

**A Day at
Happy Hollow
School**

**By
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ACT I.

SETTING—Interior of schoolroom. Chairs arranged in rows for scholars; desk and chair for teacher; blackboard.

(Enter teacher. Severe-looking, wearing eye-glasses. Arranges books and papers on desk. Rings bell.)

(Enter scholars, singly and in groups, talking and laughing until teacher again taps bell. They wear varied costumes, gingham aprons, etc. On entering remove coats, caps, shawls, hats and bonnets—in season and out of season—hanging them on hooks in the wall or on backs of chairs. Hair in pig-tails or curls tied with ribbons or shoestrings in all manner of fashions.)

Each has basket, bag or tin dinner-pail.

Teacher opens roll-book and proceeds to call roll.

Teacher. “Annabel Adams.”

Annabel Adams. “Present.”

Teacher. “Bessie Bolitsky.”

Bessie Bolitsky. “P-r-r-ésent!”

Teacher. “Curiosity Cornhusk.”

Curiosity Cornhusk. “Present.”

Teacher. “Dennis Dockerty.”

Dennis Dockerty. “Present.”

Teacher. “Etta Elephant.”

Etta Elephant (fat child). “I’m here.”

Teacher. “Fanny Finney.”

Fanny Finney (brogue). “Hyer.”

Teacher. “Geraldine Griggs.”

Geraldine Griggs. “*Present.*”

Teacher. “Henry Hoskins.”

Henry Hoskins. “*Pr-r-esent.*”

Teacher. “Isaac Ibsen.”

Isaac Ibsen. “We’s both here.”

Teacher. “Silence! Next time answer as you should.” (Proceeds.)
“Ira Ibsen.”

Ira Ibsen (very faintly). “Present.”

Teacher. “Joshua Judkins.”

Joshua Judkins. “*Present.*”

(Other names may be added.)

Teacher. “First class in geography, come forward.”

(Advance Annabel, Dennis, Etta, Curiosity and Joshua.)

Teacher. “Now Annabel, you tell me this. If to the right of you is the South, and on your left the North, and in front of you the East—what’s behind you?”

Annabel thinks a moment, then starts to cry. “Boo hoo! I knowed it. I told ma you’d see them buttons missin’ off my waist.”

Teacher. “Ridiculous! I mean the West. Now listen children! Does anybody remember what the population of China is?” (All shake heads negatively.)

Teacher. “Well, the population of China is so great that two Chinamen die every time you take a breath.”

(Etta immediately starts purring furiously. Keeps it up until spoken to.)

Teacher. “Dennis Dockerty go to the board and draw the map of New Jersey.”

(Dennis goes, but draws instead a tree, one branch of which is longer than the others, and has on it three disks representing fruit.)

Teacher (just then observing Etta’s flushed face and energetic puffs): “Why Etta Elephant, what’s the matter? What on earth are you doing?”

Etta Elephant. “Killing Chinamen. I never did like them foreigners what me father calls aliens, and I’m getting rid of them as fast as I can.”

(Teacher throws up hands in exasperation. Turns to blackboard.)

“Why Dennis Dockerty that’s not the map of New Jersey.”

Dennis. “Please, ma’am, my big brother says New Jersey’s like a fruit tree, ’cause it’s got a Long Branch, three Oranges and a Lemon.”

Teacher (meditatively): “Y-e-s, East Orange, West Orange and South Orange—but where’s the Lemon?”

Dennis (saucily). “You’re the Lemon.”

Other Scholars. “O-h-h!”

Teacher. “Go to your seat.”

(Dennis goes, shuffling his feet and sulking for some time.)

Teacher. “Curiosity, your father is a sailor; would it be possible for him to start to-day to go round the world, and keep sailing always in the same direction till he came back to his starting-point?”

Curiosity. “No, Miss Fitzimmons, pop’s laid up with rheumatism.”

Teacher. “Dear me! What ails you all to be so stupid to-day. Joshua, have we anything in our country as wonderful as the great volcano, Mt. Vesuvius, which continually pours out smoke and molten lava?”

Joshua. “Sure—give Niagara Falls a chance, it will put the whole thing out in a minute.”

Teacher. “Very good. You may take your seats.”

(Class obey.)

Teacher. “Next is the class in General Information. Forward.”

