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Bugbee's Popular Plays

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Peggy of  
Primrose Farm

BY

WILLIS N. BUGBEE

Price 35 Cents



The Willis N. Bugbee Co.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.

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THE WILLIS N. BUGBEE CO., SYRACUSE, N. Y.

# Bugbee's Popular Plays

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## Peggy of Primrose Farm

A Comedy in Three Acts

BY

Willis N. Bugbee

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*Author of "Billy's Aunt Jane," "The Deacon's Honeymoon,"  
"Aunt Sophronia at College," "Daddy and the Co-eds,"  
"The Coonville 'Ristocrat Club," Etc., Etc.*

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THE WILLIS N. BUGBEE CO.

Syracuse, N. Y.

# Peggy of Primrose Farm

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## CHARACTERS

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PETER WRIGHT .....	<i>Master of "Brookside Farm"</i>
EZRA MASON .....	<i>Peggy's Father</i>
PHINEAS PIXLEY .....	<i>A Country Squire</i>
TIMOTHY HAYFORD .....	<i>Otherwise "Timothy Hayseed"</i>
"SUNNY JIM" O'REILLY .....	<i>Man of All Work</i>
CAPTAIN PETER WRIGHT.....	<i>A Shipwrecked Sailor</i>
PEGGY MASON .....	<i>Mistress of "Primrose Farm"</i>
BETSY MASON .....	<i>Peggy's Mother</i>
MRS. MEHITABLE GREEN .....	<i>A Country Busybody</i>
MADGE BROWNELL .....	<i>Peggy's Chum</i>
CLOVER BLOSSOM .....	<i>Peggy's Maid</i>
NORA McCARTY .....	<i>Peter's Housekeeper</i>

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ACT I.—Spring—Home of the Masons.

ACT II.—Summer—Primrose Farm.

ACT III.—Following Spring—Brookside Farm.

TIME OF PLAY: *One and three-fourth hours.*

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## COSTUMES

SQUIRE PIXLEY wears long frock coat, broad-brimmed hat with high crown, white vest, spectacles, and carries cane. He may, if desired, wear large gray sideburns.

MADGE, in Act III, wears travelling suit.

CAPT. WRIGHT wears coarse clothing, a seaman's cap with forepiece and sports stubby chin whiskers of grizzly gray.

Others may dress in suitable farm costumes in Acts I and II. and in plain "dress up" clothes in Act III.

# Peggy of Primrose Farm

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## ACT I.

SCENE: *A living room at the home of the Mason's. Old-fashioned furniture. The room appears very neat and prim. Broom and dust pan at one side.*

CLOVER *is discovered dusting and tidying the room. She sings to herself as curtain rises.*

CLOVER. There! I don't believe there's a speck of dirt or dust left in this room. I've swept every inch of it and dusted every bit of furniture twice over. (*Stops suddenly, looking under chair.*) Well, just look under that chair! And I thought I'd got it all. If Mrs. Mason should see that she'd have a catnip fit. She's as 'fraid of a speck of dirt as any old maid I ever saw. (*Takes up dirt on dustpan. While she is stooping over* TIMOTHY *peeps in slyly and steals up behind her.*)

TIMOTHY. Booh!

CLOVER. (*Startled, whirls around quickly.*) My land! How you scart me! I've a good mind to box your ears.

TIMOTHY (*Laughing and chuckling.*) He! he! he! S'prised ye good that time, didn't I?

CLOVER. I think you're just as mean as you can be, Timothy Hayseed.

TIM. Ain't I told ye a dozen times my name ain't "Hayseed."

CLOVER. It's a good enough name for you. That's what everybody calls you.

TIM. I ain't to blame 'cause my front name's Timothy an' my 'tother name "Hayford." Anyways you can't say much yourself.

CLOVER. Well, I'd rather be Clover Blossom than Timothy Hayseed any day in the week.

TIM. Now don't let's quarrel, Clover—please don't. I come over to tell ye something nice.

CLOVER. I know what 'tis and I don't care if you do love me to distraction and threaten to drown yourself in the creek or take castor oil—I mean carbolic acid.

TIM. Aw, I didn't do any sech thing.

CLOVER. Yes, you did.

TIM. Didn't neither, but I'm comin' over to pop the question again next Sunday night.

CLOVER. Don't you dare! Didn't I tell you last time I wouldn't make any promises till you got a steady job?

TIM. That's what I come to tell ye 'bout. I've got one.

CLOVER. Got what?

TIM. Got a steady job. Goin' to begin tomorrow mornin'.

CLOVER. Who for?

TIM. Peter Wright.

CLOVER. For Peter Wright? What doing?

TIM. Farmin'.

CLOVER. Say! Do you know what you're talking about? Or have you clean gone daffy?

TIM. Sure I know what I'm talkin' about. Do you remember when old Josh Wright died last fall an' they hunted all over for the will?

CLOVER. Course I remember. Folks said he never made one.

TIM. Well he did, an' they've just found it in an old chest. He left Brookside Farm to Peter an' Peter's goin' to run it.

CLOVER. Good night! Peter Wright don't know any more about farmin' than a canary bird.

TIM. Course he don't, an' that's where I come in. I'm goin' to run it for him—goin' to be manager.

CLOVER. Well you are a jolly jester. What will happen next?

TIM. It's a good job all the same—pays twenty-three dollars a month an' board an' house rent free. I'll tell ye more about it Sunday night when I come over.

CLOVER. Why, is there more to tell?

TIM. Oh gee—lots! Say, I know something else, too.

CLOVER. What is it?

TIM. Oh, I can't tell—not jest yet. It's a secret.

CLOVER. But you can tell *me*, can't you?

TIM. Nope—can't tell anybody now, not even —

CLOVER. Your best girl?

TIM. Can't tell nobody.

CLOVER. Well don't tell if you don't want to.

MRS. M. (*Outside.*) Clover!

TIM. Gee! There comes Mis' Mason. I'll have to beat it or she'll give me "Hail Columby." (*Hustles off tipping over dust-pan.*)

CLOVER. Oh dear! See what you've gone and done.

