S. Smith, William O. Snow, O. W. Shaw, Theo. E. Schleuder, W. C. Strouts, William F. Strouts, Warren J. Strouts, and the unknown heirs of any deceased persons bearing said names; also all other persons and parties unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest, or lien in the real estate described in the complaint herein. Defendants.

### SUMMONS.

THE STATE OF MINNESOTA TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS:

You and each of you are hereby summoned and required to answer the complaint of the plaintiff in the above entitled action, which complaint has been filed in the office of the Clerk of said District Court, at the City of Austin, in the County of Mower and State of Minnesota; and to serve a copy of your answer to said complaint on the subscribers at their office in the City of Austin, in the said County of Mower, within twenty days after service of this summons upon you, exclusive of the day of such service; and if you fail to answer the said complaint within the time aforesaid, the plaintiff in this action will apply to the Court for the relief demanded in the said complaint.

Dated at Austin, Minnesota this 23rd day of December, 1914.  
Catherwood & Nicholson,  
Plaintiff's Attorneys,  
Austin, Minnesota.

### NOTICE OF LIS PENDENS

In District Court, Tenth Judicial District, STATE OF MINNESOTA, County of Mower—ss.

R. W. Roberts,

Plaintiff,

vs.

Dennis Crandall, Chancy Leverich, David Oliver, D. Oliver, Henry C. Bolcom, H. C. Bolcom, Joseph Bolcom, Henry W. Lambertson, H. W. Lambertson, William Windem, William Windom, Thomas Wilson, D. M. V. Stuart, Roger C. Hatch, R. C. Hatch, William Wood, Leonard Standing, Thomas Simpson, Joshua L. Davidson, J. L. Davidson, Herman R. Davidson, Herman Davidson, Augustus B. Davidson, Robert Crippin, William L. Easton, Harvey Davidson, Martin B. Davidson, Andrew C. Smith, A. C. Smith, William Ashley Jones, W. A. Jones, J. H. Jacoby, Elizabeth L. Snow, E. L. Snow, Solomon Snow, Samuel Plummer, M. Wheeler Sargent, H. H. Johnson, John W. French, William T. Mandeville, Charles H. Davidson, Mary A. Davidson, Mary Adella Mandeville, Mary A. Mandeville, E. S. Smith, William O. Snow, O. W. Shaw, Theo. E. Schleuder, W. C. Strouts, William F. Strouts, Warren J. Strouts, and the unknown heirs of any deceased persons bearing said names; also all other persons and parties unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest, or lien in the real estate described in the complaint herein. Defendants.

Notice is hereby given, that an action has been commenced in this Court by the above named plaintiff, against the above named defendants, involving, affecting and bringing in question certain real property in said County described as follows: to wit: Lot One, of Block Eight, of Bolcoms Addition to Austin, according to the recorded plat thereof, the object of which action is to obtain judgment that the plaintiff is the owner in fee simple of said premises and every part thereof, and that the defendants have no right, title, claim, lien or interest in or to said real estate or any part thereof.

Dated at Austin, Minnesota, this 23rd day of December, 1914.  
Catherwood & Nicholson,  
Plaintiff's Attorneys,  
Austin, Minnesota.

Easy to Read Clock. On a new clock dial for quick reading the figures for the minutes are placed in a circle outside the hour figures and are larger.



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### Chicago, Great Western.

Arrive from Fort Dodge, Mason City and Omaha—6:24 p. m.; 4:26 a. m.  
Arrive from St. Paul, Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City—12:12 p. m.; 11:48 p. m.  
Leave for St. Paul, Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City—6:24 p. m.; 4:28 a. m.  
Leave for Omaha, Mason City, Fort Dodge—12:12 p. m.; 11:48 p. m.  
Thru coach on trains between Austin and Minneapolis.

### C. N. & St. P. R. R. Co.

St. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS  
Leave for—8:30 a. m.; 6:55 a. m.; 2:55 p. m.  
Arrive from—11:35 a. m.; 7:00 p. m.; 10:20 p. m.

### LACROSSE.

Leave for—11:12 a. m.; 6:55 p. m.  
Arrive from—12:20 a. m.; 3:26 p. m.

### CALMAR.

Leave for—11:55 a. m.; 7:30 p. m.  
Arrive from—6:30 a. m.; 2:41 p. m.

### MASON CITY.

Leave for—12:01 p. m.; 10:20 p. m.  
Arrive from—6:30 a. m.; 2:47 p. m.

### JACKSON.

Leave for—6:50 a. m.; 3:30 p. m.  
Arrive from—11:00 a. m.; 6:25 p. m.

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