

# Ginger Ella

by Ethel Hueston

Illustrations by Irwin Myers

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## CHAPTER I

"There are two whole columns on the disarmament conference—all figures, and quotations, and simply tremendous big words," said Ginger Ella in a discouraged tone. "Oh, here's a little bit of a column about the Elks' May day fete and beauty pageant." She settled herself to read with a smug little founce of eagerness.

"You may skip that," said her father. "We know all about the beauty pageant."

His daughter sighed resignedly. "I suppose you want Lloyd George and the Communists, although it does not look very churchy to me."

She read patiently, in a low clear voice, paragraph after paragraph, sitting on the couch beside the reading lamp, little, eager and slim—with eyes that just would wander, despite her best and most daughterly intentions, from the stupid newsprint to the simply fascinating gongs-on in the opposite corner of the wide room, where Marjory, the pretty twin, lovelier than any picture, stood on a low stool, like a goddess lifted up, with her heavy of worshippers at her feet, while down on their knees before her, were Miriam, the brainy twin, and Helen, who was quite old and engaged to be married, and Miss Jenkins—clipping stray threads here and there, tucking, patting and pulling, in a vain endeavor to add greater charm to her girlish beauty.

But although Ginger's eyes would wander, the memory of her father, sitting still and limp, so patient, in the big chair at her side, his kind eyes closely handaged, quickly brought her own straying orbs back to the onerous news. By rights, it was Miriam's job to read the papers to her father. But Miriam, being a twin to Marjory, would naturally wish to assist in preparing her to win the Elks' club beauty prize.

"And this in spite of the frank warning of President Coolidge that the United States will regard any such move with extreme disfavor," finished Ginger, with a flourish. "Here's a paragraph on Mussolini and God. In my opinion it would look a lot smarter if you took that face off the shoulders entirely. Oh, excuse me, father, I'm so sorry. Here's a paragraph on Mellon cutting the tax melon—three hundred billions, no millions—Well, it doesn't interest us either way. Oh, here's a lovely write-up of the buffet supper that is to be served at the Elks' club fete at ten o'clock—nouillon, chicken sandwiches, tomato aspic—"

Reverend Mr. Tolliver smiled indulgently. He might not see, but what father but could feel the wandering eyes and the truant thoughts of a sixteen-year-old daughter on the eve of a beauty pageant.

"Put the paper up now, Ellen. I'm full of news. Suppose you play little bright-eyes for me, instead, and tell me what is going on over there, with all that snipping of scissors, and oblong and ah-ing."

"Oh, father!" Ginger doubled herself up rapturously, enfolding both her slim knees in her arms. "Oh, father, it is glorious! Marjory—honestly, father, Marjory is so pretty it doesn't seem possible. Miss Jenkins is down on the floor with five pins in her mouth, and her dress pulled up, over her knees to keep from soiling it—"

Miss Jenkins, with guilty haste, covered the offending members.

"They weren't her best ones—they had little tops. But I saw a silk ruffle, just the same. You're really missing quite a lot, you know," continued Ginger wickedly. "You'd better take those five pins out of your mouth, Jenky dear, if you're going to gasp like that."

Only Ellen dared to call the sedate spinster "Jenky," and even she did it only in her more irrepressible moments, when she was most thoroughly a Ginger Ella. It was sixteen years ago, at the birth of this same Ellen, that Miss Jenkins had first come into intimate contact with the parsonage household, then in another parsonage. And upon their later transference to other charges, she had arranged her small matters and followed after them, living her own life, keeping her own small home, teaching in the primary schools for a livelihood, but keeping in close and helpful touch with the Tolliver family, to which, in its entirety, she had given all the stored-up love of her lonely heart. With Helen and with the twins, she remained to the end firm and unyielding. But she was from the beginning surprisingly pliable in the hands of the wheedlesome Ellen.

"Well," Ginger went on, "she is wearing Helen's engagement ring, and Miss Jenkins' old gold chain. Eddy's mother gave her a perfectly spiffy lace handkerchief, and she has on my silk-to-the-top stockings that Mrs. Morris gave me."

For five days, the modest Tolliver household had simply fermented with excitement over the Elks' May day fete and beauty pageant. The Tollivers, without exception, knew that Marjory was absolutely the prettiest thing in the Middle West. Many other residents of Red Thrush, Iowa, realized it also. But just prettiness was not enough to win this beauty prize. One required an admission ticket. The Elks' club was staging the event for the benefit of its various charities, and the admission was two dollars

and a half—including favors for the ladies, an elaborate buffet supper at ten o'clock, and participation in the beauty pageant. In spite of their confidence in Marjory's outstanding beauty, two dollars and a half for admission to a May day fete did not fall within the scope of a parsonage budget.