TIM. Too bad. I'll give ye a kiss to pay. (*Tries it.*)

CLOVER. No, you don't, Mr. Smarty. (*Boxes his ear.*)

TIM. (*Holding ear.*) O—oh! Well, ta-ta, darlin', till Sunday night. (*Runs off L.*)

(*CLOVER is busy brushing up.*)

(*Enter MRS. MASON R.*)

MRS. M. Land sakes, Clover Blossom, ain't you got done cleanin' this room yet? You've been an hour at it by the clock.

CLOVER. Yes ma'am, I had it all done but I had an accident.



MRS. M. I'll bet that good-for-nothin' Timothy Hayseed's been here again. Now ain't he?

CLOVER. Ye-es, he—he was here just a minute.

MRS. M. I thought so. He's over here half the time. Why don't he get a job an' go to work like other folks?

CLOVER. He has got a job, Mrs. Mason.

MRS. M. He has? What doin'?

CLOVER. Farming, for Peter Wright. (*Talks very fast.*) You see they've found old Mr. Wright's will in a big chest up in the garret and he's left Brookside Farm to Peter and Peter's going to run it and —

MRS. M. Mercy sakes, child! You rattle it off so I can't get head nor tail to it. You say they've found the will?

CLOVER. Yes ma'am.

MRS. M. An' he left Brookside to Peter?

CLOVER. That's what Timothy said, and he's going to work for him.

MRS. M. You don't say! I wonder who he left Primrose Farm to?

CLOVER. I dunno. I didn't have a chance to ask him, but probably you can find out of Mehitable Green.

MRS. M. Wal, if you've got all through in here you'd better go'n peel the taters for dinner. I'll have Sunny Jim fetch some water.

(SUNNY JIM is heard outside whistling or singing any lively air.)

CLOVER. Sunny Jim's in the kitchen now.

JIM. (*Outside.*) Mrs. Mason!

MRS. M. Yes, here I be.

(*Exit CLOVER as SUNNY JIM enters with a hen under each arm.*)

JIM. Say, Mrs. Mason, which wan iv these hins d'yez want me to set. They're both iv thim cluckin' their heads off?

MRS. M. Better set old Speckle—she's the biggest.

JIM. All roight, mum. How many eggs shall I be settin'?

MRS. M. I'd set about twenty. She'll take care of 'em all right.

JIM. Shure an' she will that. Ramimber lasht year she had noineteen chicks an' wan duck an' she niver lost a wan iv thim?

(*Starts off humming to himself.*)

MRS. M. Oh say, Jim!

JIM. Yis mum.

MRS. M. I wish you'd fetch a pail of water from the spring.

JIM. Wid the greatest iv pleasure, mum. (*Starts to go then turns quickly.*) Now whoile I think iv it, Ould Squire

Pixley's out to the barn talkin' wid the boss an' they're both iv thim that ocxited—

MRS. M. Oh, has something happened? What do you think 'tis?

JIM. Begorra, I don't jist know whither onything's hapened at all or not. I didn't wait to see. Wull, I'll be goin' for the water. (*Exits whistling.*)

MRS. M. Dear me! I wonder what the Squire wants of Pa. He never comes over without it's something urgent. It can't be the mortgage 'cause that ain't due till next month. Mebbe he wants to buy one of them pigs Pa's got for sale. Here they come.

(*Enter MR. MASON followed by SQUIRE PIXLEY.*)

MR. M. Come right along in here an' sot down, Squire.

SQUIRE. Howdy do, Mrs. Mason. (*Shake hands.*)

MRS. M. Howdy, Squire. Take this easy chair.

MR. M. The Squire's come over on very important business, Ma.

SQUIRE. And very peculiar business, too.

MRS. M. Oh dear, I do hope 'tain't nothin' bad.

SQUIRE. No, no—nothing bad—don't be alarmed. It concerns your daughter.

MRS. M. Who? Our Peggy?

MR. M. Where is Peggy, Mother?

MRS. M. I ain't seen hide nor hair of her since the breakfast dishes was done up. I thought she went to the barn.

MR. M. She was out there feedin' the chickens but she came into the house last I seen of her.

MRS. M. I wonder where she can be. Mebbe Clover'll know. (*Calls.*) Clover!

CLOVER. (*Outside.*) Yes ma'am. (*Enters.*) Did you call me, Mrs. Mason?

MR. M. Do you know where Peggy is, Clover?

CLOVER. Now let me see—where did she say she was going? Oh, I know—she went up in the attic.

MR. M. Run up an' tell her to come down.

CLOVER. I'll get her quicker'n scat. (*Runs out.*)

SQUIRE. (*Taking papers from pocket and arranging them.*) I'll be getting the documents ready.

MRS. M. Oh dear! I hope Peggy hain't been up to something she hadn't oughter.

SQUIRE. Far from it. Your daughter's a girl to be proud of—a girl in a thousand.

MRS. M. Well, you bein' the Squire, an' the sight of them papers makes me real fidgety.

MR. M. You'll hear all about it soon's Peggy comes, Ma.

SQUIRE. And as I said before—



(Enter PEGGY and CLOVER.)

PEGGY. Here I am, Daddy. What's the matter?

MR. M. Set down an' the Squire'll tell ye all about it.

(PEGGY sits down, CLOVER stands at her back.)

SQUIRE. I have a very pleasant surprise for you, Miss Peggy—a very pleasant one and I must say, a very unexpected one. Isn't that so, Ezra?

MR. M. Gosh! It most knocked me off my feet when I first heard of it.

MRS. M. I'm jest dyin' to know what 'tis.

CLOVER. I bet I can guess.

SQUIRE. Listen and I'll tell you. I have here the last will and testament of the late Joshua Wright. It was made a year ago and hidden away in an old chest and was only found a few days ago.

MRS. M. Clover was jest tellin' they'd found it.

PEGGY. But really I don't see how that effects me in the least.

SQUIRE. The first part of the will doesn't effect you. It bequeaths Brookside Farm to his nephew Peter.

PEGGY. Which is just as it should be. He's the rightful heir.

