

THE KIND DEEDS MESSENGER

The Latham Foundation Story Service
for the Public Schools



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LITTLE MR. HOP TOAD

By E. M. S. FITE



HE CALLED him by that name because he was so tiny and because he hopped whenever he wanted to move from one place to another. Do you know what little Mr. Hop Toad looks like and where he lives

and what he eats and why he is such a good friend to us? Some of you may not know so I shall tell you what I know about him.

One day I went into the garden with a little boy named Frank, who loves all animals. The sun had been very hot and some of the plants drooped their heads from the heat. Under a large leaf Frank saw little Mr. Hop Toad sitting very still, and as he watched Frank saw him snap up a little bug, then another little bug, and then he darted out his slender tongue and scooped in a wee crawly worm that was eating the large leaf under which Mr. Hop Toad was sitting. Now you know the bugs and worms that destroy plants are just the food that Hop Toads love best, so if we make the little Hop Toads welcome in our gardens they will keep the gardens free from all of the destructive pests that injure plants.

Little Hop Toads are just the color of the soil so it is not always easy to see them and we need to be careful not to step on them; their color protects them from the large birds and snakes that like to eat them and are constantly on the lookout for them. The

markings on Hop Toad's coat are really beautiful if you look at them close, they are something like the markings on the back of a tabby cat, and the strange thing is that they change with the weather and the place he lives in.

Frank saw that Little Mr. Hop Toad was panting as though he was very hot and thirsty, so he connected the hose and turned on the water and sprayed the plants so that the cool drops fell like rain about the little creature, and do you know he was so grateful that he hopped right out under the spray. Perhaps you know that Mr. Hop Toad was born in shallow water; I shall tell you here that the frogs lay their eggs on top of the water of a pond and leave them for the heat of the sun to hatch them. The eggs do not look like the eggs you are used to seeing, they look more like a lot of yellowish jelly. As soon as the hot rays of the sun fall on this jelly, tiny little black specks begin to show in the lumps of jelly. If you could watch them through a glass that magnifies, that means a glass that makes things look very big, you would see the black specks begin to move about and finally separate themselves from the jelly; they are merry, lively little fellows with very big heads and very waggly tails and they dart about in the pond and eat specks of weeds which they find in the water and which are too tiny for us to see with the naked eye;

they seem to have a very jolly life. Now these little creatures are called tad-poles; it is not until legs grow and the tail shrivels up that little tad-pole becomes Mr. Hop Toad. Then he comes out of the water to live on dry land, but he still loves water and needs it, and if he gets very hot and cannot reach water he will die.

It is a very funny thing to watch little tad-pole turn to a hop toad. Two little hind legs begin to grow and then two front legs; the front legs end in tiny feet with four little webbed toes, and the little hind feet have five webbed toes. Then when these have grown a very queer thing begins to happen, for the tail begins to grow shorter and shorter and soon there isn't any tail at all; it has entirely disappeared. Then out of the water jumps little Mr. Hop Toad, for he is no longer a tad-pole, and he begins to carry on the same helpful work on the land that he did in the water. When he first comes out of the water he is not much larger than your thumbnail. He is so light and small that he will scarcely bend the grass-blade he rests upon.

I think I can hear you asking "What is this helpful work in the water and on the land that our little friend Hop Toad does? It is this: When he is a tad-pole living in the water he lives at first on a vegetable diet; he eats the weeds which if left in the water would turn the pond water green and would choke it up. Then he eats the decaying leaves at the bottom of the pond which if left would rot and spoil the water. Then when the tad-poles have grown a little larger they begin to feed on dead and living animal food. The flies lay their eggs on the water and the tad-poles eat them and also eat the flies as they hatch out. It is said that they clear the water as swallows clear the air of thousands of creatures "which would thicken it with their living bodies, or pollute it with their dead ones." If little Tad Pole was not such a good scavenger all of the ponds would have a very bad smell from all of the dead and decaying matter in them.