(Advance Bessie, Geraldine, Fanny, Henry, Isaac and Ira.)

(In the meantime Etta is seen chewing gum vigorously, and planting her feet conspicuously in the aisle as she fidgets about.)

Teacher (impressively). “Bessie, tell me what you would think if you saw the Stars and Stripes waving over the field of battle?”

Bessie (innocently). “I’d think that the wind was blowing.”

Teacher. “Awful!” (observes Etta). “Etta Elephant, take your gum out of your mouth, and put your feet in immediately.” (Etta does this literally in pantomime.)

(Just then Curiosity pipes up, raising hand as she asks.) “Teacher, did you ever see a hair die?”

Teacher. “Certainly *not*.”

Curiosity Cornhusk. “*Or ink stand?*”

Teacher. “*No!* Do be quiet.” (Turns to class.) “Now do you know whether any one is going to try to discover the South Pole?”

Fanny. “Oi ain’t going.”

Teacher. “Oh, Fanny, my child, you must not say, ‘I ain’t going.’ You must say, ‘I am not going.’ It’s like this: ‘I am not going; he is not going; she is not going; we are not going; you are not going; they are not going.’ Now, can you say all that Fanny?”

Fanny. “Shure Oi can. ‘There ain’t nobody going.’”

Teacher waves her aside in despair. Asks others: “Which of you can describe the backbone?”

Geraldine (raises hand, standing on one foot in her eagerness to answer). “The backbone is something that holds up the head and ribs, and keeps you from having legs clear up your neck.”

Teacher. “Now, children, what is a cat covered with? Is it wool? Is it fur? Is it feathers? Is it hair?”

Curiosity (pipes up): “Say, ain’t you honest never seen a cat?”

(The others answer in chorus): “Fur.”

Teacher. “Geraldine, what is dew?”

Geraldine. “The earth revolves on its own axis three hundred and sixty-five times in twenty-four hours. This rapid motion through space causes it to perspire. This is called dew.”

Teacher. “Henry, where was the Declaration of Independence signed?”

Henry. “At the bottom, ma’am.”

Teacher. “What is mathematics, Isaac?”

Isaac. “Dunno.”

Ira. “Me neither.”

Teacher. “Well, mathematics is the science that treats of measurement or numbering. For instance: If it takes one man twelve days to build a house, then twelve men can build it in one day. That’s mathematics.”

(Isaac and Ira put heads together over pencil and paper while teacher asks next question.)

Teacher. “Bessie, if your mother bought four baskets of grapes, the dealer’s price being a quarter a basket, how much would the purchase cost her?”

Bessie. “You never can tell. Ma’s great at a bargain.”

(Isaac and Ira wave their hands to attract attention.)

Teacher. “Well, Isaac? Well, Ira?”

Isaac. “Say Miss Fitzimmons, me’n Ira’s figgered out that two hundred and eighty-eight men will build it in one hour; seventeen thousand two hundred and eighty, in a minute, and—”

Ira (interrupts). “And one million, thirty-six thousand eight hundred men will put it up in a second, an’—”

Teacher. “There, that will do—that’s quite enough. I see you understand the meaning of mathematics fully.”

Curiosity (raises hand and asks). “Please, teacher, did you ever see a stone step, or a bed spring, or a apple turn over?”

Teacher. “Curiosity Cornhusk, I want you to stop asking questions at once. Don’t you know that curiosity once killed a cat?”
(Curiosity is thoughtful.) “Children, you may all take your seats.”

Curiosity. “Please, teacher, what was it the cat wanted to know?”

Teacher (sinks into chair). “Somebody bring me a glass of water, quick!”

(Geraldine gravely goes to pail in the corner and brings a large tin dipper full. Teacher revives.)

Teacher. “Children I wanted to speak to you about that poor family who have just moved into the old brown house in the Hollow. The father is just getting up from a sick-bed and not able to work yet and I hear there’s scarcely a thing to eat in the house, and to-

morrow is Thanksgiving, you know. I do wish we could send them a good dinner. Can any of you think of a way to manage it without asking too much of our parents?"

(A loud knock is heard at the outer door. While teacher answers it scholars occupy themselves with throwing spit-balls, and various pranks of school children. She returns.)

