

HOW SUMPSTER HALLIDAY WON A BRIDE

by rescuing her kitten from the top of a flagpole

HAYNEVILLE, Ala., will next week celebrate the cat wedding that began in a kitten romance, and Sumpster Halliday will take as his bride Miss Tom Woodley, the belle of Hayneville—whom he won by ways that make the swains of Hayneville snore to think about.

Sumpster Halliday won his bride by rescuing "Toots," her marmoset kitten, from the top of the tall, slender flag pole that stood on top of the town hall spire—its tip being 125 feet above the level of Hayneville—after half the young men in the town had been trying desperately to bring the kitten to the ground and failed.

Miss Tom Woodley is the prettiest girl and the daughter of one of the richest cotton brokers in all that district of the black belt of Alabama, and the young men of the town bowed down to her and worshiped, and all who never had asked her to marry them were trying to get up their courage.

They were so many that Miss Tom didn't know which she liked best, but it was said and declared all around town that "if Sump Halliday wahn't no infernally shifless Tom Woodley'd marry him in a minute."

But on that subject Miss Tom remained disdainfully silent.

Went to Sleep When He Called.

As a suitor Sump was, to say the least, unsatisfactory. Once or twice a month he got up enough energy to call on Miss Tom in the evening, and usually turned up on the porch, but the calls generally turned out unsatisfactorily, as Sump had a habit of dropping to sleep in his hammock under the soothing influences of the soft wind wandering in from over the cotton fields heavy with the scent of wisteria or magnolia, bringing the faintest notes and luscious pickings of the negroes, and of the moonlight. And when he awoke, Miss Tom usually left him and retired indignantly to the house.

Everybody in Hayneville "allowed" that Sump was lazy. He wouldn't work—but he had a habit of just sitting around, loafing and laughing, and then making more money on his little speculations in cotton than the hardest workers in the town could amass. His case was hopeless, too, for when he was reproved for being "shifless" Sump laughed "is soft, easy, musical laugh that made his friends with everybody who heard it, and paid no attention.

Nobody could understand it, but somehow Sump accumulated a lot of real estate on his cotton crop usually turned out well and he always had money to help some needy planter who was caught without ready cash.

Mr. Ned Purcell and Will Upley and Jack Clendennin and Col. Hugh Hayne—not to count a lot of others—were openly and professedly in love with Miss Tom and they remained awake when they called, and they called as frequently as she would let them, and whispered pretty sentiments to her. Nor did any one of them snore—so they could not understand why they had not been accepted, either individually or collectively by the handsome girl.

Toots Starts a Quarrel.

Miss Tom was 19 in April, tall, black haired, black eyed, and slender, with the graceful slenderness of a willow twig. There was only one living thing in the world—outside of her own family—that she confided in, and that was "Toots," her five months old marmoset kitten. The men stood around and admired and envied "Toots"—all except Sump, who calmly lifted the kitten by the nape of its neck, hoisted it out of the hammock, and tossed it to the floor when he called.

"Why, Sump Halliday," protested Miss Tom. "You might hurt my poor kitten."

"I wouldn't hurt him," said Sump. "I wouldn't hurt any animal less'n 'twas a mule, but I don't like cats. When we all get married I ain't going to have cats around the house."

But by that time Miss Tom really was indignant and she left Sump alone on the porch, so he made himself comfortable until Col. Woodley, her father, came out and joined him in a smoke—and invited him into the house to have something else.

Matters stood that way until May 24—a momentous day in the history of Hayneville—the day that Miss Tom Woodley's cat disappeared. The kitten had formed a habit of climbing trees, posts—everything it could find. That morning Miss Tom had taken it in the trap with her while she did some shopping and had left it washing its face with its paws as it sat on the cushions of the trap. When she came out of the store the kitten had disappeared. She searched the stores and the street, searched the groves across the street, then she gave some small negro boys a handful of pennies and ordered them to hunt the kitten. They scoured the town, but not a trace of "Toots" was found until late in the afternoon, when one of the little negro urchins, pointing upward with one black finger, called out, "Dah he am, dah he am, dah he am, I done foun' him. I gwine git dat tin cintase from Miss Tom."



Miss Tom Woodley

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Cat at Top of the Flag Pole.

