

THE LUCK  
*of*  
THE HOUSE



GLADYS BEDFORD-ATKINS





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# THE LUCK OF THE HOUSE











*"I thought to capture a beast for my very own"*

# The Luck of the House

THE STORY OF  
A FAMILY AND A SWORD

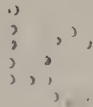
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BY  
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GREGORY ORLOFF



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*To my sister Ethel*

WITHOUT WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT AND HELP  
THIS TALE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN TOLD.  
AND TO THE BOYS OF HER SCHOOL  
FOR WHOM IT WAS WRITTEN.



## FOREWORD

Here is a tale of a family down through many centuries, and how it spread from one country to another. We have all of us a very varied heritage, some from one land, some from another, and perhaps few of us can trace it back very far. But what does that matter if we can remember to be, as the boys of the Donham family tried to be, faithful to the best that is in us?

It is true that there are three or four families in England who have held their titles and properties from Norman days. But the one of which this story tells is purely imaginary, though most of the incidents are true, as are the historic settings into which they are woven.

Probably many other interesting things happened to many other Donhams, but there is not room enough in one book to tell of them all. So it has been necessary to select only certain Donhams who carried their Sword called *The Luck of the House* as honorably as they knew. There was also a Dunham belonging to the family who helped in founding one of the youngest of the nations, the United States. This branch had no sword, only its motto—Always Faithful.





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*A beautiful young woman turned from the window*





## CHAPTER I

1084

### *THE RISE OF THE HOUSE*

When William of Normandy was  
King of England

*In which Gilbert of Beault comes to England to learn knightly courtesy from his father's friend, Sir Josselin of Donham Keep, and remains to carry on the name, as Gilbert of Donham.*





**W**HEN Duke William in his pride and might went out from his Norman Duchy to take England by force of arms from its rightful owners, among the vast company of knights who rode with him was young Count Henri de Montville and his dear friend and brother-in-arms, Sir Josselin de Beault.

At Senlac, where King Harold and his Saxons made their valiant stand, the two young men were in the first charge of the Norman horsemen, and as they rode they sang, cheering on their comrades. Many went down to death in the deep ditch the Saxons had dug about the hill where their standard was placed. Many more were sorely wounded by Saxon spears, and among these was Count Henri de Montville.

Sir Josselin rescued his friend, and tenderly cared for him until his wounds were healed. Duke William, as reward for their bravery on that day, bestowed on each vast lands and manors of the defeated Saxons. Here they retired, and strove to unite their Saxon vassals and their Norman followers in building up their lands. But in the damp climate of England de Montville suffered constantly from his old wounds. He longed for his old home in Normandy, until at last he made his plans to return, leaving his English lands in the care of Sir Josselin.

The parting was a sad one for the two young men who were such close friends. But Henri remembered a certain beautiful young girl whose guerdon he had received when he left his home; and Josselin confided that a Saxon thane, who had become tolerant enough of his presence to make Josselin welcome in his house, had a very lovely and charming sister, who, he thought, did not find him too distasteful! So they planned that the sons who some day should be theirs, would be sent—each to the other—to be taught courtesy and knightly exercises, as was the custom of those days.

The Manoir de Montville on a spring day in Normandy some twenty years later, though pinnacled, buttressed, walled and moated, did not suggest a fortress or war, no—nor even fear of war. Wild rose vines and honeysuckle hung over its outer walls, and ivy covered





*Here were the two sons of Count Henri*





its towers. The motte—that mound on which all castles of the time were erected—was starred with pink daisies; while beyond the still blue waters of the moat an apple orchard, in all the glory of its scented, rosy blossoms, swept down almost to the shores of a little cove, on whose beach broke the ever-restless waves of the sea.

Here, in the spring sunshine among the fragrant blossoms of the orchard, were the two sons of Count Henri. Raoul, the elder, was but lately returned from the great Monastery school near Rouen, to which because of its renown for learning came boys from far countries as well as the young Normans of noble birth. With his elbows resting on the crotch of a gnarled old apple tree, he looked up at his young brother Gilbert, sitting far out on a limb of the tree, swinging his legs and glowering defiantly. Raoul spoke coaxingly:

“Dost thou not know there are Saxon lads at the Monastery school? Nay, not Saxon any longer, but English! Yes, and fine fellows they are! Good students, following in the footsteps of their great long dead king, Alfred; and fond of sports they are also. Stiff-necked and obstinate often, but I like them. Truly thou wilt, likewise!”

“If thou likest them so well, why doesn’t our father send thee to his silly old friend, Josselin, and let me stay home in Normandy?” growled Gilbert, as his eyes turned lovingly toward the sunlit towers of his home.

“Thou knowest well enough, that I am nearly a man grown, and I must now be here to take from his shoulders the burden our father has bravely borne too long. And thou must be the one to fulfill his pledge to Sir Josselin,” answered Raoul impatiently.

“Ugh, how can one learn courtesy, in a half-civilized country such as that! What did he want to stay there for, anyway? And where is his boy to come to my father for his training?” Gilbert drew down his black eyebrows in another scowl.

“Thou art foolish, Gilbert, and unreasonable! I have told thee, they are no more uncivilized than we ourselves. And as for his not sending a son here, thou knowest all he has is a daughter. Mayhap thou mightest find favor in her eyes, young Gilbert, and thou rememberest not to scowl like a very demon every time thou are crossed in thine own way!”

Gilbert’s scowl cleared, and his gay laugh rang out:

“Time enough to find favor in a maiden’s eyes, when I have won my spurs, and have seen many glorious adventures in my new land. But look who comes! Thy little love, and mine, the best in the world! What should I want with a maiden’s favor!”

Reaching far out on the branch of the tree he gave it a hearty shake, sending a shower of white and pink petals down over the heads of the young girl who was betrothed to Raoul, and the lovely lady, their mother,

looking scarcely older than the young girl at her side.

