

ABBEY AND SLATS

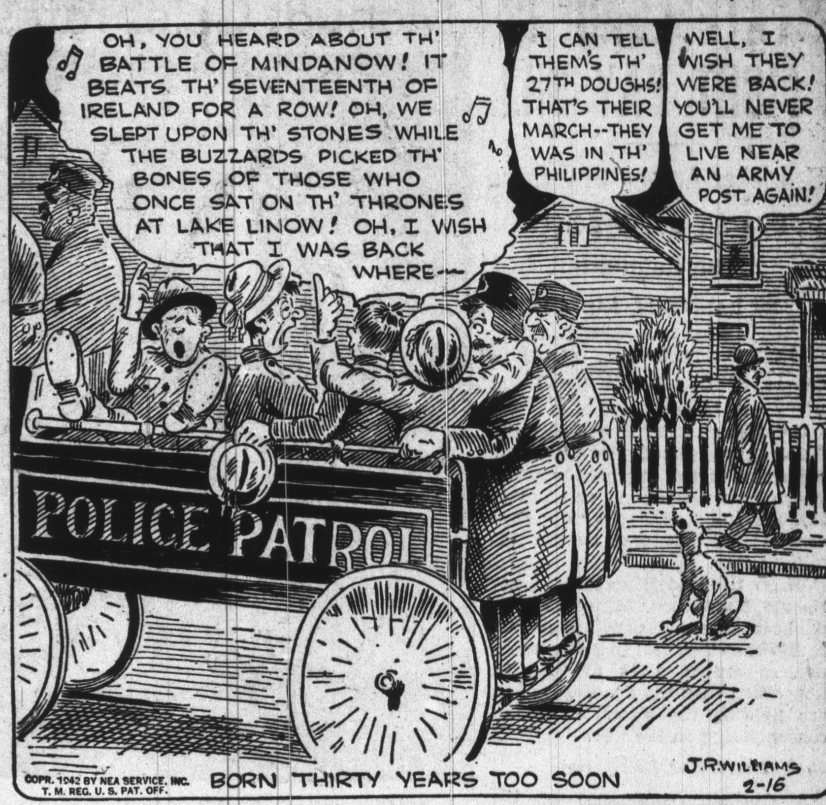
—By Raeburn Van Buren

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With Major Hoople

OUT OUR WAY

By Williams



Serial Story—

# Kings Row

By Henry Bellman

THE STORY—Smalltown Kings Row schoolmates are orphaned Parris Mitchell, 13, who adores his French grandmother, Madame von Ein; pretty Renee, daughter of von Ein's estate agent; "All Star" Drake McHugh; beautiful Cassandra Tower, whose reclusive doctor father is town mystery; Louise Gordon, daughter of leading physician. Other characters: Lawyer Colonel Sheffington, banker Curley, editor Miles Jackson.

## CHAPTER FOUR

AFTER WHAT seemed an interminable spring season, vacation came at last. Parris and Renee ran nearly all the way home. Tomorrow there would be no school.

The great sweeps of orchard back of the house were in full bloom.

"Let's go look at the apple trees, Renee. Come on, hurry up."

"All right," she answered meekly, matching her step to his as best she could.

He dashed about the orchards like something mad, gathering the low branches into his arms and making loud inhalations as if he tried to breathe them into himself.

"Aren't they beautiful, Renee? Prettier'n last year."

The months of May and June were rapturously happy. The days were all blue and gold and none of them failed of novelty or excitement. July came in hot and dry.

They walked one afternoon through the groves of young evergreens that stood on the farthest outskirts of the place. Beyond, there was only woods.

They came presently upon a small green pond with spruces and cedars planted in a wide circle about it. The sharpest points of the young trees were perfectly mirrored on the still surface.

"OOH, LOOKY—our pond! We ain't been here since last summer, have we?" Renee ran ahead.

Parris walked slowly forward, watching her bright hair as she flung the braids back over her shoulders and sat on the grassy bank with hands clasped about her knees. He decided she was a very pretty girl—prettier than anybody—prettier, even, than Cassandra Tower.

"You're my best friend, Renee," he said impulsively.

"Am I? Honestly?"

"Yes, you are. I like you better'n anybody."

"I like you best of anybody—exceptin', of course, Papa and Mama," she said contentedly.

"Renee—" Parris stumbled on the name. "This will always be our secret place, won't it?"

"Mmm."

He wished she had said more.

Parris watched his grandmother rather anxiously on Sunday mornings. If she planned to go to church she always gave orders at breakfast for the survey.

Madame von Ein put down her coffee cup and folded her napkin. "Anna, tell Uncle Henry to have the carriage ready at half-past 10."

"Yes, Madame."

THE SURREY stood shining in the sun. Uncle Henry, his chocolate face wrinkled into Sunday decorum, sat on the front seat.

Madame came down, crackling in her black taffeta dress. She was wearing her onyx-and-diamond earrings and a large brooch at her throat.

