



MADIELINE'S MARVELOUS WEEK

CHAPTER EIGHT - by Kay Hively

A man in a fancy suit took Madeline and her mother into the dining room and seated them at a table next to Thomas Hicks, the young man who had been having his picture taken. The maitre d' had chased away the crowd so Mr. Hicks could eat lunch without being disturbed.

As Maddie ate, she could not help but watch Mr. Hicks. She asked her mother what an Olympic Marathon was. Mama told Madeline about the Ancient Olympic games. She said they were athletic contests which were started in Greece many centuries ago. She said the 1904 Olympic games were being held at the fair in Saint Louis.

Then Mama explained that the Marathon was a 26-mile race, and it was one of the competitions in the Olympic games.

Just to be sure she understood, Maddie asked her mother if Mr. Hicks had run 26 miles. Mama said that he had indeed run 26 miles. Then Mama told Maddie the story of why a marathon was 26 miles long.

As she was listening to Mama, Madeline was surprised to see Mr. Hicks leave his seat and come to stand beside her. Mr. Hicks introduced himself. Politely, Mama shook hands with Mr. Hicks and introduced herself. Then Mr. Hicks turned to Madeline and asked her name.

Madeline was so tongue-tied she could hardly speak, but she softly whispered "Madeline." Mr. Hicks reached out and took Madeline's hand and kissed the back of it. Madeline's face turned red, but inside she was glowing with excitement and pleasure.

Then Mr. Hicks reached into his jacket pocket and took out a pamphlet which was about the 1904 Olympics. He laid the pamphlet down on the table, took a pencil from his shirt pocket and wrote, "To Miss Madeline - from your friend, Thomas Hicks."

Madeline didn't know what to say, but Mama thanked the great athlete for the gift. Mr. Hicks then kissed Mama's hand and bowed to Madeline. As Maddie watched in awe, Mr. Hicks put on his hat and left the dining room.

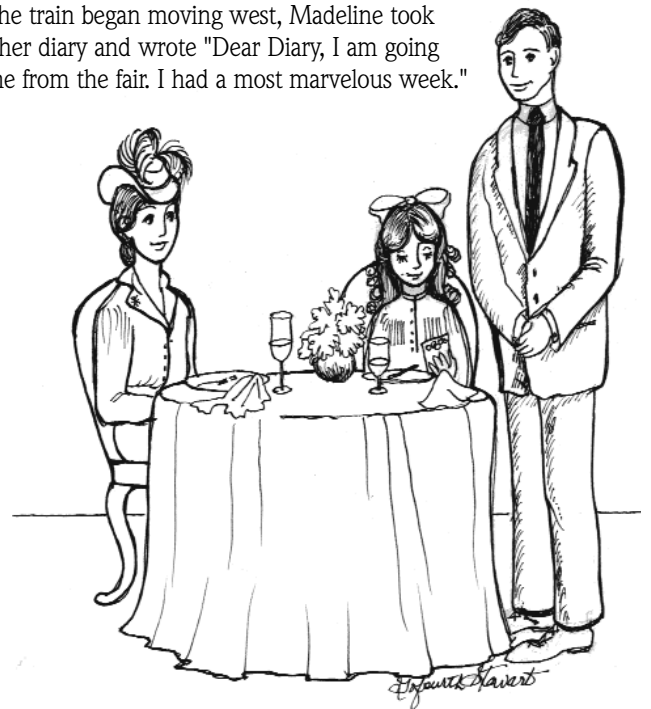
The entire meeting with the Olympic Marathon winner ended almost before Madeline could think about what was happening. But she knew it was all true because she had the pamphlet that Thomas Hicks had autographed for her.

For the first time since she had been in Saint Louis, Maddie was in no hurry to get out to the fair. She could have just stayed in the hotel room all day long and looked at what Mr. Hicks

had given her. It was the best souvenir she could have ever gotten from the fair.

It was a short afternoon at the fairgrounds because Papa finished his job at 4 o'clock. The little family then cleaned out their hotel room and caught a late train back to Nebraska.

As the train began moving west, Madeline took out her diary and wrote "Dear Diary, I am going home from the fair. I had a most marvelous week."



Author Kay Hively and Illustrator Billie Goforth-Stewart are both of Neosho, Missouri. Copyright 2005, Missouri Press Foundation.

CLASSROOM EXTENSIONS

Things to Think About and Do

A. Read about the Ancient Olympics. How are they different than the Modern Olympics? Ask to give a report on the Olympics to your class and tell about the marathon.

B. Do you think Madeline had a nice souvenir from the fair? What kind of souvenirs do you think could be purchased at the fair? Do you know anyone who has a big collection of souvenirs? Ask them to tell you about their souvenirs.

STANDARDS - SS:6; CA:6; SS:2; G1:8; G1:9; G2:1; G2:3; G3:5;