SQUIRE. Now I'll read the second part. (*Reads.*) "To Miss Peggy Mason, who took such good care of me during my recent illness, and because I consider her an honest, capable and sensible young woman, I bequeath all that part of my real estate lying on the south side of Plum Creek known as Primrose Farm."

MRS. M. My stars an' garters! Did he really mean to give that whole farm to our Peggy, Pa?

MR. M. It's right there on the paper in black an' white. You heard him read it.

CLOVER. Now I know Timothy's secret.

PEGGY. Is it really true or am I dreaming? You're sure it isn't some kind of a joke, Mr. Pixley?

SQUIRE. As sure as I'm sitting here. I'm not the person to joke about such things, Miss Peggy.

PEGGY. Oh, of course not, but it does seem so strange.

SQUIRE. Well, the rest of it is stranger yet. Listen. (*Reads.*) "The sum of twenty thousand dollars now on deposit in the Grangers' National Bank I wish to be kept in trust for one year from the time this will is probated, after which time it shall be given to the one of the two beneficiaries who has accomplished the best results during the year and who has been adjudged the more efficient farm manager. The only restriction is that they shall both live upon their respective farms and personally attend to the management thereof. I appoint as judges: Prof. Henry Blair, Isaac Trimble and Squire Phineas Pixley." I think that's all of the will that will interest you.

CLOVER. Gee! Twenty thousand dollars! My goodness gracious!

MRS. M. I don't know what to make of it. Do you, Pa?

MR. M. Why, it looks to me's if Peggy got inter his good graces that summer when he was sick with rheumatiz an' now he's left her a farm. That's 'bout the way it looks to me.

SQUIRE. A lucky girl, I call her.

PEGGY. But I can't accept it, Mr. Pixley—really I can't.

SQUIRE. I don't see how you're going to get out of it now. Of course you don't have to live on the farm unless you want to. In such case the money would go to Peter.

MRS. M. I don't see how she *could* live on it.

MR. M. For my part I ain't figured it out yet.

PEGGY. (*Decidedly.*) Well, if I must accept it, I'm going to live on it and I'm going to win out, see if I don't.

MRS. M. Why, Peggy, how can you?

PEGGY. Easy enough. You know there's a good house on the place and if you'll let Clover come with me and—

CLOVER (*Clapping hands.*) I'd love to do it. Won't it be fun!

PEGGY. And if Pa'll let me have Sunny Jim.

(*Enter SUNNY JIM.*)

JIM. Roight here I be, mum. Phwat would yez be wantin' iv Sunny Jim?

PEGGY. How would you like to leave this place, Mr. O'Reilly?

JIM. Och, divil a bit would I loike it—oxcuse me, mum—I mane I wouldn't loike it at all.

PEGGY. But if you were to work for me at Primrose Farm?

JIM. Work for yez, did yez say, at Primorse Farm? Begorra, I don't understand.

MR. M. To make a long story short, Jim, old Joshua Wright took a shine to our Peggy here an' willed her that farm an' the will's jest been discovered.

JIM. Jist so.

MR. M. An' Peggy's plannin' on runnin' it with your help an' Clover's.

JIM. Bliss me soul. But she's a plucky gurl. Shure an' I'll do me part.

PEGGY. Thank you both, you and Clover.

SQUIRE. Well, it begins to look like business. I hope you'll succeed. I hope Peter succeeds. In fact I hope both of you succeed. Being one of the judges I can't do any different.

PEGGY. You can do as the advertisements say "Watch us grow."

SQUIRE. I shall certainly take great interest in watching you both grow. Now I've done my duty I shall have to bid you good day and good luck.

(*He starts to leave room and runs into MEHITABLE GREEN, who is entering.*)

MRS. G. My land o' Goshen, Squire Pixley! You most upst me.

SQUIRE. Why don't you look where you're going, Mehitable Green?

MRS. G. I *was* lookin' but you run kerplunk into me.

JIM. Haw! haw! haw! A colision 'twixt the mail train an' the limited ixpriss, bedad.

SQUIRE. My advice is to be more careful next time. "Stop, look and listen." (*Exit.*)

MRS. M. Come right in an' set down, Mehitable.

MRS. G. Law sakes! I never was so shook up in my life. But I was goin' to tell you—I jist saw Timothy an' he was tellin' me about old Joshua's will, so I hustled right over to see if it's true.

MR. M. There ain't any doubt but what he told ye jist as 'tis.

MRS. G. An' he says Peter's goin' to work tooth an' nail to get that twenty thousand. My land, jist think of it! Twenty thousand dollars!

PEGGY. Well, if you see him you can tell him that I'm going to do the very same thing.

MRS. G. I want to know! An' you a girl, too.

PEGGY. Well, what of that? Lots of women and girls manage farms now-a-days.

MRS. G. Mebbe they do, I dunno, but if you need any help don't be afraid to call on "yours truly."

MRS. M. It's real good of you to offer, Mehitable.

MR. M. But she's jist engaged her help 'fore you come in.

PEGGY. And here we are—((CLOVER at R., JIM at L.) the co-workers who will try to make Primrose Farm a wonderful success.

CLOVER.

'Tis I will be the dainty cook  
And thrifty housemaid, too;

JIM.

Mesilf will be the captain bold  
To boss the bloomin' crew;

BOTH.

But if we strike the rocks and shoals  
Whatever shall we do?

PEGGGY.

As pilot of the sturdy craft  
I'll guide you safely through.

CURTAIN.

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## ACT II.

SCENE: *Living room at Primrose Farm. Plain old-fashioned furniture. A telephone on rear wall.*

PEGGY is discovered telephoning.