Breathless he arrived at the Woodley mansion and broke the news. A few minutes later Miss Tom, with Will Upley, was standing on the sidewalk opposite the city hall, gazing upward where Toots, frightened and helpless, was standing on top of the flag pole that rose above the city hall spire. The kitten had climbed up through the building, out on the roof through one of the little windows cut in the tower, up a water spout, evidently, to the top of the tower, and then from the little platform from which the flag pole rose had clambered up on to the flattened top, where it rested, unable to get down.

The flag pole rose eighteen feet from the top of the tower. Will Upley offered one of the little negro boys 50 cents to climb up and get the cat, but the pole was slender and polished, and after two efforts the boy gave up, and others, mounting to the top of the tower, tried again and again.

"I reckon your cat must stay up there, Miss Tom," said Sump Halliday as he approached and lifted his hat.

"Get him down for me, Sump," she pleaded.

"I ain't going to risk my life for a kitten. I'll send a nigger boy after it," remarked Sump, casting a glance of scorn.

"Course," he continued, "if you really want me to I'll go."

A crowd of the curious began to collect and Will Upley remarked that it would be better if they walked home, and he assured her that he would do all in his power to rescue the kitten, saying, also, that it probably would come down at night when it got hungry.

Couldn't Persuade It to Come Down.

At 9 o'clock that night Miss Tom made inquiries regarding the kitten and learned that it was still on top of the tower, every effort to reach it or to persuade it to attempt the downward climb having failed.

The next morning "Toots" was still a prisoner, and half the people of the town were watching the top of the flag pole, where the poor kitten turned around and around, meowing piteously and stretching down one paw as if to make the effort to slide down the pole.

Early in the "evening"—which is southern for afternoon—there was a council of war at the Woodley mansion, and among those present were Mr. Ned Purcell, Jack Clendennin, Col. Hugh Hayne, Will Upley, and a lot of the younger swains.

The chances of rescuing "Toots" were discussed for some time and Miss Tom decreed that the kitten positively must be saved. Just as she made the statement there was a soft snore from the hammock near the corner of the porch and she glanced in that direction and saw with scorn that Sump Halliday had dropped off into a little nap during the discussion of ways and means. The girl cast one disdainful

glance in the direction of the hammock, and, holding her head erect and with her eyes flashing, she said:

"I will marry the man that saves 'Toots.'"

Instantly all the men were on their feet and starting towards the city hall—except Sump, who continued to slumber away peacefully in the hammock. The news spread through the town like wildfire, and within a short time half the population and most of the negroes were gathered in "the square" to see the attempts at rescue.

Colonel Hayne Couldn't Climb the Pole.

Hugh Hayne claimed the first right to attempt the rescue. He ascended to the top of the "cupola" rapidly, stepped out

upon the three feet square platform, and gazed upward toward the top of the pole, where the kitten was meowing and looking down. He had divested himself of coat, waistcoat, and shoes, and without an instant's hesitation he started to climb the pole. Five feet he went up, then the slender pole began to sway and rock perilously, until it seemed that it would break and dash the daring youth to death against the pavement below. Twelve more he lifted himself by his hands, then a cry of horror and fright arose from the crowd. The pole bent outward and seemed about to snap. Hayne hung on, looking longingly upward for an instant, then, seeing the impossibility of the feat, he slid down to the little platform and reluctantly descended to the ground.

Then Will Upley insisted upon trying, claiming that he was lighter than Col. Hayne, but after getting ten feet up the narrow pole, he too, was forced to give up.

The others, just as brave and just as anxious to make the attempt, saw the impossibility of the feat and all stood gazing upward in hopelessness.

Just about that time Sump Halliday was awakened up by Miss Betty, who is Miss Tom's younger sister.

"Sump, you shifless, lazy, get-up-less fellow," she said, shaking him. "Wake up, Tom's a-going to marry th' man that saves her cat."

"Huh, how's that?" inquired Sump, waking up.

Miss Betty repeated her information and added details.

"She ain't a-going to do nothing of the sort," said Sump. "She's a-going to marry me."

"You'd better be getting a hustle, then, if you want me for a sister-in-law."

"Sump" Forced to Make Attempt.

So Sump stretched himself, climbed out of the hammock, and walked slowly down towards the city hall. He arrived on the scene just after the failure of Will Upley and joined the crowd.

"Here's Sump Halliday," some one sang out. "He'll rescue the cat."

"I reckon I'll hev tuh," remarked Sump, as he started slowly across the square.

The crowd cheered when Sump disappeared inside the city hall, and those who had started away returned to see the latest man in all Alabama attempt the feat that two of his rivals had essayed and which the others feared to attempt.