Teacher. "There are two automobiles just down the hill. They got off the main road by mistake, and one of them is broken down, and the men are trying to get it fixed up. They wanted to know if there was any place near here where they could get something to eat. The one at the door says they're 'positively starving,' and would be willing to pay a good round sum for anything fit to eat. You know there is no house nearer than old Mr. Dawson's and—"

Annabel. "Don't send 'em there, teacher; Mis' Dawson is just doin' her washin' to-day, and she'll most likely have a cold bite."

Teacher. "That's true—and the next place is Mr. Temple's—"

Curiosity. "I saw 'em drivin' off to town as I came by, an' the house was all shut up."

Teacher. "Then there's quite a stretch between there and your place, Bessie."

Bessie. "Mercy! Don't send them there, Miss Fitzimmons. Mother's makin' mince-meat and cookin' up pumpkin for pies, and she'd be all upset."

Teacher. "Well, it appears there isn't very good promise of lunch for these wayfarers unless we help them out. What do you say if we sell our lunches to them and take the proceeds to buy supplies

for the folks down in the Hollow? We only have a short session after recess on account of the holiday, so you wouldn't get so terribly hungry before you go home. I'll leave you here for awhile, and if you decide to make this sacrifice you can place your lunches on my desk."

(Scholars immediately begin discussion; some for, some against proposed disposal of lunches; all talking at once and moving about.)

(Presently Annabel rises, sighs and slowly advances to desk, placing basket there, and saying:) "I hate to give up that piece of pumpkin pie, but I couldn't relish it thinking of that Hollow family; I've been hollow myself." (This is funnier if the speaker is a stout girl.)

Bessie (follows her example). "All I hope is that the stew don't all get et up before I get home to-day."

Curiosity. "Guess I'll keep mine."

Dennis. "I love my lunch, but oh! them hungry kids." (Goes forward.)

Geraldine. "Guess I'm as generous as anybody." (Adds her lunch.)

Etta to *Curiosity*. "You'd ought to be ashamed of yourself." (Arises.) "My lunch is out in the cloak-room; I'll go get it."

(While she is gone, *Curiosity* puts her lunch with the rest, sighing:) "I'll do it, but I guess I'll die like that *Curiosity* cat; I'll be so hungry." (Thoughtfully.) "Wonder what that cat *did* want to know anyhow."

Joshua. "Guess if they can stand them biscuits of Sis's, I oughtn't to kick."

(Etta returns with huge basket, which she deposits with an air of importance on the desk. Looks contemptuously at Curiosity.)

Fanny. “And I bet you we won’t have nothin’ but fried praties and onions for supper. But maybe *they* ain’t got even them.” (Puts bag with others.)

(Isaac and Ira go up together, saying:) “And there’s ours.”

Henry. “Here’s mine, too.”

Etta to Curiosity. “There, you see; everybody’s give up their lunch but you, you little stingy, contrary, stubborn, selfish, tight-fisted, over-fed, pie-faced pig you—”

Curiosity. “Are you through?”

Etta. “Yes.”

Curiosity. “Ain’t you got nothin’ more to say?”

Etta. “No.”

Curiosity. “Well, all of them things you called me you are. I put my lunch there when you went after yours.”

Etta (repentently). “Oh, I take it all back.”

Curiosity (cordially). “All right, you’re welcome.”

(Enter teacher.)

Teacher. “Ah, this looks as if everybody has been generous. I’m proud of you. You’re all true friends in need. But I was sure you’d do it, so I spoke to the gentleman at the door and he says, he will consider it a bargain at any price we say, and will be back with his

friends soon. Now for the recitations. Each one of you try to recite something, if only a stanza. And after all have recited, I will call for the fire drill, and all be ready to respond immediately. Don't hesitate, do as you would if the building was really on fire. Now, Annabel you're first on the roll, so you begin speaking."

Annabel comes forward, bows, announces: "Mary's Little Lamb."
Bows again, and recites as follows:

"Some folks say that fleas is black,
But that ain't true I know,
For Mary had a little lamb
Its fleas was white as snow."

Teacher. "Now Bessie, it's your turn."

Bessie. "Me and Curiosity's got one together."

Curiosity.

"I asked my Pa a simple thing,
Where holes in doughnuts go?
Pa read his paper, then he said,
'Oh, you're too young to know.'"

Bessie.

