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**Peerless Roller Mills**  
ALEX S. CAMPBELL

# 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 deaf 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 Cochran, 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 Hart Cole are friends of the whole community.

Cephas Cole, tending store for Baxter, proposes to Patty and is rejected. In his addition 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. Hayting time arrives.

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

Mrs. Boynton confides in Waitstill, telling her 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 sick.

Trying to trace his father, Ivory writes to Waitstill a long account of Boynton's following of Cochran, 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 Hart.

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 cancels 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.

have hoped. Just listen to the end. She was frightful to hear and to look at, the girl was, though all the time I could feel that she must have had a gypsy beauty and vigor that answered to something in your father.

"Go along out now!" she cried suddenly. "I can't stand anybody near. The doctor never gives me half enough medicine, and for the hour before he comes I fairly die for lack of it, though little he cares. Go upstairs and have your sleep, and tomorrow you can make up your mind."

"You don't leave me much freedom to do that," I tried to answer, but she interrupted me, rocking her body to and fro. "Neither of us will ever see Aaron Boynton again—you no more than I. He's in the west, and a man with two families and no means of providing for them doesn't come back where he's known. Come and take her away, Eliza! Take her away, quick!" she called.

"I stumbled out of the room, and the woman waved me upstairs. 'You must not mind Hetty,' she apologized. 'She never had a good disposition at the

best, but she's frantic with the pain now, and good reason, too. It's about over, and I'll be thankful when it is. You'd better swallow the shame and take the child. I can't and won't have him, and it'll be easy enough for you to say he belongs to some of your own folks."

"By this time I was mentally bewildered. When the iron first entered my soul, when I first heard the truth about your father, at that moment my mind gave way—I know it now."

"Poor, poor mother! My poor, gentle little mother!" murmured Ivory brokenly as he stroked her hand.

"Don't cry, my son; it is all past—the sorrow and the bitterness and the struggle. I will just finish the story, and then we'll close the book forever. The woman gave me some bread and tea, and I flung myself on the bed without undressing. I don't know how long afterward it was, but the door opened and a little boy stole in, a sad, strange, dark-eyed little boy who said: 'Can I sleep up here? Mother's screaming and I'm afraid.' He climbed up to the couch. I covered him with a blanket, and I soon heard his deep breathing. But later in the night, when I must have fallen asleep myself, I suddenly awoke and felt him lying beside me. He had dragged the blanket along and crept up on the bed to get close to my side for the warmth I could give or the comfort of my nearness. The touch of him almost broke my heart. I could not push the little creature away when he was lying there so near and warm and confiding—me, all unconscious of the agony his mere existence was to me. I must have slept again, and when the day broke I was alone. I thought the presence of the child in the night was a dream, and I could not remember where I was or why I was there."

"Mother, dear mother, don't tell me any more tonight. I fear for your strength," urged Ivory, his eyes full of tears at the remembrance of her sufferings.

"There is only a little more and the weight will be off my heart and on yours, my poor son. Would that I need not tell you! The house was still, and I thought at first that no one was awake, but when I opened the sitting room door the child ran toward me and took my hand as the woman came in from the sickroom. 'Go into the kitchen, Rodman,' she said, 'and lace up your boots. You're going right out with this lady. Hetty died in the night,' she continued impassively. 'The doctor was here about 10 o'clock, and I've never seen her so bad. He gave her a big dose of sleeping powder and put another in the table drawer for me to mix for her toward morning. She was helpless to move, we thought, but all the same she must have got out of bed when my back was turned and taken the powder dry on her tongue, for it was gone when I looked for it. It didn't hasten things much, and I don't blame her. If ever there was a wild, reckless creature it was Hetty Rodman. But I, who am just the opposite, would have done the same if I'd been her.'

"She hurriedly gave me a cup of coffee and, putting a coat and a cap on the boy, literally pushed me out of the house. 'I've got to report things to the doctor,' she said, 'and you're better out of the way. Go down that side street to the station, and mind you say the boy belonged to your sister, who died and left him to you. You're a Cochranite, ain't you? So was Hetty, and they're all sisters, so you'll be telling no lies. Goodbye, Rodman. Be a good boy and don't be any trouble to the lady.'