Sump was inside the city hall for quite a while and the crowd, watching for him to appear through the little window at the side of the tower, wondered at the delay.

Finally, after ten minutes, he stuck his head out of the window, laid something on the ledge, crawled out, lifted the something on to the platform at the base of the flag pole, carefully hauled himself up and sat down on the platform.

Then he lifted the object which he had carried up and commenced to saw the flag pole off near the base.

Rescues the Cat and Gets the Girl.

The crowd let out one wild whoop of joy and the five crestfallen suitors stood dejectedly watching Sump until he sawed off the pole, lowered it down the side of the tower, carefully so as not to shake the kitten from its perch, carefully deposited the kitten in his coat pocket, picked up the saw and clambered in at the window.

Another cheer greeted him as he reappeared from the city hall door and started down Hayne avenue toward the Woodley mansion.

"Here's your cat, Miss Tom," he said, as he walked up to the porch.

Miss Tom went into ecstasies over the cat, while Sump stretched himself in the hammock and closed his eyes. When she went for cream for "Toots" Sump rocked easily in the hammock.

"You are going to keep your bargain, Miss Tom?" he inquired.

"I suppose I will have to,"

"I reckon you'll get away to Susie. I don't like cats."

Fourteen Times Disappointed

FOURTEEN times disappointed in love, fourteen times jilted by women who suddenly found that they loved an other man better, Frank Messing of Covington, Ky., has at last found a woman whose love for him lasted at least to the altar, and, they both think, will last to the grave.

Messing, the most jilted man in the world, at the age of 37 years, has wedded Louise Wullweber, aged 45, whose love he won despite the fact that he was forced to tell her, "You are the fifteenth woman I ever have loved."

And, after fourteen starts on his honeymoon, Messing finally got away as the Rev. Hugo Eisenlohr loosed the barrier and he and his bride are spending their honeymoon in California (California, O.).

Both the bride and groom are as pleased as they can be. The groom declares that all his disappointments served to bring him into wedlock with the right woman, and the bride declares that her husband's practice in lovenaking with fourteen other women has made him an ideal lover. So they have lived happily ever afterward.

"The first of my fourteen disappointments," remarked Messing, after he had secured his license, "was away back in 1856. She was a little dream, a blonde, and plump and pretty as a speckled bull pup. We loved each other to death almost and I spent most of my wages buying her ice cream and taking her to the theater. But she threw me down and married a shoe drummer. I saw her in the Fifth street market in Cincinnati a few weeks ago. She was fat."

"I guess I didn't fall in love then for two years—and then I went daffy over the prettiest slenderest little girl that ever threw pork and across a lunch counter. And we got engaged and were going to be married in the fall. She made me save money—she was one of two of them who die—so she must have been in earnest, but she dodged me and married a barber."

"I fell out of love with her and into love with another without stopping and this time it was a buxom little widow with two children that lived up on the Vine street hill, but, after we were engaged and had planned our future, she married the landlord and saved two weeks' rent. She had the nerve to invite me to the wedding."

"The next year I got engaged to a girl up at Lebanon, but after we had set the date she wrote to me and broke off the engagement. She was the best of them all, for she felt real sorry about it, but I simply could not resist the temptation to marry a 400 acre farm adjoining the town."

"By that time my love affairs got to be the wonder of all my friends. The girls used to offer to get engaged to me and pay all the expenses, just to get me to go with them. They felt sure that the moment I announced my engagement to them some one else would come along and want to marry them. My friends would say, 'There goes Frank with his new fiancée. There'll be a wedding pretty soon.' They didn't mean that I would get married, but that the girl would find another husband and drop me."

"I was shaken so many times that I was like a fellow with theague, and really got so I liked it. I think perhaps that some of those girls got engaged to me just for practice when there wasn't any one else handy, and I got to thinking that I would die an old bachelor. I was engaged to fourteen of them that threw me over—and I got back six of the rings, which was a pretty good average."

"I finally found one that would go the route to the altar—and she really was the only one in the world for me. She ain't too look at, but we are tied hard and fast now. No more rings back for your Uncle Frank."

TOWN THAT CUPID SKIPPED



CUPID has skipped over Plano, Ill., and the citizens of that thriving little city are thinking of sending a new nap to the little god of love with PLANO marked in big letters on it. Whether Cupid thinks the self-binders they make down there are sufficient to tie the knots without his aid or not can only be guessed, but the fact remains that Plano has more eligible bachelors to the square inch than any town in the central west.