You may not think that Mr. Hop Toad is pretty but he has very beautiful eyes. They are so bright that it has been said he wears "a jewel in his head." He grows much larger than his cousin, the frog, and when Mr. Hop Toad outgrows his skin coat, it splits down the back and you might see the new coat underneath. Now he takes off the old coat in a queer way—he skins it off and rolls it in a bundle under one arm and then, what do you think? HE SWALLOWS IT! Did you ever hear of such a thing?

Very few people know what interesting pets Hop Toads make. They are really very intelligent, they are clever and curious little animals; they are said to be more intelligent than their cousin, the frog. I want to tell you a story of a cunning little Hop Toad about which Miss Carrington has written, and she knows a great deal about Hop Toads and many other living creatures.

This little Hop Toad used to come to a gentleman's window every day at the dinner hour to be fed; he never failed to come just on the hour. For some reason the dinner hour was changed from four to two o'clock and as there was no way to let Mr. Hop Toad know of the change he missed his dinner. But he missed it only one day. The next day he appeared; he must have kept a careful lookout, and ever after that he was in his right place at the window-sill without anyone to watch or a clock to help him.

You may wonder what becomes of the little Hop Toads in winter time; they creep away into holes or bury themselves in the mud. They can live for a long time without food, but they cannot live without it altogether any more than we can. Sometimes when they stay too long in their corner or crack in the rocks they grow too large to get out and there they have to stay in their prison and grow by feeding on the insects that crawl into the crack, and they drink the water that trickles down through the crack. Some workmen finding a toad in the crack of a rock that they have broken open have thought that a toad could live without food and water, they have not known how the toad got there, nor how it lived.


You must not confuse our little tad-pole that turns into Mr. Hop Toad with the other kind of a tad-pole found in stagnant ponds; he is a very slender little creature and has a transparent tapering silvery body. But this little tad-pole does not turn into our friend Mr. Hop Toad, he is the little water-newt and looks very much like a tiny fish.

Little Mr. Hop Toad is a good friend to us even though he may not be pretty to look at, and because he is such a good helper in the garden our Government says that he is very valuable, and says that Mr. Hop Toad is worth \$20 a year to every person who has one in his garden. So you see we should be kind to Mr. Hop Toad and protect him all we can. He works for us for nothing, and saves our plants and does not even expect us to feed him as many of our pets do.

If you have a tiny Hop Toad in your garden you can make him happy and glad to stay with you if you build him a little home. Dig out a shallow hole in a shady place, under some plants, and place a flat rock across the top and leave an entrance for him; he will find it and will be glad to sleep in his cool house during the heat of the day, and he will come out at night when it is cool and feast on the bugs and worms that do most of their harmful work at night. When you pick Mr. Hop Toad up to place him in a cool damp place, be sure to handle him very carefully.

Many boys who think that Mr. Hop Toad is ugly and not useful will stone him, so one way that we can show our kindness to our little friend is to tell others how useful he is. If you have no Hop Toad in your garden get one and make him feel at home and you will learn many things from him, I am sure.

THE HUMANE POSTER CONTEST

 OUR 1927 Exhibit, now taking place at the Art Gallery of the Oakland Auditorium, is one of unprecedented success. Visitors can scarcely believe that the thought and skill evidenced in upwards of one thousand posters are the product of such young brains and hands. What pleases us most is that there is behind these pictures quite uniformly the large heart appeal for the misused animals to have their recognized rights.

JUDGING COMMITTEE

WILLIAM H. CLAPP, *Director, Oakland Art Galleries.*
MISS SUSIE W. MOTT, *Curator, Oakland Museum.*

MRS. MAUD H. HOLLIS, *Teacher of Design, Oakland Schools.*
MISS CHARLOTTE SPALTEHOLZ, *Supervisor of Art, Stockton Schools.*

To insure an impartial allotting of the awards, the names of the cities and counties, and the individual contestants were withheld from the judging committee until after their decisions were made; as for instance the twelve posters which won the Supreme Prize bore no identification marks whereby the judges could have connected them with Oakland.