PEGGY. Hello, is this you, mother?—oh lovely! We're getting along splendidly—no, just ready to begin haying—what's that?—yes, we'll have to have another man for a few days. I'm going to telephone to the Employment Bureau today—yes—um hm—yes, Sunny Jim says we'll have bumper crops this year. But say! I called you up to tell you that Madge came last night.—Why, Madge Brownell? You've heard of her. She was my chum at school—oh I can't say. She'll stay two or three weeks anyway, maybe all summer—yes, she's real handy about the house—oh, is that so—today?—Well, why don't you drive around this way and stop in for a few minutes?—That'll be just lovely. I'll look for you. Good-bye. (*Hangs up receiver*). Now I must call up that Employment Bureau and see if I can get a man to help Sunny Jim with the haying. (*Looks up number in book. Takes receiver.*) Hello Central, give me 4267-J. — Is this the Central Employment Bureau?—

(*Enter MADGE, unobserved by PEGGY.*)

—well say, have you a good man you could send out to Primrose Farm for a week or two to help at haying?—yes—yes— How much does he want? — Can he come tomorrow? — All right, send a good steady man and a good worker—Good-bye. (*Hangs up receiver.*) Why, Madge, I didn't hear you come in.

MADGE. You seem to be pretty busy today.

PEGGY. I'm a busy woman all the time, Madge.

MADGE. Tell me truly, do you really like the business of managing a farm?

PEGGY. I love it—so far. Perhaps though when the novelty wears off, or if the weather and the seasons should be bad and things got to going crosswise I might change my mind, but I hope not.

(*Enter CLOVER.*)

CLOVER. Miss Peggy, the bread was all eaten up for dinner. What ever'll we do for supper?

PEGGY. Make some warm biscuit, Clover. We'll have warm biscuit and honey.

CLOVER. Gee! That makes my mouth water already. (*Dances off singing Tra-la-la-la-la, etc.*)

(*Enter SUNNY JIM.*)

JIM. Phwat wull yez be doin' about the hayin' tomorrow, Miss? Is it *yes* or *no*? If yez say the word I'll be gettin' the mowin' machine ready. Iv course I can't do it alone, yez know that.

PEGGY. I just telephoned to the employment office and they've promised to send a man tomorrow morning.

JIM. All roight. I'll be ready for him. If he's a good mon we'll jist make things hum. (*Exit singing "hum de dum de dum," etc.*)

MADGE (*Laughing.*) You're a wonder, Peggy. They enter with a tale of woe and go away singing a song of joy.

PEGGY. Isn't it comical.

MADGE. There's one thing I wish you would tell me—and that is, why do they call this "Primrose Farm?"

PEGGY. That's easy. You've heard me tell about Mr. Joshua Wright, haven't you—the old gentleman I took care of when he was sick? (*MADGE nods.*) Well, he was an Englishman and when he first came to this country years ago, he built this house and planted English primroses all around it. I suppose it was beautiful to behold. Then people got to calling it the "Primrose Farm" and the name still clings to it. You may still see a few of the primroses in the dooryard.

MADGE. But were there no other heirs besides this Peter you tell about?

PEGGY. None living that we know of. Peter's father and mother died in England some years ago and Peter, being an only child, was sent over here to his uncle. Old Mr. Wright had one other brother but he was a sailor and was shipwrecked, so it is said.

MADGE. How funny things do happen sometimes, don't they? Well, here comes a caller. I wonder if it's another tale of woe.

PEGGY. It's Mehitable Green. You may be sure she's got some kind of a tale to tell.

(*Enter MRS. GREEN.*)

MRS. G. Howdy, Miss Peggy. Jest thought I'd run in a minute on my way from the store. Oh, excuse me—you've got company.

PEGGY. My friend, Madge Brownell, Mrs. Green. She used to be my chum at school. (*Greetings.*)

MRS. G. I want to know! Real glad to know you, Miss Brownell.

MADGE. The pleasure is mutual.

MRS. G. Goin' to stay long?

MADGE (*Laughing.*) Why—er—I can't say how soon Peggy will send me home.

PEGGY. I'm going to keep her all summer if I can.

MRS. G. Well, do tell! Ain't that real nice——But say! I jest stopped in to Peter Wright's on my way an' they're awfully upshot over there.

PEGGY. Why, what's happened?

MRS. G. Oh, somebody got into Peter's prize cornfield last night an' broke an' trampled down a lot of his corn. They heard



the dog barkin' an' this morning' they found a man's hat in the lot an'—

GIRLS. My goodness!

PEGGY. Who do they think it was?

MRS. G. Timothy swears uphill an' down that the hat belongs to Sunny Jim.

PEGGY. To Sunny Jim? Impossible! It can't be!

MRS. G. Wal, of course I don't know. He says it's one he's seen him wear. But Nora McCarty says 'tain't, so there you be.

(Voice outside calls "Help! Help!" Others run to door.)

MADGE. Goodness! What's happened?

MRS. G. Wal, did you ever! It's Timothy Hayseed an' he's sprawlin' on the ground.

PEGGY. He's got hurt. And there's Sunny Jim running to help him. (Calls.) Bring him right in here, Jim.

MRS. G. That boy's allers up to something or other. I never see the beat.

(Enter SUNNY JIM supporting TIMOTHY, the latter with streaks of "blood" on forehead and hand.)

MADGE. Oh mercy! How did it happen?

JIM. He was ridin' a boicycle an'—

TIMOTHY. An' I took a header over the handle bars. O—oh! My head!

PEGGY. Well, sit right down here and I'll get some water to bathe it. (Rushes out.)

(Enter CLOVER.)

CLOVER. Oh dear! Is he killed?

TIMOTHY. Not quite, but I come purty nigh it.

MRS. G. Run an' get some cloths to bind him up an' something to put on. Hurry!

CLOVER. (Running off.) Oh dear! Oh dear!

(Enter PEGGY with dish of water and cloth. She proceeds to wash it very tenderly. MADGE holds dish.)

PEGGY. Does it hurt now, Timothy?

TIM. N—no, not much, but I wish—that is, I wish—

PEGGY. Well, what do you wish?

TIM. Why, I wish—(Aside.) Gosh ding it—(Aloud.) I—I wish you'd let Clover do it.

(Girls laugh. Enter CLOVER.)

PEGGY. Why, surely she may. Here. Clover! Timothy wants you to do this.

CLOVER. Me? Oh my goodness!

MRS. G. Wal now, ain't that the beatenes' idee you ever heard tell of!



JIM. Shure an' I moight as well be goin' about me work. Wid a house full iv wimmen he's all roight, an' that's no joke at all.