"How I found the station I do not know, nor how I made the journey, nor where I took the stagecoach. The snow began to fall, and by noon there was a drifting storm. I could not remember where I was going nor who the boy was, for just as the snow was whirling outside so it was whirling in my brain."

"Mother, I can hardly bear to hear any more. It is too terrible!" cried Ivory, rising from his chair and pacing the floor.

"I can recall nothing of any account till I awoke in my own bed weeks afterward. The strange little boy was there, but Mrs. Day and Dr. Perry told me what I must have told them—that he was the child of my dead sister. Those were the last words uttered by the woman in Brentville. I carried them straight through my illness and brought them out on the other side more firmly entrenched than ever."

"If only the truth had come back to you sooner!" sighed Ivory, coming back to her bedside. "I could have helped you to bear it all these years. Sorrow is so much lighter when you can share it with some one else. And the girl who died was called Hetty Rodman, then, and she simply gave the child her last name?"

"Yes, poor, suffering creature. I feel no anger against her now—it has burned itself all away—nor do I feel any bitterness against your father. I forgot all this miserable story for so long, loving and watching for him all the time, that it is as if it did not belong to my own life, but had to do with some unhappy stranger. Can you for-

give, too, Ivory?"  
"I can try," he answered. "God knows I ought to be able to if you can!"

"And will it turn you away from Rod?"

"No. It draws me nearer to him than ever. He should never know the truth. Why should he? Just as he crept close to you that night, all unconscious of the reason you had for shrinking from him, so he has crept close to me in these years of trial when your mind has been wandering."

"Life is so strange. To think that this child, of all others, should have been a comfort to you! The Lord's hand is in it!" whispered Mrs. Boynton feebly.

"His boyish belief in me, his companionship, have kept the breath of hope alive in me. That's all I can say."

"The Bible story is happening over again in our lives, then. Don't you remember that Aaron's rod budded and blossomed and bore fruit and that the miracle kept the rebels from murmuring?"

"This rebel never will murmur again, mother," and Ivory rose to leave the room. "Now that you have shed your burden you will grow stronger and life will be all joy, for Waitstill will come to us soon, and we can shake off these miseries and be a happy family once more."

"It is she who has helped me most to find the thread, pouring sympathy and strength into me, nursing me, loving me, because she loved my wonderful son. Oh, how best among women I am to have lived long enough to see you happy!"

And as Ivory kissed his mother and blew out the candle she whispered to herself, "Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

## CHAPTER XXIX.

The Deacon's Waterloo.

MRS. MASON'S welcome to Waitstill was unexpectedly hearty, much heartier than it would have been six months before, when she regarded Mrs. Boynton as little less than a harmless lunatic, of no use as a neighbor, and when she knew nothing more of Ivory than she could gather by his occasional drive or walk past her door with a civil greeting.

Ivory made himself quickly at home and helped the old lady to get a room ready for Waitstill before he drove back for a look at his mother and then on to carry out his impetuous and romantic scheme of routing out the town clerk and announcing his intended marriage.

Waitstill slept like the shepherd boy in "The Pilgrim's Progress," with the "herb called heart's ease" in her bosom. She opened her eyes next morning from the depths of Mrs. Mason's best feather bed and looked wonderingly about the room, with all its unaccustomed surroundings. She heard the rattle of fire irons and the clatter of dishes below, the first time in all her woman's life that preparations for breakfast had ever greeted her ears when she had not been an active participator in them.

She lay quite still for a quarter of an hour, tired in body and mind, but incredibly happy in spirit, marveling at the changes wrought in her during the day preceding, the most eventful one in her history.