But the good fairy who watches over youthful beauty did not fall them.

On the twenty-fifth day of April, Eddy Jackson walked up the narrow flagstone path to the parsonage. Marjory was lying in the hammock, fast asleep, her magazine fallen to the floor at her side. Eddy Jackson, coming thus upon beauty unaware, was stricken momentarily dumb in its presence, and stared at her in such rapt awe that Marjory awakened in some confusion.

"Gee, Margie, but you're easy to look at," he said admiringly. "Why don't you go after the Elks' prize? It's fifty dollars in gold. And there's



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not a girl in Iowa can walk in the same block with you. Why, if I was a judge, I wouldn't let anybody else enter the same contest with you. Go on, try it, bet you a dollar on it, and you can pay me out of the beauty prize."

"Heavens, Eddy, what would the members say if father called down to the Elks' club to enter his daughter in the beauty pageant?"

Eddy squared his shoulders. "All right, I'll do it myself. You and I go. I'll get the tickets right now." And he turned himself about and marched straight down the flagstone path, entirely forgetting that he had come with a message from his mother.

In a household whose financial limits were as circumscribed as those of the parsonage, the Elks' club beauty pageant was an event of no mean import. The prize itself was fifty dollars in gold, and there were additional trophies.

Even Mr. Tolliver, despite his seeming indifference, warmed slightly to the charm of fifty dollars in gold.

Marjory slowly revolved for final approval.

"There—it is perfect—another touch would be too much."

Reverend Mr. Tolliver stood up, and put out his hand. "Come here, Margie. Let me see if my pretty twin is as pretty as I think."

She crossed to him quickly, a little pain rising in the white throat with the thought of his helplessness, quick mist clouding the lovely eyes. His hand gently followed the gold lace at her shoulder, fondled the soft curve of her hair, lingered the slender chin.

"It is not just prettiness, my child," he said affectionately. "You are fragrant and wholesome and sweet. That is your beauty. You don't need artificial adorning. Your loveliness is like a flower's—unaffected, unassumed, just born there."

Marjory, freed from his hand, moved

annuously about before the mirrors, preening herself pleasantly to their flattering reflections, and to the more flattering eyes of her sisters.

Ginger giggled. "Father, you ought to see her. Really you ought. She is so unaffected right now—just like a flower turning to the sun."

The low siren of a motor sounded outside. A flash of light leaped to Marjory's eyes, a quick flush to her cheeks.

"It's Eddy," she whispered. "Sit down everybody, and look natural. Don't stand about—gaping—"

Suiting action to her words, Marjory dropped gracefully into a chair and toyed with the golden chain with an air of utmost indifference. The others, quickly, with more or less of grace, draped themselves about the room, Ginger turning her back to them all and to the door, burying herself in the details of the buffet supper.

"You see, father," she hissed scornfully. "You see? The whole family is man-mad, simply man-mad. Except you and me. Disgusting, that's what it is, simply disgusting. Natural as a flower—humpf! You don't see the flowers flying off their stalks when a boy-friend bumble bee breezes in."

"Lo everybody," called Eddy's pleasant voice from the piazza. "Door's open—I'm coming in. Oh, good evening, Mr. Tolliver, how are you? Good evening, Miss Jenkins, Gee, Margie, I pity the judges. I only hope they live to deliver the prize."

"Why, Eddy, how nice you look," said Helen warmly.

"Yes, thanks, I suppose I do. The white carnation was mother's idea, and I feel just like a banker. She says it is not often a mere bay rube farmer has a chance to step out with a Blue Ribbon, so she dolled me up. Hello, Ginger."

Ginger had not so much as lifted her eyes from the paper.

"Oh, hello, Eddy," she said coldly. "But this coldness on her part was merely assumed on principle, to show her disgust for the man-madness with which her sisters were afflicted. In her heart, she was fond of Eddy Jackson."

"Oh, you're all right, are you? That's a relief. I thought you'd been suddenly struck deaf, dumb and—er uh—"

He floundered awkwardly away from the tender subject of blindness.

"It must be time to start," said Helen, her eyes on the clock. She had told Professor Langley not to come until eight-thirty—a late hour for callers in Red Thrush, but she was determined to do her sisterly duty to Marjory before abandoning herself to personal pleasure.

"Yes, I think it is," agreed Eddy. "It seems they check the beauties at the door, at eight, I think. I should have brought a truck to carry home the prizes, but—"

"Oh, nonsense," laughed Marjory. "You know I haven't a chance in the world, against all those lovely girls, and all those lovely gowns—"

"Huh," sniffed Ginger scornfully, under her breath. "You'd never think we'd spend that fifty dollars—in our minds—five days ago."