*(Exit, and is heard singing off stage.)*

MRS. G. I don't see's you need me, neither. Mebbe I'd better go over'n tell Peter to come an' get him in his ortomobeel.

PEGGY. Just as you like, Mrs. Green.

MRS. G. Wal, good-bye, girls. I'll run in again some day.  
*(Exit.)*

PEGGY. There! Now let's bind up his wounds.

MADGE. *(Taking up bottle.)* Why, what's this?—hair oil.

CLOVER. Oh, I got the wrong bottle. I meant to bring the arnica. *(Runs off and returns with another bottle.)*

PEGGY *(To TIMOTHY.)* Now lean your head over this way. *(To CLOVER.)* You put the arnica on, Clover, then Madge and I will attend to the bandages.

TIMOTHY. Oh gee! I don't want them old rags on.

*(They continue to bind head and hand.)*

PEGGY. But you must. You're our patient and you must submit to our treatment.

TIM. Then I s'pose I'll have to.

MADGE. There! Isn't he a real nice-looking patient?

PEGGY. Scrumptious!

*(Some one outside calls, "Peggy!")*

PEGGY. Oh, there's father and mother! Come, Madge, let's go and bring them in and see our patient.

TIM. Gosh! You folks make me sick.

*(Girls rush out.)*

CLOVER. Feel any better now, Timothy?

TIM. Yes, a good deal. I'm all right.

CLOVER. How did it ever happen?

TIM. Oh my wheel went into an old wagon rut an' stopped an' I jest went on—that's all. But say, Clover, I've been wantin' to ax you something for quite a spell.

CLOVER. Well, what is it?

TIM. Don't you think I've been workin' pretty steady lately?

CLOVER. Yes, I guess you have.

TIM. An' you know what you promised me soon's I got a steady job, don't you?

CLOVER. Yes, I know—but Timothy—

TIM. Now don't go to buttin' again. You're jest like Peter's old Billy goat—always a buttin'."

*(Enter girls followed by MR. and MRS. MASON.)*

PEGGY. Here's our patient.

MRS. M. Why, it's Timothy! He was jist over to our house.

MR. M. Wal, I swan! They've got you tied up pretty well. What struck ye, Tim?

TIM. Didn't nothin' strike me. I struck the road. Keeled right over the handle bars.

MRS. M. Dear me suz!

MR. M. Lucky you've got a good solid head.

PEGGY. Why, Pa! How you talk.

MRS. M. Peggy, we do think your crops are looking splendid—what we could see from the road.

PEGGY. Sunny Jim says we're bound to win that twenty thousand.

MR. M. By the way, Timothy was tellin' us that Peter had a lot of his corn crop ruined last night.

TIM. Sure he did.

MR. M. An' he says they found Jim's old hat in the lot this morning'.

TIM. That's so. I've seen him wear it lot's of time.

PEGGY. But Pa, you don't believe for a minute that Sunny Jim would do such a thing, do you?

MR. M. Wal no, I wouldn't a thought he'd do it, but it does look kinder suspicious—now don't it?

TIM. 'Specially when you find his hat right where he left it when the dog scart him away.

PEGGY. Sunny Jim hasn't worn that old hat lately. He keeps it hanging up in the shed. Go and see if it's there now, Clover.

CLOVER. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit.*)

PEGGY. Besides he didn't go away at all last night. He went to bed early.

MR. M. Which ain't sayin' he might have slipped out arterwards.

(*Enter CLOVER, excitedly.*)

CLOVER. It ain't there, Miss Peggy. I've looked all over. Oh, you don't suppose—

TIM. Didn't I tell you?

CLOVER. Well, here comes Mr. Peter now.

MR. M. Then we'll hear what he's got to say.

(*Enter PETER and NORA.*)

PETER. Good afternoon, folks.

(*Others respond in similar way.*)

PEGGY. You've met my friend, Miss Brownell, haven't you, Peter?

PETER. Don't think I have. (*They bow.*) Glad to meet you.

MADGE. And I am very glad to meet you, Mr. Wright. I've heard so much about you.

PETER. Hope it was something good.

MADGE. Oh, it was.

PEGGY. And here's Miss Nora McCarty.

NORA. That's me, shure enough.

(MADGE laughs and bows.)

PEGGY (To Peter.) And here is Mr. Timothy Hayford, our patient.

PETER. Well, great Scott! You're a fine looking specimen.

TIM. Guess I do look worsen' I be.

NORA. Yez do that. I thought by phwat Mrs. Green said that yez were brathin' your lasht, an' for that I lift me bakin' in the oven. An' here yez be laughin' at me, ye spalpin.

(Others laugh.)

MR. M. (To PETER.) We were just talkin' about your corn when you came in.

PETER. I think you'll have to admit it was a dastardly trick.

MR. M. We sartainly do—an' specially as it was one of the finest pieces of corn in the county.

PETER. The very finest without exception. Everybody said so. I don't think the scoundrel would have left a spear standing if Tige hadn't appeared on the scene.

PEGGY. But really, you can't think that Sunny Jim had anything to do with it?

PETER. Don't think—I know. We've got the evidence.

PEGGY. But only circumstantial evidence.

NORA. You're roight, Miss, 'tis only sarcumshtantial ividence, so it be—

PETER. It's enough to satisfy me, at any rate.

PEGGY. But how could he do it when he wasn't out of his room?

PETER. Are you sure he wasn't out of his room?

PEGGY. Quite sure. Did you hear anything of him, Madge? His room is next to yours.

MADGE. I heard him snoring all night. I didn't sleep well myself because—well, I never can sleep much the first night in a strange room. And then, when I did get into a drowse he would start in louder than ever and wake me up.

(Enter SUNNY JIM, excitedly.)

JIM. Och, worry, Miss, I've got bad news this toime—oxcuse me, I didn't know yez had so much company.

PEGGY. Never mind the company, Jim—what's the bad news?

JIM. Och, I've jist discovered a plot.

SEVERAL. A plot?