Unmarried men and ex-married men are so numerous that it keeps the tailor busy repairing their clothes and sewing in their buttons. The laundries charge extra for mending hosiery and shirts. Recently, when the town was left without a tailor, a philanthropic citizen took pity on the buttonless bachelors and spent a week persuading a new tailor to come in and fill the want.

In the town, with its 1,004 persons, there are more bachelors and grass widowers who live lonely lives than in any town of twice its size in the state. There are three classes, those who live alone and do their own housework, those who eat at one place and sleep at another, and those who live with their relatives.

"Bachelors' Inn" Is Crowded.

"Bachelors' Inn" houses twenty-five bachelors—that is, men who were born bachelors, acquired bachelorhood, or had bachelorhood thrust upon them by divorce courts. There are enough eligible men in that one house to gladden the hearts of many lonely women, and enough in Plano to make the expression "old maid" obsolete in two or three counties.

The plight to which the women of Plano are reduced indicates that these bachelors shy at the sight of women, for a short time ago there was such a scarcity of men escorts that the mayor was called upon to ask the town marshal to escort women to their homes when they arrived on trains in the evening. It may be that the bachelors were not notified of the coming of the women.

The bachelors, however, have a wonderful reputation for bashfulness. They shun women and play games by themselves in places where there is no rustic of skirts. Recently a crowd of bachelors formed a club of their own, rented grounds, and constructed tennis courts, where, safe from the incursions of matchmaking mamma, they play in peace.

Plenty of Girls and Scenery.

Yet Plano has plenty of girls, pretty and talented, and several wealthy and not old widows, among enough of them to supply each one of the bachelors with a good wife. And, also, the country around Plano is as beautiful and

romantic as any in Illinois. It is in the heart of the lovely Fox river region, where the hills are covered with beautiful foliage, where the roads and lanes wind in and out through groves along the river, a country where cupid, one would think, would make his favorite hunting ground.

So it seems that, for some reason, Cupid has skipped over Plano and left the hearts of bachelors and maids untouched by his arrows.

There are rich bachelors and poor bachelors, handsome and homely bachelors, many of excellent families, successful in business, some specially gifted. They belong to every class of society, from the pulpit to the "hired" man, and yet, with many women verging on "old maidhood," they do not wed.

Women Show No Pity.

That the hearts of the women are untouched either by love or by their cousin, pity, for these bachelors is shown by a recent occurrence.

A professional bachelor in crawling into his last clean shirt two days before his belated consignment was due to arrive from the laundry ripped it wide open.

The haberdasher's store was closed. Every bachelor friend wore shirts too large for him. In despair he let his sad plight become known, hoping that some tender hearted woman would take pity on him and offer to sew up the rent. Not one volunteered, and, pasting the tear together with court plaster and trusting to luck, he attended the function.

The editor of the local paper, seeing the dire plight of his bachelor constituents, went to Aurora and offered subsidy to get a tailor to come down and attend to the mending for the single wretches.

Partial List of Bachelors.

Here is a partial list of the candidates for matrimony who have either been turned down in caucus or refused the nomination:

- S. H. Ness, photographer, lives with mother.
- Ben Olsen, lives with his mother.
- John Filby, married one month, divorced.
- Arthur Tooley, painter, lives with relatives.
- Herman Thunow, retired farmer, lives with daughter.
- W. H. Barnes, widower, shoe merchant, lives alone.
- Cyrus Morris, manufacturer, lives with brother.
- Orrin Robbins, manufacturer, kept bachelor quarters with his father until the latter married the sister of his son's former wife; now keeps bachelor quarters by himself.
- L. P. Marble, painter, lives alone; has fine garden, fruit, and a big flock of chickens.
- The Rev. Dr. Charles E. Henr, minister, Baptist church, lives with sister.

- Thomas Welch, retired, lives with sister.
- Frank Harden, lives alone.
- John Jial, bookkeeper, lives with relatives.
- Frank Zimmerman, blacksmith, lives with relatives.
- Dr. Orlwein, dentist, boards; sleeps part of time in his office.
- W. R. Taylor, druggist, grass widower, sleeps in store.
- Henry Kane, merchant, lives with sister.
- John Stahl, saloonkeeper, lives alone.
- Jess Sheer, liverman, eats at restaurant, sleeps in office.
- John Spolum, boards with mother, sleeps in his store.
- Louis Lanphear, lives with relatives.