The girls followed them to the door as they went out, smiling admiration at Marjory—admiration, encouragement and hope.

"Shall I bring you a sandwich in my pocket, Ginger? Or would you rather have an aspic?" Eddy called to her.

Ginger ignored him.

The three girls stood together in the doorway until, with a last farewell of the siren, the car disappeared down the quiet shady street.

"A nice boy," said Helen quietly. "But with a full view of the living room before her, her quietness vanished. "This place is a sight," she said briskly. "Ginger, get the broom, and dust up that rug. Miriam, put away the thread and things."

"But what difference—this time of night—" protested Ginger.

"Horace will be here in ten minutes. Now straighten up for me, won't you, while I run up and straighten myself?"

"Most disgusting thing I ever saw. Man-mad. Simply man-mad. The whole gang of them. She doesn't care if you sit in a dusty chair, father—she doesn't care if Miss Jenkins has to look at a messy table and an untidy rug—she doesn't care if Miriam and I have to associate with her when her nose is shiny, but a man! Oh, no!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Dame Fashion Smiles

By Grace Jewett Austin

It is certainly as hard to solve as the riddle of the sphinx to know how long the skirts of women will be in the late fall and winter. To look at the crisp, up-to-date effect of a company of women in gowns just below the knee, it does not seem possible that women are going to allow themselves either to put on those of



Grace J. Austin.

that subtly unbecoming length which old-time folk called "droozly," or the genuinely hampering gowns which came down to the ankle.

Recent showing in New York of an American designer's view of what he called a "smart autumn costume," was precisely not one inch longer than those we have grown accustomed to seeing everywhere. It was of the type often known as "spectator sports" dress; of homespun tweed, with a plaited skirt, jacket about to hip length of the same goods, yet given a new note by having deep pointed cuffs, almost to the elbow, of heavier fur. The loose, tuck-in blouse, finished with a knotted handkerchief scarf, was of a gay red hue. Velvet blouses are also making their appearance.

Dame Fashion was given of late what seemed to her quite an astonishing compliment. A young girl and her mother, from California, declared they gained more practical help from this column than from Hollywood! Part of that was probably just kindness, but after all, there are more "just folks" in the world than there are movie stars. One thing is certain, that whether in East or West, "doctors disagree" about the styles. It will be declared, "the uneven hem-line is disappearing," and in the next breath, that unevenness shows an increase.

This disagreement need call for no discouragement, for it just gives room for a fine latitude of individual taste. If one chooses something just to suit, and a friend objects, simply declare, "I like it, and it is one of the season's modes." Whatever you have chosen; you will be safe in making that answer.

Such individuality is quite in accord with modern thought. Good orphanages no longer, in most cases, clothe their little girls in the gingham uniform which grew familiar to so many when the play "Daddy Longlegs" was in fashion. In a season of many polka dots, Dame Fashion would aver that she saw them from the size of a pin head, on and up to be as large as the heavy silver dollars now so seldom seen.

Dame Fashion can remember distinctly a gray gown (with a polonaise!) which her mother wore when she herself was four years old. And because it was deeply trimmed with silk fringe, that has always seemed in her sub-conscious mind a most admirable trimming. More or less of fringe was used last fall and winter, and the word comes that it will adorn satin and Canton crepe dresses this winter. There is an airy wish to fringe that has a touch of the fluttering of wings. And of course anything angelic is highly appropriate to women!

That brings to mind that as velvet became airy and announced itself as "transparent," so satin crepe has taken to itself a lighter form, and of all names, chooses to be known as "angel's skin!"

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## Ensemble Coat Lining to Match With Blouse



Showing one of the fall ensemble costumes with a polka-dot lining that matches the blouse and the navy blue skirt made of the material of the coat. The novelty of this costume is in being able to wear the lining inside out or outside in.

## Two Charming Hats of Felt for Autumn Wear



The upper model is a close-fitting tan felt, trimmed with stitching. The lower one is a winsome hat for sports wear. It is of tan felt, trimmed with brown ribbon.

## Colors and Fabrics on

### Fashion List for Fall

Much interest centers in information about colors and fabrics which will be of leading importance this fall. The following, notes a fashion writer in the Detroit News, have been designated by both Parisian and American designers.

**COLORS**—Black and dulled opaque tones are favored for daytime costumes and accessories. Black is foremost, being combined with off tones of white or a color. Brown with a bluish cast is second in chic and is especially good when combined with dark capucine, olive green, and yellow. Blue for brown is a lighter tone which promises to be popular. Greens of a dark hue with slightly brownish cast and the new olive green are exceedingly smart. Blue with a greenish tinge is newer than the bright or purple blues. Gray blue with a steel cast is exclusive. Russet and dark capucine are two other exclusive colors. Then reds of a wine tone, plum ranging from red to blue hues and steel gray follow in importance.