JIM. Yis mum, a low-down threacherous plot. I was jist lookin' under the hay barn for a couple iv boards an' phwat should I foind but a pile iv shavin's wid a lot iv matches clost by an'—

MRS. M. My goodness sakes!

(*All appear interested.*)

PEGGY. Do you think someone tried to burn the barn?

JIM. Shure an' I do, mum. The shavin's was half burned up, but I'm thinkin' they was to grane to burn good an'—

MADGE. Isn't it dreadful!

MR. M. Gosh a mighty! Wonder who could have done sech a thing as that.

JIM. I dunno who 'twas, but I found this handkerchief roight there besoide it.

(*Holds up handkerchief.*)

PEGGY. Let me see it. (*Takes it and examines same.*)

MADGE. Look, Peggy! There's some reading on it.

PEGGY. (*Examining it.*) Well, of all things! Do you know anything about it, Peter? It's got your name on it.

PETER. My name? Must be a mistake. I never had a handkerchief like that—never.

PEGGY. But you can see for yourself. It says "Peter Wright" as plain as day.

TIM. Gee! I never seen him have one like it.

PETER. Where did you say you found it?

JIM. Roight under the north-east corner iv the hay barn, jist forninst that bunch iv shavin's.

CLOVER. My sakes, ain't it funny. Everybody's finding some evidence.

PETER. What are you talking about?

CLOVER. Why, didn't you find Mr. Jim's hat in your cornfield? That's evidence number one. Now he finds your handkerchief under our barn. That's evidence number two.

PETER. But I tell you it isn't my handkerchief.

JIM. Phwat d'yez mane by foindin' me hat in his corn patch?

PETER. She means that some one destroyed part of my corn last night and this morning your hat was found there. What have you got to say for yourself?

JIM. (*Holding his hat.*) Roight there's me hat.

TIM. Aw, 'tain't that one—it's your old felt one we're talkin' about.

JIM. Thin you'll foind it hangin' out in the shed where I lift it.

CLOVER. It isn't there, Mr. Jim, I looked to see.

JIM. Thin begorra, somebody's shwiped it on me. Onyways I was abid an' ashlape all noight, so I was.

MADGE. I'm sure of it.

NORA. Faix an' I don't belave ayther wan iv 'em did phwat yez think they did.

PETER. What do you mean, Nora?

NORA. I mane that I don't belave 'twas yersilf that sot the barn afoire, an' I don't belave Jim destroyed the corn. I can't go back on me Jim because I—I—you tell 'em Jim.

JIM. We're engaged.

*(Laughter and exclamations follow.)*

PETER. Great Scott!

MRS. M. My goodness! Things are gettin' into an awful muddle. I dunno how they'll ever get straightened out. Do you, Pa?

MR. M. Gosh ding it, I dunno 'less we get one of them detective fellers.

MADGE. I've just thought of something, Peggy. Do you remember that time at school when we missed so many things from our lockers?

PEGGY. Oh, don't I.

MADGE. And you know how I ferretted out the thief?

PEGGY. I certainly do remember it.

MADGE. Well, my idea is for you folks to go right on just being good friends and neighbors and—and so forth, and let me be the detective. I will try to solve the mystery.

PEGGY. A regular lady Sherlock Holmes.

PETER. I'm willing to do as she says.

PEGGY. So am I, Peter.

TIM. Good scheme, I'll say. Eh, Clover?

CLOVER. Sure thing.

MRS. M. An' we'll trust to Providence that everything turns out all right in the end.

MR. M. Wal, we'll have to be gettin' started, Ma.

PETER. And we, too. Come on, Timothy and Nora. *(He assists TIMOTHY.)*

NORA. Shure we will for I lift me bakin' in the oven.

*(MR. and MRS. M., PETER, TIMOTHY and NORA hurry off, TIMOTHY limping.)*

QUICK CURTAIN.

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### ACT III.

SCENE: *Living room at Brookside Farm. Furnishings similar to those in Act II, some changes being made by shifting the position of furniture and by use of different table coverings, tapestries, tidies, etc.*

*NORA is discovered putting on a clean white apron, after which she busies herself straightening tidies, etc.*



NORA. Faix an' I think I've got iverything ready for the parthy this avenin'. To be shure it won't be much iv a parthy—jist a few iv the nabors, but it's all the same to meself whither it's wan or a dozen. I wouldn't have onywan sayin' that Nora McCarty ain't a good housekaper. Whin I git to kapin' house iv me own you'll always foind it as nate an' clane as a wax candle. An' that makes me think—it won't be long before me name wull be Mrs. James O'Reilly.

An' oh! How swate will be the sound  
Of Mrs. James O'Reilly,  
An' ivery wan that calls on me  
Will praise me very hoighly.

(Enter PETER.)

PETER. What were you saying just now, Nora?

NORA. Och nothin' but jist some blarney iv me own.

PETER. Everything looks as slick as a whistle here.

NORA. That's phwat I was sayin' to meself "Folks praise me very hoighly."

PETER. The future Mrs. O'Reilly.

NORA. Go on wid yez now. Yez make me blush.

PETER. Do you realize that it's been just a year since you came to keep house here, Nora?

NORA. Faix, an' I was jist thinkin' iv it this day.

PETER. It hasn't been such a bad year after all, everything considered.

NORA. I should say not, barrin' a few thrubbles that cropped up now an' thin.

PETER. There are one or two things that I would like to see explained, but I expect they will always remain mysteries.

NORA. Wull, jist have faith. Mebbe the good Lord will make things clear to us some day.

PETER. (*Looking at watch.*) It's most time somebody showed up.

NORA. I thought I heard some wan jist thin. Shure an' it's Mehitable Green. Come roight in, Mrs. Green.

(Enter MRS. GREEN.)

MRS. G. My land! Am I the first one here?

PETER. Has that appearance, doesn't it?

MRS. G. Well, I'd rather be the first one than the last. I never like to be late. Say, Peter, I do hope the judges will decide in your favor tonight. I think you deserve it.

PETER. And I suppose you've already told Peggy the same thing, haven't you?

MRS. G. Why I—now Mr. Wright, of course you know I'd like to see you both get it. Really, I couldn't say I hoped she wouldn't get it. Could I?