Swiftly the lad swung down from the tree, landing lightly beside the two, and turning to the elder, cried:

“Oh, my Lady Mother, let them not send me to this cold, bleak, barren England, so far away from my dear sunny Normandy and—and thee, my lady!” His voice shook a little as though homesick tears were not far away, though he angrily tried to steady it.

“Dear my son,” Lady de Montville answered, putting up her hand and ruffling his dark curls, “thou wilt never be far from my heart, however far thou journeyest. England is not always cold and bleak. Thy father’s friend, Sir Josselin, is a noble brave man. And, very dear one,” she continued, laughing gently, perhaps to hide the tears in her own eyes for this boy, her youngest, “thou must be brave and manly. Learn all he can teach thee, but never forget what thy mother has tried to teach thee—be always gentle and kind to little children, respect old age, and show courtesy to all people, high and low.

“And now, word has come that the ship is in the harbor. I came myself to tell you, that we might have one last walk together through the orchard. Thy father waits to give thee his blessing, and start thee on thy way.”

Gilbert proved a good sailor. The voyage through the rough waters of the Channel, the first sight of the



high white cliffs of the English coast were matters of vast interest to him. Even more so was the beaching of the ship in the pale, silvery light of an early dawn, for on the shore a large party of men and horses was to be seen waiting for them to come in.

Amid the shouting of orders and the creaking of rigging as the small ship was maneuvered in shore, Gilbert stood by the rail of the poop deck wondering about the men, and his probable reception by them. For though later on he would be only one of the pages in the castle, now he was the son of his father, the dearest friend of Sir Josselin.

One of the party on the shore, a man tall and broad, wrapped in a long cloak, walked to and fro a little apart from the others, stopping now and again to watch the progress of the ship.

“It might be Sir Josselin himself,” thought Gilbert, “but more like ’tis some knight of his household. Yet he might well come to meet my father’s son. I wonder how long we must travel to reach his castle and lands.”

A heavy footfall on the deck beside him jarred him from his musing.

“We are beached, young master,” spoke the burly ship’s master, Oswald. “Yonder would be those who come to meet thee. A goodly company, but there is much in our ship to be carried with them on their return, and they will need many a sumpter mule, and

many a strong arm to protect it on the way, that I'll warrant! Come now, I will put thee ashore, dry and safe, and see thee in the care of them to whom thou goest, that I may so tell Count Henri when I return."

And on the shoulders of sturdy Master Oswald, young Gilbert rode through the last of the water between the ship and the land where he was to see many adventures. He would come to love this land. He and his heirs were to live in it for generation after generation, until at last certain of them would journey on to make themselves homes in a newer land that in those days was not even dreamed of.

As Oswald swung the boy to his feet on the pebbly shore, the man in the long cloak came down the beach, both hands outstretched. He had a ruddy, clear-skinned face, lit by kindly grey eyes. He wore light chain armor under his long dark blue cloak, and his great broadsword was fastened to his side with a wide, silver-studded belt of crimson leather.

"So, here is the son of my dear friend, Henri. Welcome to our sweet land!" he greeted Gilbert cheerily.

It was Sir Josselin! Gilbert's interest grew. Perhaps this knight would be all that his father had told of him. Perhaps he would not hate England so much after all. The sun was bright, the smell of the sea was salt in his nostrils, and there was a hint of something elusive—a sweet perfume drifting down from the countryside.

He made a courteous reply to Sir Josselin, answered his inquiries about the voyage, and gave him messages of greeting from his father.

During this time there was much hurrying back and forth, the men from the ship carrying in great bales and bundles of goods, to be packed and strapped on the waiting mules by Sir Josselin's servants. For they must be off speedily, in order to make the most of the daylight for their journey.

Left to himself, Gilbert wandered here and there, inspecting the horses; trying now and then to talk with the men, but finding them in the most part either too busy to stop for talk; or that the language they spoke was not the French to which he was accustomed, being mixed with English words or pronounced with an accent strange to his ears.

At last all was ready. Master Oswald, who had been deep in conversation with Sir Josselin, came to the boy:

"Master Gilbert, the load is packed. The horses are saddled, and Sir Josselin hath given me a space in which to bid ye farewell. I will tell thy good father, Count Henri, that thou fared through the voyage like an old sailor, and bore thyself manly in thy greeting to his friend. 'Twill doubtless please him. The day is fair, thou'lt make good speed. God give the good hap, sir."

"I give thee thanks, good Master Oswald. Tell my father I shall try to bear myself bravely as his son, and



take my dear love to my Lady Mother. See, I have gathered some yellow flowers from shrubs, back on the cliff. Take them to her, I pray thee, Master Oswald, though I fear they will fade long ere thou art back; and take these shells and bright pebbles from the shore.”

So they rode away, Gilbert by Sir Josselin's side at the head of the train and mounted on a splendid black horse. A wave of homesickness swept over him as he took one last backward look at the ship, already weighing anchor for its return trip. But the sun was shining on the golden gorse of the uplands, the perfume from hawthorne hedges filled the air with warm sweetness. Larks, singing to the skies as they rose from the fields, carried his spirits high with them. Behind, with clatter of hoofs, jingle of spurs, and clang of armor rode Sir Josselin's retinue of men-at-arms and serving men.

Hour after hour they rode, through sunlit plains, over rolling downs, into dark and shadowy forests. Here the men-at-arms scattered and rode ahead, keeping sharp watch to right and left for possible marauders, or foemen. Now and again they passed through a clustering group of small cottages. Once Gilbert caught a glimpse of a gray donjon keep rising grimly from its motte, its narrow, slotted archer's windows squinting out over the surrounding countryside. Then once more they were on a highroad that stretched out ahead, like a long ribbon.