**FOR EVENING**—White and daytime colors lead. Again black is extremely good. Pale shades in blue and green as well as an apricot tone give promise of being fashionable. Among the daytime shades that are good for evening—deep blue, the brown and green just mentioned and gray are to be seen.

**INFORMAL WOOLENS**—Tweeds continue to be smart but have changed in texture. Loosely woven, spongy textures which are both heavy and soft are new. Black tweed, basket weaves, diagonal tweeds, feather and wool fabrics and tweeds with nub effect will all be much seen.

**FORMAL WOOLENS**—Some fabrics dressier than tweed will be fashionably worn. Many semi-lustrous and closely shorn fabrics of broadcloth and suède-fabric type will be seen. Wool crepes as soft and fine as silks and almost as sheer, light wool tweeds, a sheer Jersey and a fine rep will be used for frocks.

**SILKS**—Daytime fabrics for fall in silks have heavy textures and dull surfaces. Flat crepe, silk fallie crepe, satin with a dull finish and plain or patterned panne velvets will lead. For evening, silks are either stiff or supple according to the type of dress. Plain crepe or satin, printed crepes and satins, moire, taffetas and panne velvets are the favored mediums.

## Two Inches to Be Added to Skirts, Says Paris

Whether the American woman of fashion will follow the edicts of Paris modistes wherever they lead is a matter that is seriously concerning New York's interpreters of the mode these days. For Paris says skirts are coming down in the autumn!

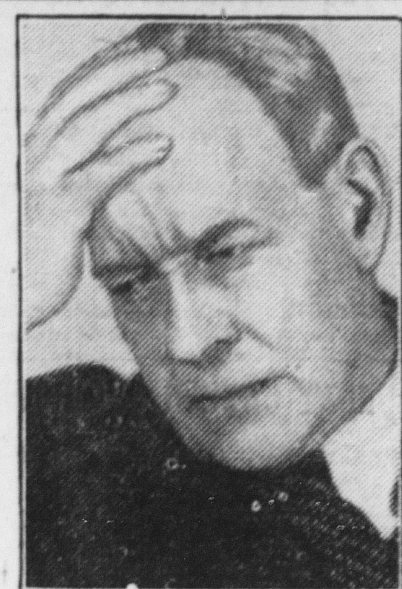
The drop will not be radical—just an experiment with the knee line. Nevertheless it will be distinctly noticeable. Describing the early showing of autumn models, Marjorie Howard, European fashion editor of Harper's Bazar, writes:

"While evening skirts remain long, or long in spots, daytime ones are trying hard to come down in the world also. Lelong, Louiseboulanger, Patou, Jane Regny, Goupy, all are bringing them down about two inches."

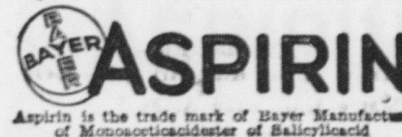
"For formal afternoon gowns, long points or dipping backs are often shown, especially in thin materials. One might say that the more formal the occasion, the longer the skirt."

## Uncovered Forehead to Be Popular Fall Mode

Have you wondered whether the trend for the uncovered forehead would carry over into fall in the hat collections? It seems that it will, and many of the very newest models are showing either high points at one side of the forehead or the entire forehead revealed in some manner.



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**Now We Ask You!**  
The American Motorist says: "Whenever a man drives up in a cloud of dust and tells you that the modern fashions in women's clothes are nonsensical, ask him what would happen if a hoopskirt tried to get into a rumble seat."

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## Name "Peony" Traced to Legend of Mythology

In the days of the Greek gods and goddesses, the peony first came to the world's attention. Leto, Apollo's mother, was the one to introduce it. Apollo was known as the god of healing and his son, Aesculapius, was the god of medicine.

It seems that a pupil of Aesculapius named Paeon was the physician of the gods, and to him Leto first gave the plant which he employed to cure Pluto of a wound received at the hands of Hercules during the Trojan war.

The fact that his pupil could surpass him in effecting such a cure made Aesculapius angry, with the result he attempted to kill Paeon, but Pluto, indebted to Paeon for his own life, res-

cued the physician of Mount Olympus from death by changing him into the plant that had saved his life. Until this day that plant bears Paeon's name and is known to us as the peony.

The history of the peony in China and Japan is of a sentimental nature. Fittingly enough, the words "Sho Yo," meaning "Most Beautiful," were applied to the herbaceous peony, while the tree peony held sway as the "King of Flowers."—Kansas City Star.

### Has Its Uses

"The appendix is the only part of the human body that is of no use," says a writer. For the medical profession, however, it is a "very profitable side-line."