SUPREME PRIZE for the twelve best posters produced by the pupils of a city or county competing: awarded to Oakland.

THE LATHAM FOUNDATION ART SCHOLARSHIP in the California School of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, California, was awarded to DOROTHY WOENSCH, of Hayward Grammar School; VIRGINIA SMITH, of Technical High School, Oakland; BERNICE WIDDING, Hayward Union High School, in the order given, in case the first mentioned cannot accept it. The judges for this scholarship were MR. AND MRS. F. H. MEYER, Directors of the California School of Arts and Crafts.

Following are the prize winners and winners of the Certificates of Merit:

ALAMEDA

PRIZE WINNERS—

Alan Neal, Fred Traversa, Elmer Payne, Scott Price, Franklin Brown

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Marjorie Makins, Taizo Imura, Edward Spink, Barbara Hofman, Lucy Chippindall, Helen Fabery, Mary Cruz, Eddie Eckhardt, Marjory Makins, Violet Covert, Eileen Henrick, Mary Tacchi.

BAKERSFIELD

PRIZE WINNERS—

Bernice Sesmas, Winifred Crone, Ruby Spangler, Mary Hill, Marguerite Gil, Edith Shanks.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Ruth Stewart, Phyllis Klipstein, Nevada Gardiner, Mariam Mortense, Mary Heiner, Marian Mandell, Theodore Heinrich, Olga Voterbeck, Peggy Klipstein, Esmal Harris, Egbert Harrel.

BERKELEY

PRIZE WINNERS—

Frances Colt, Muriel Miller, Tomatsu A. Kagi, Evelyn Page, Joe Sgroe.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Billy Knowles, Carol Harley, Helen Rognas, Vera Thomas, Mary Kecheley, Wilmelmina Braun, Albin Lenio, Julia Johnson, Martin Rugborn, Hugo Trudung, Helen Mork, Eleanor Sacker, Lucile Clark, Vance Wagner, Elma Tammi, Samuel Cho.

OAKLAND

PRIZE WINNERS—

John Fernandez, Eugene Lackey, Albert Draskey, Audrey Peterson, Gertrude Ottesen, Sally Kimball, Eleanor Farhner, Alice Clark, Calvin Emerton.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Edwin Pitta, Mabel Santi, Joe Gomes, Margaret Chopo, Douglas Opsahl, Emil Haverlandt, Phyllis Bailey, Ralph Stranhle, Alice Ness, Mildred Nelson, Lenora Bradley, Gordon Stewart, Dean Ramsden, Vivian Guerard, Marian Bliss, Arne Kotwold, Campbell Grant, Carl Murphy, Colwyn J. Gibbs, Neal Monroe, Alice Cook, Lloyd Howell, Carl Maxwell, Kenneth L. Frost, Edith King, Paul A. Doane, Fumi Fukuda, Virginia Smith, Wilber Phelps, Aloise Currier.

SACRAMENTO

PRIZE WINNERS—

Vincent Hunt, Jack Cole, Edna Brown, Elizabeth Wheeler Evans, Dolly Drew, Leola Nichols.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Emery Depner Ford, Alvin Ricci, Dorothea Sharp, Lillian Hitchcock, Joselyn Carlson, Merl Nelson, Doris Ruhstaller, James Irvine, Watson Grumm, Irene Wilde, Jimmie Kurokomo, Helene Bowers, Leslie Duffus.

SAN JOSE

PRIZE WINNERS—

Patricia Morss, Edna Rossi, Frances Methung, William Sobernes, Allen Rhines, Carl Rogers, Martin Keeble, Eva Anderson, Eva Lou Pope, Rose Caruso.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Mary Bredlove, Oriel Lucille Isham, Florence Tomacci, Theresa Lovagha, Dino Marconi, Elmer Poakey, James Americh, Norman Stanley, Irving Walters, Charlotte Mendel, Fay Elsie Winter, Thurman Harbaugh, Eldred Boes, Clifford Baughman, Delos Wolff, Henry Schmidt, Wallace Anderson, Anna Wenzel.