The image of Ivory had been all through the night in the foreground of her dreams and in her moments of wakefulness, both made blissful by the heaven of anticipation that dawned upon her. Was ever man so wise, so tender and gentle, so strong, so comprehending? What mattered the absence of worldly goods, the presence of care and anxiety, when a woman had a steady hand to hold, a steadfast heart to trust, a man who would love her and stand by her, whatever befell?

Then the face of Ivory's mother would swim into the mental picture; the pale face, as white as the pillow it lay upon; the face with its aureole of ashen hair, and the wistful blue eyes that begged of God and her children some peace before they closed on life.

The vision of her sister was a joyful one, and her heart was at peace about her, the plucky little princess who had blazed the way out of the ogre's castle. She saw Patty clearly as a future fine lady, in velvets and satins and furs, bewitching everybody by her gay spirits, her piquant vivacity, and the loving heart that lay underneath all the nonsense and gave it warmth and color.

The remembrance of her father alone on the hilltop did indeed trouble Waitstill. Self reproach, in the true sense of the word, she did not, could not, feel.

When she was thankfully eating her breakfast with Mrs. Mason a little later and waiting for Ivory to call for them both and take them to the Boynton farm, she little knew what was going on at her old home in these very hours, when, to tell the truth, she would have liked to slip in, had it been possible, wash the morning dishes, skim the cream, do the week's churning, make her father's bed and slip out again into the dear shelter of love that awaited her.

The deacon had passed a good part of the night in scheming and contriving, and when he drank his self-made cup of maddy coffee at 7 o'clock next morning he had formed several plans that were to be immediately frustrated, had he known it, by the exasperating and suspicious nature of the ladies involved in them.

At 8 he had left the house, started Bill Morrill at the store and was on the road in search of vengeance and a housekeeper. Old Mrs. Atkins of Deerwader sniffed at the wages offered, Miss Peters of Union Falls, an aged spinster with weak lungs, had the im-

pertinence to tell him that she feared she couldn't stand the cold in his house; she had heard he was very particular about the amount of wood that was burned. There was not another free woman within eight miles, and the deacon was chafing under the mortification of being continually obliged to state the reasons of his needing a housekeeper. The only hope, it seemed, lay in going to Saco and hiring a stranger, a plan not at all to his liking, as it was sure to involve him in extra expense.

Muttering threats against the universe in general, he drove home by way of Milliken's mills, thinking of the unfed hens, the unmilked cow, the

unwashed dishes, the unchurned cream and, above all, of his unchastened daughters, his rage increasing with every step until it was nearly at the white heat of the night before.

A long stretch of hill brought the tired old mare to a slow walk and enabled the deacon to see the Widow Tillman clipping the geraniums that stood in tin cans on the shelf of her kitchen window.

Now, Foxwell Baxter had never been a village Lothario at any age nor frequented the society of such. Of late years, indeed, he had frequented no society of any kind, so that he had missed, for instance, Abel Day's description of the Widow Tillman as a "reg'lar syreen," though he vaguely remembered that some of the Baptist sisters had questioned the authenticity of her conversion by their young and attractive minister. She made a pleasant picture at the window. She was a free woman. She was a comparative newcomer to the village, and her mind had not been poisoned with feminine gossip—in a word, she was a distinctly hopeful subject, and, acting on a blind and sudden impulse, he turned into the yard, flung the reins over the mare's neck and knocked at the back door.

"Her character's no worse than mine by now if Aunt Abby Cole's on the road," he thought grimly, "and if the Wilsons see my sleigh inside of a wider's fence so much the better. It'll give 'em a jog. Good mornin', Mrs. Tillman," he said to the smiling lady. "I'll come to the pint at once. My youngest daughter has married Mark Wilson against my will and gone away from town, an' the older one's chosen a husband still less to my likin'. Do you want to come and housekeep for me?"

"I surmised something was going on," returned Mrs. Tillman. "I saw Patty and Mark drive away early this morning, with Mr. and Mrs. Wilson wrapping the girl up and putting a bot soapstone in the sleigh and considerable kissing and hugging thrown in."

This knowledge added fuel to the flame that was burning fiercely in the deacon's breast.