“This,” said Sir Josselin to Gilbert, “is called Watling



Street. It is told that it was built first by Roman soldiers. I know not, but it runs mile after mile, far into the north. And now," as they crossed over a stone bridge that spanned a small river, "just beyond this river lies an abbey, where we will stop this night for rest and food. I'll warrant thou are tired and hungry. The abbot and the monks are godly men and hospitable, ever ready to entertain travelers."

Wide, tilled fields were here. Cattle, knee-deep in lush meadows, lifted their heads as the cavalcade passed. The travelers drew rein near a group of wooden buildings clustered about a simple, humble little church. A monk came from a door:

"God give thee welcome to this His house, good sir knight. Dismount, that we may offer rest and refreshment to thee and thy men in His Name."

A sturdy, pleasant-faced esquire offered to help Gilbert dismount from his big horse, but the boy, weary though he was from the long hard ride, still retained his Norman pride. Should he be helped from his horse, he who had ridden since he had been big enough to sit upright on the cantle of his father's saddle? And by one of these barbarians? No, indeed! He made a great effort to spring down, but his legs, cramped and weary from long hours in the saddle, buckled under him, and only for the kindly hand of Ranulf, the esquire, he would have fallen.

They tramped up and down until the circulation was restored in Gilbert's legs once more, and then entered the monks' refectory, where the rest of the party was already partaking of the simple fare offered by the monks. A fire roared on the huge open hearth, warming the room from the chill night air, and sending bright dancing light flickering on walls and the low ceiling. Here the smoke caught it, reflecting strange, distorted shadows among the dark rafters. Gilbert looking about compared it very unfavorably with the great church in Rouen, and another great monastery that he had seen in Normandy.

Ranulf laughed, in a friendly, teasing fashion, "Oh, we are very rough and wild barbarians, but we can better this, Sir Norman! After all, this is but a small handful of the good fathers. Wait till you see some of the fine abbeys that are rising fast in our land, and I'll warrant that there is no greater stronghold in all Normandy than that which is being built in London town!"

When the weary travelers had finished the last of their bread and cheese and ale, they were shown to small and bare cells furnished with rude pallets piled high with fresh sweet-smelling hay; a small bench, and a crucifix on the wall. In front of it Gilbert knelt and sleepily muttered an evening prayer, before he tumbled on his bed. Wrapped in his own warm cloak, he slept as sweetly as though under the softest of silken coverlets.

Morning saw them well on their way again, before the dew on the grass was dried. When the shadows were lengthening, and the birds chirping their goodnights from the trees, Sir Josselin called to Gilbert who had dropped back to ride with his new friend Ranulf:

“Yonder, ahead of us is London town, where we will sleep this night. Show him where to look, Ranulf.” And following his friend’s hand, Gilbert saw in the misty sunset light the gabled roofs of many houses and towers of churches, for the Normans were great church builders. And all over the land were rising the great abbeys and churches that were for centuries the glory of England. Dim in the distance bulked a mighty mass of masonry:

“Look,” said Ranulf, “there stands King William’s great, new castle of London; ’tis the strongest fortress in the land!”

That night they slept in the house of a friend of Sir Josselin. Gilbert was too tired to notice much beyond the fact that they passed through beautiful gardens, and that they were served a bounteous supper by the light of flaring torches stuck high on the walls of the room.

A thick fog hung over the city in the morning, and the party made its way slowly down the narrow, crooked muddy streets toward the city gates. Early though it was, there were already many people about, some mounted, some afoot—Normans, English, nobles and



serfs—all intent on their own business, and too accustomed to the passing of such a cavalcade as Sir Josselin's to give them more than a glance. But Gilbert gazed about him with wonder and delight at the sights and sounds of his strange new world.

Beyond the city walls the sun struggled through the heavy veil of fog, and they rode through a lovely country of rolling hills and valleys where little streams sparkled and danced. At last they turned from the highways onto a grassy ride, skirting a deep forest. Through the leaves the sunlight dappled the road with lights and shadows. Beneath the trees a thick carpet of bluebells spread. Yet through all the still loveliness there was a feeling of impending danger, for the men-at-arms who had but lately laughed and joked among themselves now rode silent and watchful, grim-faced and intent, with swords loose and ready for action.

“What do they fear, Ranulf?” asked Gilbert, curiously.

“They do not fear,” returned Ranulf scornfully. “To be sure, there are many who might set upon a company with so heavily laden a pack train, but there would be no fear of such by Sir Josselin nor by any of his men! No, 'tis, I think, that they look for an attack by one Hugo Fitz Osbern of Tiverly, a rascally knight of mean disposition, who hath long hated and envied Sir Josselin—”

Interrupting him suddenly, an arrow sped by with a sharp, whistling sound. Instantly the loosened swords were out. Grim faces grew even grimmer, though some hardened into ferocious grins. The pack train was driven in among the trees, to stand concealed by the bushes. Sir Josselin ordered Ranulf to take Gilbert and two of the men-at-arms in with them.

“Ranulf,” he said, “I give my friend’s son into thy charge as a sacred trust. The pack also. Guard them well, ’tis as honourable a post as any in the coming fight, though I doubt not thou wouldst far rather be in the thick of it. I think this will be that same vile scoundrel, Hugo Fitz Osbern, that is ever molesting us.” He turned his charger and rode to the front of his men.

Just beyond a slight turn of the path, there rose a rocky ridge. From behind it there now sprang a score or more armed and mounted men who fell on Sir Josselin’s band silently and fiercely, and with bared swords. But Sir Josselin, thanks to the carelessly sped arrow, was warned and ready, and men and horses came together with a great clash of steel, trampling of hoofs, and loud cries.

From under the trees, Gilbert and Ranulf eagerly watching, could see little for the clouds of dust that rose from the road. Ranulf had stationed himself between Gilbert and any chance arrow that might fly their way, though the fighting was being carried on entirely with

sword and battle-ax. He was standing in his stirrups in an effort to see which way the fight was going; while Gilbert, unable to see anything, sat kicking his heels against his mount, to whom his excitement was rapidly being conveyed. Under the pressure of rein and heel, the horse grew more and more restive. Suddenly he backed, reared, wheeled and bolted for the open spaces.