STOCKTON

PRIZE WINNERS—

Kenichi Hasegawa, Jean G. Brandt, George Capurro.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Louis Shimma, Elmer Ketterman, Dorothy Honda, Bernice Frombolo, Eva Celayeta, Conchy Arca, Eugene Towle, Nadine Seppi, Clara Leisering.

ALAMEDA COUNTY

PRIZE WINNERS—

Robert Hayes, Dudley Wood, Monte Macer, Verna Webb, Mildred Webb, Manuel Silva, Edna Young, Doris Thies, Dorothy Woensch.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Arthur Ekstrom, Virginia Krawa, Violet Silva, Harold D. Jorgensen, Henry Morton Springer, Catherine Blanco, Harold Wells, Mildred Webb, Verna Webb, George Pyles, Fred Lund, Paul Weitzch, Pauline Foster, Warren Martin, Edward Dutra, Win Jensen, Walter Colombo,

John Maggi, Gladys Rose, Francis Botteni, Frank Garcia, Edgar White, Donald Cameron, Lawrence Daingerfield, Wilma Graff, Marian Keifer, Bernice Widding, Harold Edgington, Jennie Mallory, James Giorgis, Billice McLaren, Geraldine Flower, Alvin Gomez, Elizabeth Costa, Margaret Sinclair, Mildred F. Block, Wilda Almada.

MARIN COUNTY

PRIZE WINNERS—

Mildred Richardson, George Miller, Muriel Darragh.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Viola Clark, Grace Zappetine, Clara Kirby, Marie Lovejoy.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY

PRIZE WINNERS—

Antonio Lopez (2), Alice Gould, Margaret Standish, Martha Davis.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—

Charles Blanc, Alice Wilson, Alfreda Gibbs, Silvia Balsar, Fay Young, Constance Moies, Consuelo Mendola, Frank Satelo, Mabel York.

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

PRIZE WINNERS—Phillip Mattes, Byrl Unice Miller.

CERTIFICATES OF MERIT—Ethel Larson, Hattie Rieger.

We acknowledge with grateful appreciation the action of the Oakland school children who have donated their beautiful posters to The Foundation for the promotion they will surely effect of the Humane Movement both in America and in foreign lands.



The Humane Essay Contest

THE returns from our Essay Contest held in Alameda County have been highly encouraging. Children from nine to fifteen, or grades from 3 to High School, have taken part and the two most popular subjects with them have been "The Cruelty of Trapping" and "The Cruelty of the Air Gun and the Sling Shot." Teachers have repeatedly told us that since our work was started their children have become remarkably acute in their observation of the cruelties committed about them, and the essays abundantly prove that this is true. The essays set forth an astonishing degree of wanton cruelty observed—killing just for the joy of killing, especially of our priceless bird life, and with the killing sometimes an ingenious resourcefulness in treachery that is fairly unbelievable. Three hundred and twenty-five essays were submitted from our county schools.

A review of these essays proves, as nothing we have thus far personally experienced, the crying need of Humane Education in the world today if we are to have law-abiding citizens in the future, trained in childhood to habits of compassion and fair play.

Almost to a unit the children reflect through their essays how earnestly the subject of Humaneness has taken hold of them. We can in some instances trace the good influence back to a certain lesson, where their minds like a sensitive plate took the impression and held it indelibly. It is a thrillingly happy experience to note to what a degree the work is taking hold in many young lives.

Mrs. Genevieve M. McKeever of the County Board of Education kindly consented to judge the essays and the awards will be made to the schools May 1st.

PRIZE WINNING SCHOOLS

First Prize—Pleasanton Grammar School.

Third Prize—Alvarado.

Second Prize—Marin.

Fourth Prize—Mount Eden.

Fifth Prizes—Russell and Independent.



The Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education, Inc.,
Latham Square Building, Oakland, California.

www.latham.org