"Well, how about the housekeepin'?" he asked, trying not to show his eagerness and not recognizing himself at all in the enterprise in which he found himself indulging.

"I'm very comfortable here," the lady responded artfully, "and I don't know's I care to make any change, thank you. I can't like the village much at first, after living in larger places, but now I'm acquainted it kind of gains on me."

Her reply was carefully framed, for her mind worked with great rapidity, and she was mistress of the situation almost as soon as she saw the deacon alighting from his sleigh. He was not the sort of a man to be a casual caller, and his manner bespoke an urgent errand. She had a pension of \$6 a month, but over and above that sum her living was precarious. She made coats, and she had never known what for she was a master hand at leading with the opposite sex. Deacon Baxter, according to common report, had ten or fifteen thousand dollars stowed away in the banks, so the situation would be as simple as possible under ordinary circumstances. It was as easy to turn out one man's pockets as another's when he was a normal human being, but Deacon Baxter was a different proposition.

"I wonder how long he's likely to a hang who had it, as he hated the whole human race with entire impartiality. If Jane Tillman didn't behave herself he had pleasing visions of converting most of his fortune into cash and having it dropped off the bridge some dark night, when the doctor had given him up and proved to his satisfaction that death would occur in the near future."

All this being harmoniously settled, the deacon drove away and caused the announcement of his immediate

marriage to be posted directly below that of Waitstill and Ivory Boynton.

A "spite match," the community in general called the deacon's marriage, and many a man and many a woman, too, regarding the amazing publishing notice in the frame up at the meeting house, felt that in Jane Tillman Deacon Baxter had met his Waterloo.

(To be continued.)

Optimistic Thought.  
One should always pull gently at a weak rope.

Statement of the Ownership, Management, Circulation, Etc.

Required by the Act of August 24, 1912 Of Mower County Transcript published weekly at Austin, Minnesota, for April 1, 1915.

NOTE:—This statement is to be made in duplicate, both copies to be delivered by the publisher to the postmaster, who will send one copy to the Third Assistant Postmaster General (Division of Classification), Washington, D. C., and retain the other in the files of the post office.

Editor, Anna B. Roble, Austin, Minn., Publisher, Anna B. Roble; Owner, Anna B. Roble.

Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders, holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None.

ANNA B. ROBLE.  
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th day of March, 1915.

[SEAL] A. C. PAGE,  
Notary Public, Mower County, Minn.  
My commission expires Aug. 9, 1916.

STATE OF MINNESOTA.  
County of Mower—ss.  
Merle S. Richardson, Plaintiff

vs.  
William Haney, "C. & O. Jones & Atwood", William J. Haney, F. N. Holway, James Casady, Peleg Lake, Dorothy Lake, Dorothy Lake, George W. Lake, William Ferguson, Daniel McCaskell Sr., Ella Maud McCaskell, Daniel McCaskell, unknown heirs of Peleg Lake deceased, also all other persons unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest, or lien in the real estate described in the complaint herein. Defendants.

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 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 February 6th, 1915.

Catherwood & Nicholsen,  
Plaintiff's Attorneys,  
Austin, Minnesota.

NOTICE OF LIS PENDENS  
In District Court, Tenth Judicial District.

STATE OF MINNESOTA,  
County of Mower—ss.  
Merle S. Richardson, Plaintiff

vs.  
William Haney, "C. & O. Jones & Atwood", William J. Haney, F. N. Holway, James Casady, Peleg Lake, Dorothy Lake, Dorothy Lake, George W. Lake, William Ferguson, Daniel McCaskell Sr., Ella Maud McCaskell, Daniel McCaskell, unknown heirs of Peleg Lake deceased, also all other persons 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: The south half of the northwest quarter of section ten, in township one hundred two north, of range fourteen west, 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 February 6th, 1915.

Catherwood & Nicholsen,  
Plaintiff's Attorneys,  
Austin, Minnesota.