Covered by the noise of the fighting, Ranulf heard nothing. One of the men-at-arms caught at the horse's bridle, but missed it. Down to the road galloped the frightened beast. At the same time, an apparently riderless horse trotted out from the cloud of dust. Gilbert had by dint of coaxing hand and soft voice, soothed his nervous animal and slowed him down. He now saw, what to his way of thinking, was an excellent opportunity to capture a mount for his very own. So he rode after the riderless horse, which had dropped from a trot to a walk. At Gilbert's call it stopped and turned its head. Gilbert caught at the dragging reins, then he saw that the horse's rider, wounded and unconscious, was held by his foot in the off stirrup. Gilbert looked back. Ranulf was galloping after him, while the fight on the road had changed to a rout, with Sir Josselin and his men in headlong pursuit.

"Ranulf, haste!" shouted the boy, "I have two prisoners!"

They both dismounted, and Ranulf bent to look at the



wounded man's face. "My faith!" he exclaimed. "If it is not Hugo himself, I am no true man!"

"What is this?" broke in Sir Josselin, who had ridden back in search of them after having successfully driven off the attacking force. "Hugo, do ye say? I believed one of his men must have carried him off after he was unhorsed in the fight. For among those that escaped one rode double, and Hugo was not of those left on the road. What has happened here?"

"I think, Sir Josselin, our lad from Normandy plans to be dubbed knight before ever he acts as thy page, for 'twas he who captured yon false knight! And I stand before thee as one who has, alas, failed his trust! For indeed Gilbert was down on the road, ere I even saw he was no longer with me."

"Nay, Sir Josselin, I am alone to blame! My horse became affrighted by the noise and I fear that I was none too calm, and struck him. He—tried to run away!" confessed Gilbert, "I thought to capture a beast for my very own, when I saw the riderless one coming along."

"And so thou shalt, an my farrier says he is a good beast!" cried Sir Josselin, pleased at the boy's pluck and honesty. "If he is not, by my faith thou shalt have the pick of my stable, save only this noble friend whom I ride myself! As for Ranulf, thy spurs are a long way from thee, an thou canst not guard a trust more safely, Sir Esquire!"

“But ’twas truly my fault, Sir Josselin! Do not blame him.”

“By thy plea, and that we hold Hugo of Tiverly by thy prowess, Ranulf shalt be forgiven. But now we must make speed, lest those who escaped bring back a larger force to the rescue!”

That evening ere the sun had set, they rode down a lovely valley, between wide green meadows, shaded by great oaks. They passed lowly farm and cottage; crossed a river bordered with golden flowers amid glossy green leaves; through a small village of clustered cottages. Ahead there arose a hill curtained with woods, and crowned by a massive stone keep, its towers silhouetted against the deep blue of the northern sky. Here had been a little village or hamlet guarded by a fortress on the hill, for long years before ever Duke William and his Normans invaded England. The Saxons simply called it Donham, from their two Saxon words, don—a fort, and ham—a village.

It had been one of the forfeited estates bestowed on Gilbert’s father. Henri saw the similarity in his own name of Montville. His sense of humour, as well as a desire to make a friendly gesture toward his Saxon vassals had combined to suggest that he keep the old Saxon name. When he returned to Normandy leaving everything to Sir Josselin, Sir Josselin had chosen it as his home.

The road curved slowly upward through the trees. At one hand the side sloped steeply to the river and meadows below. On the other it rose, a rocky precipitous wall topped by a palisade.

From the top of the formidable gatehouse blocking the road, fluttering scarfs greeted them.

“A-ha!” laughed Sir Josselin, “my little maid is watching for our return, to see her new playfellow, no doubt.”

Gilbert looked disdainful. The idea of being regarded as a possible playmate for a little girl was not pleasing.

“Be not alarmed,” chuckled Ranulf softly, “the Lady Aedgyth is no puling baby! She has been all the son our brave Sir Josselin hath.”

The great portcullis slowly lifted, and they clattered into the courtyard of the castle, where the weary horses were led away. By the side of Sir Josselin, Gilbert mounted the narrow circular stairway built into the thickness of the wall. It curved sharply upward to the right, so that one man standing on the stair might defend it with the sweep of his sword, whereas any attacking foeman trying to force an entrance must needs be handicapped by the curve, and could only thrust with his weapon. They passed through the portcullis room. Here stood the great windlass for winding the chains that raised and lowered the heavy grill. The two finally emerged on the broad parapet, where a small but stately



little lady, clad in a blue camelot robe, with flowing sleeves of white embroidered in silver, and a small blue cap on a mass of shining wind-blown yellow curls, moved toward them.

“Greetings, my lords,” said she, in a most dignified manner. But hardly had she spoken when her dignity disappeared, and she sprang into her father’s outstretched arms, smothering him with kisses and golden curls. At last he put her on her feet, and turned to greet his wife, the Lady Ethelfleda, who had smilingly followed the child, Lady Aedgyth gave her attention to Gilbert, scanning him gravely with her serene, blue eyes. Finally she reached out one small hand.

“I like you, boy-from-over-the-sea, thou mayest kiss my hand.” Gilbert obeyed the order with the courtesy his mother had taught him, and the Lady Ethelfleda, who had moved over to them in time to witness the performance, smiled down at him. Slipping her slim, white fingers under his chin, she turned up his face and kissed him, saying,

“Welcome to Donham Keep, Gilbert of Normandy. May you find England a happy home. I hope thou and Aedgyth wilt be friends.”

“Canst hawk? And chase the deer?” Aedgyth inquired when her mother had gone back to Sir Josselin. “I can climb almost to the top of the gatehouse on the big ivy vine! Dost think you can do better than that?”