PETER. It wouldn't be very complimentary, that's a fact.

(Enter TIMOTHY.)

TIM. Hain't nobody got here yet?

PETER. Where are your eyes? Can't you see Mrs. Green.

TIM. Shucks! That's nothin'. She's here half the time anyway.

MRS. G. Now, Timothy Hayseed, you know better.

TIM. I ain't Timothy Hayseed an' you know it.

(Voce outside calls "whoa!")

PETER. There's Ezra and Betsy Mason. Go and take care of their horse, Tim.

TIM. You betcha. (Runs off.)

(Enter MRS. M. followed by EZRA.)

PETER. Come right along in, folks, and make yourselves to home. Brookside is yours tonight.

MRS. M. Thanky, Peter. I declare if Mehitable ain't got the start of us, Pa.

MR. M. That's nothin' new. She allers does.

MRS. G. I ain't been here long. Have I, Peter?

PETER. Not very.

CLOVER. (Just outside L.) Well, I don't want him for my beau and I wouldn't have him neither. I've got a feller of my own. So there.

(Enter CLOVER.)

MR. M. What 'pears to be the excitment, Clover?

CLOVER. Nothing only Nora McCarty's jealous. She thinks I'm settin' my cap for Sunny Jim just cause we walked over here together, but I wouldn't give a picayune for that old paddy-whack.

(Others laugh. Loud voices outside.)

MRS. G. Now she's givin' it to Jim. "True love never did run smooth."

(The "hank, honk" of an auto is heard.)

MRS. G. There's the Squire's automobeel. I can always tell it.

PETER. (At door.) Good evening Squire. Come right in. (They shake hands.)

LADIES. Yes, do come in, Squire.

SQUIRE. Good evening, ladies. (Bows.)—and here's Ezra, too. Glad to see you. (They shake hands.)

EZRA. Be you all alone?

SQUIRE. Yes, Professor Blair and Mr. Trimble couldn't come—had other engagements—so they left me to finish the job. (Looks around.) Everybody here that ought to be?

PETER. Peggy hasn't come yet. I don't know why.

MRS. M. We thought she'd be here.

MR. M. So we drove around by the lower road.

CLOVER. I know where she is. She went down to the station to meet Miss Brownell.

MR. M. Madge comin' agin'?

MRS. M. Why yes, Pa. Didn't I tell you yesterday she was comin' to spend her vacation.

MR. M. Wal, mebbe you did—I forgot. (*To CLOVER.*) What's the reason Jim didn't drive?

CLOVER. Cause she wouldn't let him. She wanted to go alone.

(*Enter JIM followed by NORA.*)

JIM. Begorra, that's a fact. I thryed me bist.

(*Enter TIMOTHY.*)

TIM. There's a buzz wagon comin' up the road. Couldn't see who 'twas, though.

(*Honk of auto is heard.*)

MR. M. It's Peggy.

TIM. Now we're goin' to hear all about it. Gee! I hope—

CLOVER. Timothy Hay, you keep still. You needn't go to hoping anything at all.

(*Enter PEGGY and MADGE.*)

PEGGY. Well here we are at last. The train was late or we'd have been here sooner.

SEVERAL. Howdy do, Miss Brownell. Glad to see you back. (*General handshakings.*)

SQUIRE. I guess you liked the country pretty well or you wouldn't come again.

JIM. Jist loike the birds thaat come to us ivery summer.

MADGE. True enough. I enjoyed myself immensely last year and I'm glad—real glad to be back aagin with you all.

SQUIRE. I think myself it's a pretty good corner of the earth to live in.

NORA. Faix, an' 'tis mesilf has seen lots worse.

SQUIRE. Well, now hadn't we better get to business? "Business before pleasure" is a pretty good maxim.

MRS. G. Jest what I was thinkin'. I'm real anxious to know how things are goin' to turn out.

SEVERAL. We all are.

TIM. I'll bet on Peter.

CLOVER. I'll bet Miss Peggy wins.

SQUIRE. Hold your horses. This is no betting game.

PETER. Never mind the kiddos. Go ahead, Squire.

SQUIRE. Well, as you all know, the will of Joshua Wright specified that the sum of twenty thousand dollars was to be kept

in trust for one year, after which it was to go to the one who had made the best showing in that time.

SEVERAL. Yes! Yes!

SQUIRE. Well, the three judges have kept pretty close tab on both of you. We've watched the crops growing, and how you took care of them, and we've seen what has been produced and we've figured it all up and talked the matter over among ourselves until ——

TIM. (*Hand on heart.*) Gee! My heart goes pitter patter.

SQUIRE. But you must realize that it's not an easy thing to judge. While the size of the two farms and the soil and the drainage are about equal, there are a good many other things to take into consideration—a good many. But you've both done remarkably well. I congratulate you both on your success at farming.

MR. M. Hain't you forgot something, Squire? You didn't tell us who gets it.

SQUIRE. I'm just coming to it, Ezra. As I said before it was a hard matter to decide. Prof. Blair of the Buxton Agricultural School thought Miss Peggy should have it. (CLOVER nudges TIM.) On the other hand, Mr. Trimble, the Farm Bureau man, was in favor of Peter. (TIM nudges CLOVER.) But as for me I couldn't see much difference either way, so you see we had a lot of arguments pro and con. Finally the upshot of it all is that we've decided the money should be divided even.

SEVERAL. Good! Good! That's fair!

TIM. How about Peter's corn?

SQUIRE. We've taken all that into consideration. Everything's been considered.

PEGGY. While we are speaking of that, Madge has something to tell us. You know she was to be our detective.

JIM. Begorra, she didn't do much detectin'.

MADGE. But I have had better luck during the winter.

MR. M. Where?

MADGE. Right in Blockton, my own home city, I have solved the mystery and discovered the plotter.

ALL. You have?

PETER. You know who destroyed the corn?

JIM. An' who set foire to the barn?

MADGE. I know all about it, and if you will pardon me I will cease to be a detective and become a magician. With my magic wand I will reveal him to you.

