

You Won't Believe  
Your Eyes!

# The Enormous Egg



by Oliver Butterworth



## Chapter One

MY NAME IS NATE TWITCHELL, BUT I CAN'T help that. It's a kind of a funny name, but I've had it for twelve years, and I'm pretty much used to it by now. And I guess a lot of other folks have got used to it too, after the thing that happened up here in Freedom last summer. That's the name of the town I live in — Freedom, New Hampshire. It's just a little town, with a few houses all along one street, and a store and a church, and not much else. Oh yes, and a school. I almost forgot that. We're only about three miles from the Maine state line, but Pop says Freedom's just as much a part of our state as Concord is, and *somebody* has to live near the State of Maine.

My pop runs a newspaper here in town. It's called the *Freedom Sentinel*, and it comes out once a week. We mail out a lot of copies to people in Effingham and Center Ossipee and places like that. I guess the paper doesn't make much money,

but we have some chickens and a goat and a vegetable garden, and that helps out.

But I want to tell you about this thing that happened to us. I don't know just where to begin. I guess I better go back to last spring, when Mrs. Parsons began leaving her window open. You see, she sleeps with her bedroom window shut all winter, but when it warms up again in May, she begins leaving her window open at night. Pop always waits for Mrs. Parsons to open that window before he plants his beans. He says it's more dependable than the almanac.

Anyway, her house is next to ours, and her window looks out on our back yard where the chicken coop is, and last spring she began to complain to Mom that the rooster was waking her up with his crowing. She said we ought to get rid of him.

We had a family conference the next morning at breakfast. Mom said we didn't have any right to disturb the neighbors, just because we wanted to keep an old rooster. Pop said he thought we might have the *right* to disturb the neighbors, but we'd better not disturb Mrs. Parsons because she lets us keep our goat in her back lot. Cynthia (she's my sister) said she didn't care what happened to the nasty old bird. That made me kind of mad, because we've had that old rooster for six years now, and I like him. My Uncle Julius brought him over to us from his farm in Potter Place. He's a New Hampshire



Red — the rooster, I mean — and he's got a wild look in his eye and always runs at my sister with his wings flapping whenever he gets a chance. She hates him.

Anyway, I said we ought to try some way of keeping the rooster quiet in the early morning, and if it worked, then we could keep him, and Mrs. Parsons could get her sleep, and everything would be all right.

"And how do you propose to keep a rooster quiet?" Pop wanted to know. "Crowing at daybreak is a pretty strong habit with roosters."

"Couldn't we shut him up somewhere at night?" I said. "We could put him down cellar, and it would be dark and he wouldn't know when it was time to crow."

Mom never really enjoys having any of the livestock in the house, and she didn't take to the idea, even when I promised to clean out his box every morning, but Pop said why don't





## MAMMOTH EGG LAID IN FREEDOM

FREEDOM, N. H., June 24  
Freedom, New Hampshire, may be a small town, but it sure can produce a big egg. A hen belonging to the Walter Twitchell family of this town recently laid an egg which may turn out to be the largest hen's egg in history.

Their hen laid this astonishing egg on June 16, Mr. Twitchell declared. She had shown some signs of uneasiness before laying the remarkable egg, which measures almost a foot and a half around, and weighs nearly three and a half pounds. . . . Mr. Twitchell admits that he doesn't know what will come out of the egg. "Something surprising," Mr. Twitchell guesses.

When Nate Twitchell discovers that one of his family's hens has laid the biggest egg he has ever seen, he is determined to see it hatch. And when it does, neither he nor his parents, the townspeople, the scientists, or the politicians from Washington are prepared for what comes out!

"Nate tells the story himself, and it is quite a yarn. Good for reading aloud. . . . Recommended."

— *School Library Journal* (double-starred review)

"[An] engagingly hilarious comedy."

— *Christian Science Monitor*

Oliver Butterworth was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1918. *The Enormous Egg*, one of the most popular children's books of all time, has been made into a television movie special and even an operetta.

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