“I can but try!” promised Gilbert in return.

In the Great Hall that evening near the blazing fire Gilbert sat with Aedgyth and two pages of the castle, boys of his own age. They soon became good friends, telling of exploits in the castle, on the river, in Normandy; of friends and relatives, of tourneys and town fairs—all the thousand and one things of which life is made.

So the long spring twilight turned to night, there was a *jongleur* singing a long tale of old heroes of the land; a monk saying an *Ave*; and then—for Gilbert, after his long journey with its new sights and sounds, new friends and places—all was blotted out in deep sleep.

\* \* \* \* \*

Spring turned to summer—long summer days, the sun hot on the fields, making the river the most desirable spot in their world for the boys of the castle. For not only could they catch fish, but in a deep, quiet pool they could swim and dive to their hearts' content. They were cool and clean again when they donned their simple garments to cross the river to the Abbey of Saint Cross, where the good fathers taught them Latin and French, reading and writing.

At first, Gilbert was a little resentful of this “monkish learning”, as he called it. But when he found how customary it was among the Saxon lads of noble birth, and

how much more they already knew than he, he flung his bright young mind whole-heartedly into the tasks. That a Norman should be outdone by a Saxon seemed unthinkable, was his first idea. But little by little, as they worked together and played together, he forgot they were Norman and Saxon, and they all became English.

Summer slipped into winter. Boylike, they hunted rabbits in the fields. But they also rode into the forests with the castle huntsmen for red deer and wild boar. They learned to handle a bow or a boar spear accurately and well; returning to the Great Hall, they huddled about the fire, full of stories of the chase for their little Lady Aedgyth, though in truth she frequently made one of their party, and rode as well as the boys.

And so the seasons rolled around. Ranulf, for whom Gilbert still held a great admiration, was knighted, and left the Castle for his own Manor, which he held under fief to Sir Josselin. Another of the esquires had also left, and Gilbert had begun to take over some of the duties of these two. He still waited on his lord and lady at table, but now he also had the care of Sir Josselin's great war horse, considered among the esquires and pages the highest of honors, as a war horse was one of a knight's most valued possessions. He also assisted Sir Josselin's seneschal, Sir Reginald, when he made his nightly rounds of the castle to see that all was well, that



the gates were barred, and the guards on watch. Then, rolling himself in his cloak, Gilbert slept at the door of Sir Josselin's chamber, so that none might enter without waking him.

On a warm summer day three years after Gilbert's arrival, Hugo of Tiverly, now called Hugh and held prisoner ever since that time, escaped from his prison. He had been confined in a small, strong tower, a part of the outer wall, that had come to be known as Hugh's Tower, though many had even forgotten why. A man who had carried him food once a day, was found lying on the floor unconscious and could tell no tale. He had lain there nearly two days before he was found, so little had become the concern about the once dreaded Hugo of Tiverly.

But now Hugh was gone, and it would not be long before he would arouse his own people again, and would return for vengeance. The great bell in Donham Keep clanged out its summons to the surrounding countryside, calling Donham's vassals to its defense. The guards on walls and towers were doubled. Grim old Sir Reginald kept the armourers hard at work fashioning stronger bolts and bars for the outer gates and the portcullis, and making ready all defences.

The courtyard rang with the clamor of arms and armour, and the clatter of hoofs, for already messengers were coming with news of raids by Hugh and his men

on the villages and outlying manors. Others were going forth to summon the knights who held their lands under Sir Josselin; and these with their retainers, men-at-arms, and families, were gathering within the castle. Once some of Hugh's men were bold enough to appear on the Abbey road in an attempt to raid Donham village itself, almost under the castle's walls. But they had been successfully driven off by a swift foray of horsemen under Sir Ranulf whose own manor had been burned to the ground in Hugh's first raid. Ranulf, his young wife and baby, and most of the inmates had escaped safely to the protection of his overlord's castle.

Crowded days passed swiftly, thrilling days to Gilbert, busy all day long. One morning, snatching a few moments, he ran up the stairway to the top of the gatehouse. Here he could often find Lady Aedgyth, looking like a boy herself in her short tunic; either watching the preparations, or gazing out over the surrounding country, eagerly hoping to be the first to spy out signs of some of Hugh's men.

"Oh, Gilbert," she cried petulantly, as she caught sight of him, "why wasn't I a boy? I want to be at my father's side whenever an enemy attacks us. Instead I shall be hurried to a safe place in the castle, or at best to help those who might be wounded!"

"Thou wouldst be too young!" mocked Gilbert. "And besides, thou wouldst be far from here. Knowest

thou not that, even as I am here, an thou were a boy thou wouldst be in Normandy with my father according to the promises our fathers made in their youth? Oh no, 'tis best to be here, even though it is only to tend those who may be hurt in defence of Donham! And I promise thee, Aedgyth, I shalt fight much more bravely with thee watching me. Thou must give me thy guerdon to wear!"

"And why shouldst I give thee my guerdon? Mayhap, my father wilt not let thee go forth from the castle either," retorted Aedgyth, with an indignant toss of her fair curls. "For all thou art grown so tall, and art doing so many of an esquire's duties, thou art but a boy still. There are esquires more near a man's estate who might wish a guerdon from me!"

Gilbert was aghast at the prospect of a refusal to allow him to join the fighting men. While he was searching his mind for a fittingly scathing answer, the two angry youngsters heard a faint wavering blast of a horn outside the gates.

Their irritation forgotten, they rushed to the parapet. Below on the road approaching the gate, stood a weary horse white with foam. Its rider sat limply on the saddle, while the portcullis was being raised.