The second church bell was ringing from the Presbyterian tower when they turned into Federal street.

A number of men stood on the little lawn before the church. Several of them lifted their hats and spoke. Parris could see that they liked his grandmother from the respectful tone of the greetings.

The inside of the Presbyterian church was most pleasant. It was very high, and tall slender windows of colored glass reached far up to the curved ceiling behind the graceful sweep of gallery. The

## THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



When you freeze some body, it burns them up. Says E.A. JOY-JO JOHNSON, SAFFORD, ARIZONA.

Windows were open today, and puffs of warm air came in.

Mrs. Curley turned and smiled as she greeted to Madame von Ein, and the old banker turned also and bowed gravely aside.

On the far side of the church, in the little-used north section of seats, Parris saw a gleam of copper curls. It was Cassandra and her mother. He couldn't remember ever having seen them at church before. The service seemed interminable.

"PARRIS WAS STARTLED by a stilt and rustle. It sounded as loud as thunder. He opened his eyes. Then he flushed very red and sat looking into the depths of Mr. Curley's silk hat. He hoped no one had seen him asleep."

The whole congregation bowed and the lovely words of the benediction faded into a whispering cadence across their heads. "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen."

Drake McHugh was squeezing through the outgoing crowd. "Parris!" The sibilant sound carried sharply. "Hist! Wait a minute outside, will you? I want to see you. Oh, good morn—good day, Madame. Uncle Rhodes and Aunt Mamie said could Parris stay in town and eat dinner with us and stay this afternoon?"

"Why certainly, if you want him to."

The group walked slowly out of church. "Now send him home if he bothers you," Madame smiled at the Livingstones.

The Livingstones lived near the Presbyterian Church. Parris thought this must be very convenient and pleasant, but Drake did not regard it as an advantage.

Drake McHugh was an orphan, too, and lived with his aunt and uncle, both of whom were as old as Madame von Ein.

After dinner Mrs. Livingstone retired for a nap, and the Major sat on the front porch smoking.

"C'mon, Parris, let's go down in the back where it's shady."

They sat on the grass, somewhat stunned with food, but making an effort at conversation.

"I hate Sundays, don't you?" Drake threw a stick at a tall mullein stalk.

"Why?"

"Gee, they won't let me do nothing on Sunday." Drake seemed surprised that Parris shouldn't know this.

"Why not?"

"'Cause it's Sunday. Does your grandma let you play on Sunday?"

"Of course she does."

"Gee! They won't let me do one thing. Of course I slip off, but they don't know it. It's a sin—they say it, anyhow. I don't see how it can hurt anything just to play."

"Well, Aunt Mamie's gone to sleep. Uncle Rhodes'll be asleep pretty soon. Then we can slip off."

"Won't they get after you?"

"They won't know anything about it."

"Well, I guess it isn't any harm just going somewhere."

"Course 'tain't, Gee, Parris, you're funny."

"How?"

"You always talk so proper."

Parris blushed. "It's the only way I can talk, Drake. You know I have to think when I speak English, and I guess it just goes kind of slow."

"Gosh, that's so. You do talk some other language, don't you?"

"German and French."

"It's funny for an American boy to be talking any other kind of talk but American."

"Does—does it sound sissy, Drake, the way I talk?"

"N-no—it don't sound sissy exactly. It just sounds like you're puttin' on."

"Well, I ain't."

"Now, that's more like it—when you say 'ain't.'"

"But 'ain't' ain't—ain't really right."

"I don't care. Sounds better."

Parris laughed, but it was a half-hearted laugh. He wanted Drake to like him.

Drake jumped up. "Let's go."

"All right, where?"

"Let's go down to the depot, Drake suggested."

They walked on the shady side of the street and hurried from time to time through occasional stretches of sun where trees were missing.

"I guess this is the hottest day I ever saw," Drake stopped and wiped his face on his sleeve.

"I'd like to go swimming," Parris sounded almost wistful.

"So'd I, but the closest swimmin' hole is way down the creek. Too far, I guess. I tell you—let's go down to the Elroy's icheuse. We can play in there an' it's cool as everything. Gus Elroy's got a trapeze, and flyin' rings an' par'lel bars fixed up like a regular gymnasium."

"All right, come on then. Let's go fast."

They hurried toward the south end of town.

There was no one at the depot, or near it. Kings Row had no Sunday trains.

Drake seemed more at home in these surroundings. He made knowing remarks, mentioning easily and carelessly the names of engineers and firemen, brakemen and flagmen. Parris was impressed. He felt very young and inexperienced.

(To Be Continued)

(All events, names and characters in this story are fictitious.)

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SKUNKS ON INCREASE

PITTSBURG, Cal (U. P.). — It is up to the people of California to decide whether they want skunks or mountain lions, according to Health Officer W. A. Mittenbacht. With the steady killing off of the mountain lions, a natural enemy of the skunk, he reports that the latter are increasing.



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