March 24, 31 April 7

STATE OF MINNESOTA,  
County of Mower—ss.  
In District Court, Tenth Judicial District.  
A. E. Rector, B. R. Summy and Leonard Hopfe, Plaintiffs,

vs.  
James McLaughlin, James W. McLaughlin and—McLaughlin his wife, A. J. Burbank, Hepzibeth Vaughn, E. Daniels (same person as Edward Daniels) and Ione G. Daniels his wife, Dwight Weller and—Weller his wife John P. Jones and—Jones his wife, John Potibone and—Potibone his wife, D. M. V. Stuart and—Stuart his wife, Alanson B. Vaughn and—Vaughn his wife, Enoch G. Vaughn and—Vaughn his wife, Deborah Jones, Orlando C. LaBar and Mary LaBar his wife. The unknown heirs of the following named deceased persons: James W. McLaughlin, Hepzibeth Vaughn, E. Daniels (same person as Edward Daniels) and Ione G. Daniels his wife, D. M. V. Stuart and—Stuart his wife, Alanson B. Vaughn; also all other persons unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest or lien in the real estate described in the complaint hereto and their unknown heirs. 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 is filed in the office of the Clerk of the District Court, in the City of Austin, County of Mower and state of Minnesota, to serve a copy of your answer to the said complaint on the subscriber at his office in the city of Austin, in said county within twenty days after the 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 Austin, Minnesota, this 15th day of February, 1915.

ARTHUR W. WRIGHT,  
Attorney for Plaintiffs, Austin, Minn.

Notice of Lis Pendens.

STATE OF MINNESOTA,  
County of Mower—ss.  
In District Court, Tenth Judicial District.  
A. E. Rector, B. R. Summy and Leonard Hopfe, Plaintiffs,

vs.  
James McLaughlin, James W. McLaughlin and Hepzibeth Vaughn, E. Daniels (same person as Edward Daniels) and Ione G. Daniels his wife, Dwight Weller and—Weller his wife, John P. Jones and—Potibone his wife, D. M. V. Stuart and—Stuart his wife, Alanson B. Vaughn and—Vaughn his wife, Enoch G. Vaughn and—Vaughn his wife, Deborah Jones, Orlando C. LaBar and Mary LaBar his wife. The unknown heirs of the following named deceased persons: James W. McLaughlin, Hepzibeth Vaughn, E. Daniels (same person as Edward Daniels) and Ione G. Daniels his wife, D. M. V. Stuart and—Stuart his wife, Alanson B. Vaughn; also all other persons unknown claiming any right, title, estate, interest, or lien in the real estate described in the complaint hereto and their unknown heirs. Defendants.—Notice of Lis Pendens.

Notice is hereby given that an action has been commenced in this court by the above named plaintiff against the defendants in order to obtain a judgment that the plaintiff is the owner in fee, and in severally as alleged in the complaint, of the following described real property situated in the County of Mower and State of Minnesota, to-wit:

A parcel of land containing 1.06 acres more or less, situated in the South half of the North-west quarter of Section No. Eleven, in Township No. One hundred three (103) North, Range No. Eighteen (18) West described as follows: Commencing on the West line of said Section, Eighteen rods North of the South-west corner of said quarter, thence North Sixteen rods, along said Section line, thence East Eighteen rods, thence South Sixteen rods, thence West Eighteen rods to beginning; and the North half of the South-west quarter of the North-east quarter of Section No. Ten (10) in said Township and Range. That the defendants and each of them have no estate or interest therein or lien thereon, and to quiet the title in the plaintiff of the several parts of said premises.

Dated Austin, Minn., this 15th day of February, 1915.

ARTHUR W. WRIGHT,  
Attorney for Plaintiffs,  
Austin, Minn.

March 10-17-24

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.; 4:26 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.; 3:20 p. m.

CALMAR.  
Leave for—11:55 a. m.; 7:20 p. m.  
Arrive from—6:30 a. m.; 2:41 p. m.

MASON CITY.  
Leave for—12:01 p. m.; 10:30 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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