Horse and rider soon disappeared from their sight, nor could they picture what was taking place under the great arched passage. "Sir Josselin—" gasped the mes-



senger, "tell Sir Josselin—I saw Hugh—a great force—coming by Abingdon—make haste!" Then lifting his hand slowly as though it was a terrific weight, he brought it to his shoulder. A look—half surprise, half anger—crossed his face. He reeled in the saddle and fell, blood gushing from a wound in which the broken end of an arrow still protruded. But he had accomplished his errand, he had warned his master of the approaching danger. Kindly hands lifted him and bore him within, to be cared for by the women.

All the garrison were called to their posts, and Gilbert in wild haste dashed in search of Sir Josselin, only to receive a bitter disappointment. For Sir Josselin glanced at him impatiently:

"I have not time for thee now, boy. Stay thou here in the castle, thou art far too young to go forth with the fighting men," he said shortly, and turned away to his captains.

Bitterly disappointed and scowling blackly with indignation, Gilbert was about to leave the courtyard in search of some obscure corner where he could nurse his hurt pride in solitude, when one of the bowmen from the tower, breathless with haste, hurried up to Sir Josselin.

"My lord," he cried, "a great cloud of dust rises on the road to the east! Sir Reginald sends thee word 'tis the spears of Sir Hugh of Tiverly!"

Swiftly Gilbert made his way among the gathering soldiery in the court to the stairway leading to the parapets. At least if he might not fight, he could watch from the best point of vantage. He picked the tower where the great silken banner embroidered by the Lady Ethelfleda and her maids, snapped and fluttered in the breeze blowing away the morning mists. Here in a sheltered niche, he found, as he had expected, Lady Aedgyth. She tilted her curly head at him and laughed mischievously, but said nothing about his not being among the fighting men, and gradually Gilbert's scowl vanished.

Together, they watched the approach of Hugh's forces. Through the curtain of dust there was the gleam and glitter of armor, tossing pennons waved, scarlet, green and gold. Lumbering in the rear came the great battering rams, and mortars for throwing fire and rocks.

Then forth from the massed army, a single knight rode up to the gate of the castle. Some fifty paces away he raised his voice:

“Ho, warden of the gate! Speech with Sir Josselin of Donham Keep! From Sir Hugh Fitz Osbern of Tiv-erly!”

The portcullis was raised, the massive oaken gates opened, and the seneschal of Donham Keep rode out to parley with Hugh's messenger.

Hugh offered battle in the meadow below, or the cas-

tle would be besieged. Sir Reginald answered swiftly:

“Sir Josselin can withstand any siege Hugh of Tiverly can raise. Nevertheless, go thou back to him with word that Sir Josselin of Donham Keep intends, not only to give battle, but to destroy Hugh’s power once and for always. There will be no quarter given, nor any asked!”

While Sir Hugh’s emissary once more rejoined the waiting forces below, the seneschal sat his pawing, impatient charger. Then out through the gate rode Sir Josselin, on his great war horse. Behind him came the esquires, captains, and men-at-arms of his own household, followed by the knights and men-at-arms who owed allegiance to him.

As the horses clattered through the gate, from parapet and tower the bowmen sent out a cloud of arrows, speeding over their heads, toward Hugh’s massed force. The sudden onrush of death-dealing arrows halted Hugh’s men, who were striving to bring up their heavy rams and mortars to position. And now Sir Josselin and his men charged on toward Sir Hugh’s force and the sound of battle filled the air with clamor.

From the tower, Gilbert, with Lady Ethelfleda, little Lady Aedgyth, the women of the household and the young pages, watched the conflict surging back and forth on the road and meadow. Now one side prevailed, now the other, when to their horror, they saw Sir Josselin and a few of his followers cut off from the



main body by a clever feint of one of Hugh's captains. One by one the few men with him fell. Through the clangor of sword and battle axe, war cries, trampling of hooves, the groans and screams of the wounded and dying, Sir Josselin's call for succor was unheard.

Lady Ethelfleda, white with fear for her husband, but calm and brave still, turned to send Gilbert to the reserves at the gate with word of Sir Josselin's peril. But the boy was no longer there. She heard the ring of racing feet on the stone stair, stood for a minute listening. Then Aedgyth's voice called to her excitedly:

"Lady Mother, look, look! Our Gilbert hath gone himself to my father's aid! See, he hath a helmet on his head, a sword in his hand! Oh, Mother, the Saints give him strength and grace, that he cometh in time!"

Together they watched, breathlessly. The daring lad had swung himself down over the walls by the clinging vines, and landed just behind Sir Josselin. The latter now alone and afoot, stood astride the fallen body of his last retainer, coolly facing his enemy, with only his battle axe in his hand; his great broadsword was broken as a vanquished foeman had fallen on the blade.

Shouting, "A Donham to the rescue! Ho, a Donham!" Gilbert sprang to his lord's side. His sword swung, and descended just in time to strike down an enemy, who had thought to attack Sir Josselin from the rear. Side by side the boy and the belted knight stood,

the sword and the battle axe keeping clear a circle about them. At last high above the din came the welcome shout.

“Rescue, rescue for our lord! Ho, Donham!” And straight through the ranks of Tiverly came the men of Donham. With the clash of steel on steel blow after blow fell until, as says the old chronicle, “their sword arms sank, because there were left none of Hugh Fitz Osbern’s men for the sword to strike!”

It was some hours later that Gilbert, still quivering with excitement and weariness, stood in the Great Hall with his chosen companions. With his eyes shining, he finished his account of his adventures— “And thereon the Saints did prosper us, for Hugh fell before Sir Reginald’s attack, and his vassals, such as were left, took flight. Our knights pursued them, but they would not stay for further battle!

“Sir Josselin saith,” he continued proudly, “he would have given me knighthood on the field, but that he wishes my dear father and mother to be present at the addubment! And thou, Aedgyth, wilt not now give me thy guerdon, that I may be thy knight?”