"I asked my Ma about the wind,
Why you can't see it blow?
Ma thought a moment, then she said,
'Oh, you're too young to know.'"

Both together.

"Now why on earth do you suppose

They went and licked us so.
Ma asked, 'Where is that jam?' I said,
'Oh, you're too young to know.'"

Teacher. "Now, Dennis."

Dennis recites.

"The lady in the street-car
Was glaring down at me,
Because I chanced to have a seat
And she did not, you see.

"But I rose very quickly
And offered her my seat.
'Twas a question whether she or I
Should stand upon *my* feet.
Ouch!"

Teacher. "Now we'll have yours, Etta."

Etta. "Please, teacher, I ain't thought of mine yet." (Nudges Fanny.)
"You g'wan, Fanny."

Fanny (grinning and twisting apron).

"Hyer Oi stand, all ragged and dirty,
Ask me me name, an' Oi'll run like a turkey."

Teacher. "Geraldine next."

Geraldine.

"When mother was a little maid
She was so very good,

I really often think that she
Must have been made of wood.

“*She* never, never played a trick
On her pet pussy ‘Tib,’
She would not tease; she would not tell
The tiniest little fib.

“*She* always kept her dresses clean,—
Her curls were brushed just right;
She never cried and coaxed that she
Might stay up late at night.

“And very often when I’ve been
In mischief and been bad,
I think, ‘Ain’t it an *awful shame*
That I took after Dad.’”

Teacher. “Now, Henry.”

Henry (very rapidly and jerkily).

“There was a young girl from Boo Loo
Who wanted to catch the two-two.
Said the porter, ‘Don’t hurry, or scurry or worry,
It’s a minute or two to two-two.’”

Teacher. “Isaac and Ira, I suppose you have one between you?”
(They nod.) “All right.”

Isaac.

“The verse you write
You say is written.

Ira.

You fly your kite
But not your kitten.

Isaac.

The gas you light
Is never litten.

Ira.

The things you drank
Were doubtless drunk.

Isaac.

The boy you spank
Is never spunk.

Ira.

A friend you thank
But never thunk.

Isaac.

Suppose you speak
Then you have spoken.

Ira.

But if you sneak
You have not snoken.

Isaac.

The shoes that squeak
Have never squoken.”

Teacher. “What is yours, Joshua?”

Joshua.

“Grandma, here’s a little gumdrop.”
“Thank you very much, my sweet,
What a thoughtful little boy you are
To bring Grandma a treat.”

“Did you like that gumdrop, Grandma?”
“Yes, my dear, ’twas very nice.”
“Ain’t it queer now, Towsey didn’t
’Cause he spitted it out twice.”

Teacher. “Dear me, Joshua, perhaps you’d better let me choose your next piece. Now, Etta, if you are ready, we’ll have your piece as the final recitation.”

Etta.

Once there was a little boy, whose name was Robert Reece,
And every Friday afternoon he had to speak a piece.
So many poems thus he learned, that soon he had a store
Of recitations in his head, and still kept learning more.

And now this is what happened; he was called upon one week
And totally forgot the piece he was about to speak!
His brain he cudgelled! not a word remained within his head!
And so he spoke at random, and this is what he said.

“My Beautiful, my Beautiful, who standest proudly by,
It was the schooner Hesperus—the breaking waves dashed high!

Why is the Forum crowded? What means this stir in Rome?
Under the spreading chestnut tree, there is no place like home.

“When Freedom from her mountain height cried, Twinkle little
star,

Shoot if you must this old gray head, King Henry of Navarre!
Roll on, thou deep and dark blue crested crags of Drachenfels,
My name is Norval on the Grampion Hills, ring out wild bells!”

“If you’re waking call me early, to be or not to be,
The curfew must not ring to-night. Oh! woodman spare that tree!
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on! and let who will be
clever!

The boy stood on the burning deck, but I go on forever!”

(Bows and takes seat.)

Teacher (smilingly). “Now, children, what would you say if I
should make a few remarks?”

All together (as in fire drill) “Form a line and march outdoors.”

Teacher. “What! what!” (Teacher taps bell sharply.)

Etta (excitedly). “That’s the fire bell. Hurry up!” (All rush out,
leaving teacher standing amazed.)

(She turns to audience and says:) “Well, ain’t that the beatenest?”
(Also goes out.)

(Curtain.)

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