Some More Matrimonial Prizes.

- F. H. Earle, president F. H. Earle Manufacturing company and Earle Metal Bed company, proprietor of Bachelors' Inn.
- Adam Booker, ice man, sleeps over drug store.
- Dr. Gilbert Beck, veterinary surgeon, lives alone.
- Laeselle and Clyde Agler, lives with mother.
- Prof. Alfred Cook, formerly a professor in University of Pennsylvania, left to write on sociology; lives alone in his quarters with large supply of books.
- Charles Bailey, teamster, lives alone.
- George Bissell, carpenter, lives with relatives.
- Lawrence Bell, manager Northern Illinois Telephone company, lives with relatives.
- Bert J. Sears, son of the richest man in Little Rock township, lives with father.
- Charles Tenney, retired, boards.
- Dana Gail, teamster, boards.
- Oreille Killa, lives with mother.
- Warren Kusler, farmer, lives alone.
- Charles Lawson, lives alone.
- Frank B. Tyler, retired, widower; lives with mother.
- There are others, but this will supply the demand.

Meet but Never Love.

There is no lack of entertainments to bring the bachelors and unmarried women together. There is a fine golf course, literary societies, a society for the collection of historical data concerning the Fox river valley, and many other organizations, but they seem to lead in every other way except toward matrimony.

The conditions are such that the ministers and justices would starve if they depended upon marriage fees.

But there is always the expectation that some day Cupid will descend upon Plano and find the happiest hunting grounds in all Illinois.

Strangest Club in the World

RUSSIA has outdone Rome in its golden day, out-rivalled the splendor of ancient Athens, paled the glories of beautiful Paris, in Kharkoff, a town of which nine-tenths of the people of America never have heard—there is a club, the most wonderful and beautiful—and also the most degenerate—that the world ever has known.

The "Sylarites Circle" of Kharkoff is the most luxurious, the most beautiful, the most degenerate of all the clubs the world ever has known, and the lavishness, the luxuriousness, the beauties of the club have just been revealed to the world because a newspaper man impersonated one of the members and secured an entrance to the palace at Kharkoff, where never before the foot of man who was not a member or an employe was set, but which have been tried by scores of court beauties and lovely women from France and from all the Russias.

No woman dare tell that she ever has been a guest in the Sylarites Circle, but hundreds have been entertained in that white marble den.

The Grand Duke Cyril and Boris—themselves the leaders of the exquisite of the Russian grand ducal equities—among the leaders of the Sylarites Circle.

There were twenty male human beings—the richest of Russia's young nobles—who formed the circle and, at the cost of \$100,000, they built in Kharkoff a miniature white marble palace, finished with rare woods and with inlaid doors, with beaten bronze and silver handles and plates, with silver chandeliers. No one in Kharkoff ever saw the inside of the myrtle palace except the workmen and the members of the club, and when it was finished, these twenty exquisite furnished it at the cost of tens of thousands of dollars, decorating rare paintings, rich tapestries, and gold and silver servitors.

Then an Englishman named Gower—a renowned chef—was engaged with a corps of assistants who never left the kitchen, and a dozen beautiful girls were employed as waitresses, and, clad in the Grecian style, they were called upon to serve the banquet to the twenty young, human animals who pose before the world as men.

The fame of the club spread and other males of the same sort sought entrance to the club—only to be refused—but the members invited thereto the women of highest rank and greatest renown and wonderful feats were given by them, followed by orgies that would shame ancient Rome.

The plates on which the rare viands of the world are served to the Sylarites are studied with rubies and spades and diamonds and pearls, the table napkins are of finest silk, drawn into beautiful patterns, the bath towels and sheets for the beds are of pure silk, wadded finer than a spider can draw them and, altogether, the clubhouse is the most wonderful in the world.

In court circles of St. Petersburg and Paris and Vienna the beauties whispered of the wonders of the Sylarites palace—and, in time, the curiosity of Europe was aroused to know what went on within those white marble walls at the grand ducal resort at Kharkoff.

It was known that the Englishman Gower was paid \$5,000 a year to cater to the twenty, and that each of the members paid \$2,500 a year dues, besides paying for special entertainments.

M. Konnikoff, a journalist, determined to penetrate the mysteries. He impersonated a member who seldom came from St. Petersburg to join in the luxurious orgies—and wrote for his paper a description of the clubhouse and its contents.