(*Exclamations of "My land!" "Gosh!" "I want to know!" etc.*)

MADGE. (*Using a folded fan for wand which she waves in the air.*)

"Ena, Mena, Mina, Mo"

Hither come your face to show.

*(She stamps three times, waves fan and stamps three times again.)*

*(Enter CAPT. WRIGHT.)*

MADGE. Ladies and Gentlemen! Here is your man. Allow me to present to you Capt. Peter Wright.

*(General exclamations again.)*

PETER. What? My uncle that was shipwrecked?

CAPT. Shipwrecked several times but too tough to drown.

MADGE. Perhaps you'd better tell them your story, Captain. They're all waiting to hear it.

CAPT. All right, Miss, an' what I tell ye will be gospel truth. 'Twon't be no sailor's yarn. I'll begin back nigh onto forty years ago when Josh an' me came across from England. Josh was for settlin' down but I was allers a rover an' loved the sea. Howsumever, Josh persuaded me to lend him five thousand dollars an' with that he bought the farm jest across the creek from here an' stocked it an' built a house, while I set out on a sea-farin' life. I hadn't been sailin' moren' a year when we was shipwrecked off the coast of Barbadoes an' only me n' Skipper Bill was saved. Skipper Bill an' me've been partners ever since, an' together we've sailed the Seven Seas. 'Bout a year ago we was in another shipwreck an' as luck would have it, Bill an' me was the only ones saved again. 'Twas then we decided to quit the sea for good an' all, an' we headed back here. When I found Josh was dead, the farm in other hands an' my five thousand gone, somehow I felt sorter riled up. I talked it over with Bill an' we vowed to get even. It was Bill's part to destroy that prize corn an' I was to fire the barn on the Primrose Farm. But the dog scart Bill away an' my conscience wouldn't let me do my part, so we drifted to Blockton where this young lady found us. That's all I've got to say.

SQUIRE. Seems to me that pretty near clears things up.

TIM. But how come it Sunny Jim's hat was found in the corn lot?

CAPT. I reckon mebbe 'twas one that Bill picked up somewhere while we was reconnoiterin'.

JIM. An wheriver is the loikes iv this Skipper Bill?

CAPT. He ain't been feelin' well for a few days so he stayed in Blockton. But he sends his regrets an' we both of us ax your pardon.

PEGGY. If what you say is true, then Primrose Farm really belongs to you. Doen't it, Mr. Pixley?

SQUIRE. The deed was in Joshua's name.

NORA. Faix, an' I wouldn't give it up for the loikes iv him.

CLOVER. Indeed I wouldn't.

CAPT. Don't be alarmed, Miss. I ain't cut out for no farmer an' I ain't figurin' on gettin' the farm away from ye.

MR. M. Gosh! Five thousand dollars would draw a pile of interest in forty years. Did ye have anything to show for it?

CAPT. Right here is Josh's note. (*Takes a crumpled paper from wallet.*) I've kept it ever sence. (*Others examine it.*)

SQUIRE. It's Joshua's signature all right.

MRS. G. But I've heerd that sech things outlaw after a while.

CAPT. That's true, ma'am. I expect this note's been outlawed a good many years. I ain't got no legal claim against the estate. At first I was riled up, as I told ye, but I've thought different since, an' I'm here tonight to make a clean breast of it.

PEGGY. What do you think, Peter? It was your uncle's debt.

PETER. I think it ought to be settled for Uncle Josh's sake and probably would have been if Uncle had known his brother was still alive.

PEGGY. Then suppose we each give him half of our money allowance.

PETER. Agreed. We'll have the Squire fix it up in that way.

CAPT. Now you're gettin' too generous. I'd be happy with jest the amount of the note.

PETER. Then take what we offer and be twice as happy. Be as happy as Peggy and myself. For after all I will have ten thousand dollars and so will Peggy.

SQUIRE. I don't know how you make that out. There wasn't only twenty thousand in all.

PETER. We're both aware of that, but isn't it true that what belongs to the husband belongs to the wife, and vice versa?

TIM. Gosh! They're goin' to be married.

CLOVER. Lordy!

MRS. G. Is that so, Mrs. Mason? Be they really goin' to be married?

MRS. M. Yes, that's one thing you hadn't heard of. Pa an' I gave our consent this mornin'.

TIM. We've got a secret, too. Ain't we, Clover?

CLOVER. Um—hm. You bet.

JIM. Shall I be tellin' 'em about oursilves, Nora?

NORA. They moight as well know it now as any toime.

JIM. Thin I hereby announce the weddin' iv Miss Nora McCarty to Sunny Jim O'Reilly nixt wake.

PETER. What? So soon?

NORA. Yis sor, we jist decided tonight.

SQUIRE. Great Jupiter! This is getting contagious. I feel some symptoms of it myself. How about you, Mehitable?

MRS. G. Oh, I feel it comin' on. Just think of it, Phineas. I've been a lone widder for night onto six years.

SQUIRE. And for five years I've been a wretched widower. Oh, Mehitable, my dear!



## PEGGY OF PRIMROSE FARM

MRS. M. Land o' Goshen! This is gettin' ridiculous.

MR. M. Haw! haw! haw!

MADGE. Mercy! I hope I don't catch it.

CAPT. As for me, I'm too old an' salty for sech doin's, but if any of ye want to go for a vacation or mebbe a honeymoon you'll find a welcome with Skipper Bill an' me in a little cottage down by the seashore.

PETER. Thank you, Uncle Peter.

PEGGY. And winter or summer, spring or fall, anytime and all times, you'll find open house at Primrose Farm.

ALL.

At Primrose Farm, at Primrose Farm,  
This gathering oft we'll see.

PEGGY and PETER.

And there'll be welcome for you all.

ALL.

And merry times there'll be.

CURTAIN.

*The following positions are held at the close of act: A, PETER and PEGGY; B, MR. and MRS. M.; C, SQUIRE and MRS. G.; D, TIMOTHY and CLOVER; E, SUNNY JIM and NORA; F, MADGE; and G, CAPT. WRIGHT.*

AA

BB

CC

DD

EE

F

G





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