Aedgyth, flushing rosily to the roots of her curly, golden hair, answered softly: “Why Gilbert, indeed thou art my veriest own knight! Did I not hear thee shout ‘A Donham to the rescue’ instead of the Norman name Montville, as thou dashed to my father’s side? I think

England and Donham Keep hath won another Norman for our own!”

So it was that Gilbert de Montville won his spurs in England though a boy, and later still won the sweet little Lady Aedgyth for his wife, even as his brother Raoul had foretold. And as Sir Gilbert of Donham, he lived through many adventurous years, leaving behind him at the last strong sons to help build the kingdom, and hand on down to their sons, his valor and his lady's beauty.







## CHAPTER II

1189

### *THE LUCK COMES TO THE HOUSE*

When a Plantagenet King Followed  
the Cross to the Holy Land

*In which one hundred years after Gilbert de Montville came to England, another Donham journeys far and wins through faith and knightly courtesy the friendship of a noble enemy. Jocelyn is given a Sword called THE LUCK OF THE HOUSE.*



**J**OCELYN, son of Baron John of Donham, was the bearer of a name that had become a custom in his family since the days when the first Josselin had followed Duke William from Normandy to new lands and possessions in England. The boy sat at one end of a broad seat in the high embrasure in a window in the Crusaders' castle of Acre. In those days all the knights of Christendom were gathered in Palestine striving to regain the Holy Land from the pagans.

Jocelyn hugged his silken clad knees with his arms, talking eagerly:

“And, Lady Beatrice,” he continued to the girl who sat at the other end, “from the top of that wall where I had climbed, I saw rare sights! It looked more like a



county fair than aught else I have ever seen. There were camels laden with food stuffs, their drivers wearing gay colored turbans; and stalls full of silks, beautiful rugs, wonderful brass lamps, strange fruits and sweets—oh, and a juggler, who made a tree grow whilst I watched.

“Then while I lay flattened out under the low branches of the big tree, so that none might see me,” he chuckled, “either from without or within—and that was most necessary, for had Messire Gervase caught me, I know not what would have happened—there came down the street a company of Saracens, mounted on the fleetest, most beautiful horses! The horses were gaily caparisoned; the men wore burnouses and turbans of many gorgeous colors, and there were jewels flashing from their turbans, and from the hilts of their swords!

“Oh, would I were a man grown! I should go forth and fight these Unbelievers, and some day I should bring back to you a gleaming jewel; and for myself, I would wear a jeweled sword by my side!”

“That would be brave! But Father Bernard says ‘too many forget in the zest for fighting, that it is to free the Lord Jesus’ birthplace from the Infidel, that we are here.’ ”

“Well, perhaps I might take an emir prisoner, then Father Bernard could teach him to be a Christian, and he would give me the jewels, because I had opened the way for him to see God’s truth!”

“I wonder,” pondered the little girl, “why that wouldn’t be the best way for everyone to do it!”

“See,” interrupted Jocelyn, “the sun is getting low, shall we go down into the garden ere dark comes, and I will show you where I climbed?”

“Lady Elena will not like that I do so; she says I will never be a great lady if I mend not my manners, that I had better have been a boy. I think so too,” she continued thoughtfully. “Shall we let René come with us?” Beatrice slid down from the high window. René was the second page in attendance on Lady Elena and Lady Beatrice, a French boy of whom Jocelyn was very jealous.

“No, Lady Beatrice, René would weep, an he skinned his hands climbing the wall, and besides would run to tell Messire Gervase to have me punished!”

Jocelyn’s father, grief-stricken at the death of his beloved wife, had turned from all his familiar pursuits, and leaving his castle, lands, and the care of his younger children in charge of his brother, had “taken the Cross” with King Richard and sailed for the Holy Land. With him went Jocelyn, his eldest son barely ten years old.

Two years had passed, and still the Crusaders were no nearer their goal. Time and again, they had been defeated by the powerful, clever generalship of Saladin, the great Saracen leader. During these years Jocelyn had remained as page in the great fortress castle at

Acre. A high-spirited lad, straightforward and honorable though a leader in all mischief, he had speedily become a favorite with most of the inmates.

Now he parted the arras or tapestry hanging over the door, and peered out. There was no one in sight. So he and Beatrice tiptoed across the hall, through a door and so out into the garden, heavy with the scent of roses warmed in the sun. The shadows were beginning to lengthen; soon there would be others coming out to enjoy the cool of the evening. Hand in hand the two ran to the gate, where the warder, accustomed to the outer bailey being used as a playground, readily passed them through.

“It is almost a stair,” said Jocelyn, as they reached the shelter of a buttress of the wall, “I will go ahead where I can give you my hand, and pull you up that first long step.” In another minute the two were safely atop the broad wall, almost hidden from view by the drooping branches of a tamarisk tree. Here they could look across the wide street to where a busy mart had grown up, to satisfy the needs of the castle folk.

“Oh, Jocelyn, does it not seem like a dream, all that gay color and sound yonder? The sweet perfume of these blossoms—I wish we might see some of the horse-men!”

Jocelyn wriggled uncomfortably. Already his conscience was beginning to trouble him.



“I think perchance we had better return now,” he said, swinging his legs to the inside of the wall, preparatory to jumping down, “some one might miss you; and there will be sweets back there in the garden,” he added coaxingly.

“But listen,” she answered him, “do you not hear, Jocelyn? Horses! I must see them!” In her excitement she had risen to her feet, and balanced by a light hold on a branch, leaned eagerly forward. Jocelyn hurriedly reached out to pull her back:

“Lady Beatrice, be careful!” But it was too late, for in her desire to see she overbalanced herself. The little branch was only enough to break her fall; and Jocelyn sat alone, stiff with fright; while she lay, a little limp heap at the foot of the wall! He looked back. No one was in sight, but he did not dare leave her to run for help, for she was on the wrong side of the wall. She lay so still, he wondered if the fall had killed her. He must get down there, before any of the people out beyond became aware of that limp form that was Lady Beatrice!

Perhaps he could rouse her, and they could reach the little postern gate far down the side of the wall. There were no friendly buttresses on this side to shelter them, but it was the only thing to be done. “If we had only brought René to run for help! But a man must protect his lady,” he muttered to himself. With one last des-

perate look around for the help that was not there, he lowered himself over the outer edge of the wall, clinging tightly till he hung full length. Then dropping, he landed safe on his feet in the shadow of the wall, and close by the side of Beatrice. Her eyelids slowly lifted as he knelt beside her.

“Are you hurt, my lady? Oh, are you hurt?”

“What happened? O—oh, my foot!” she struggled to sit up, then as realization of her fall swept over her, she caught at Jocelyn’s hand. “Oh, what shall we do? How shall we get back?”

“I think no one has seen us, it may be possible that we won’t be noticed if we keep close in the shadow of the wall; and if you can walk a little, perhaps we may reach the shelter of the postern where there will be a watchman to let us in. If only no one passes on the road. Can you stand, and I help you?”

“I’ll try, Jocelyn,” but the pain in her foot brought tears to her eyes, Jocelyn dropped to his knees:

“Let me rub it. It is swelling badly already. If I could carry you—”

Beatrice giggled in spite of the pain at that. “But, Jocelyn, I am nearly as tall as you,” she said apologetically, as she saw his quick frown at her laugh.

“We must reach the postern, but I can’t leave you here alone to call for help!” He looked anxiously up the smooth wall that rose sheer and steep above them.

“Jocelyn, the riders! They come. Oh, what if they should see us!” cried Beatrice, her voice frightened. He wheeled. Yes, there they came at a swift trot, colorful, fierce. But the thrill of today was not in color or superb horsemanship. It was a thrill of cold fear. But Jocelyn must be brave, and think, think fast! There was nowhere to go, so they must pretend it was natural, their being outside the wall. Quickly he dropped on one knee beside Beatrice, so that he faced the oncoming horsemen:

“See, Beatrice, we will be playing mumblety-peg with my knife. Keep your face toward me and don’t look up. Look down at the knife and be sure not to look at the riders till they are well past. It’s the only chance of their not noticing us, not very good, but the Blessed Saints grant it may suffice!”

He pulled down his peaked cap, with its flaunting, scarlet feather over his shining, yellow hair so that it shadowed the blue eyes and fair skin, and thought thankfully that Beatrice’s hair was dark, not a mass of golden curls like those of his little sister, who was now safe in cool, green England. His eyes felt queer and hot, but his body shivered. However, his hand was steady, balancing, throwing, catching up the knife, keeping Beatrice’s attention with a running chatter of the game. It seemed to take hours instead of seconds for the horsemen to reach them; surely they would never notice two



children playing by the roadside. The beat of the hoofs came closer, reached them, stopped. Jocelyn's movements were mechanical. Only his lips moved, framing words of a prayer to his patron saint.

He realized now that the leader had spoken directly to him:

“What are you doing here? Who are you?” The question was repeated impatiently.

All the pride and arrogance of his Norman-English blood rose in Jocelyn. He hesitated no longer:

“What business is it of yours? Go, leave us, you annoy me!” he blazed out in the dialect he had learned from servants and prisoners. He sprang to his feet, his fists clenched, his fair face flushed with anger.

The man gave a short laugh, but another spoke to him:

“These are no ordinary babes of low caste Christians. Take them with us. Our master will know how to deal with the matter. Thou take one, I take the other; Allah grant the Franks come not forth till we are gone.”

Jocelyn still held his knife in his hand; he would use it if these men attempted to touch them. It was only a knife and he was only a little boy, but some one of them should feel it! Yet so swift were their movements, as swift and sure-footed as a wild animal, that there was not even time to call out. The stifling folds of a heavy burnous enveloped his head, and hands like





*“See, Beatrice, we will be playing mumblety-peg”*





steel bands closed around him, and lifted him despite his struggles. Though burdened with his weight Jocelyn felt his captor leap to the saddle. He felt also the long effortless stride of the horse as it broke into a gallop.

The heat seemed intense, he wondered where Beatrice was, if she was hurt, suffering, smothering, as he was! He couldn't breathe under the cover of the burnous; again he tried to fight it off, but his effort was weaker; his head burned and spun, his ears roared. Then mercifully he slept.

Hours passed. Night with its myriad brilliant stars and its soft blackness fell, bringing a sudden coolness which roused Jocelyn. The stifling folds of the cloak had been removed, the air blowing in his face was as refreshing as a drink of cold water.

The light of the stars shimmered on a vast expanse of rolling sand dunes; an occasional stunted shrub looked to him like some animal or misshapen man in the strange light. A sudden outcropping of rock slackened the speed of the horses. The rocks towered into cliffs, they entered a narrow pass, where even the starlight did not penetrate.

In utter blackness the Arab steeds daintily picked their way, as sure-footed as in the broad light of day. It was bitterly cold and the wind wailed ominously. Jocelyn thought with a dull, sick feeling, of Beatrice whom he had led into this danger; of his father who had tried

to teach him to be honourable and knightly (he had failed his father's trust!); of England, her green meadows, the little villages, the great, stately Abbey of Saint Cross and his gentle white-haired uncle, the Abbot; of his little brothers and his sister, with her golden curls and merry laughter. A big tear rolled down his nose.

The man who carried him spoke suddenly: "Wake, Infidel, we are almost there!"

Jocelyn, clutching the pommel of the saddle, sat erect. The silvery light of early dawn was growing. The narrow, steeply walled pass opened before them. Ahead of them, seeming to float in the shimmering morning mists, rose a building such as he had only imagined the fairy castles of his old nurse's tales to be. It had delicate, graceful minarets and towers of gleaming white, capped with gold and touched with the rosy light of coming day. He tried to twist around far enough to catch a glimpse of Beatrice, but the blowing cloak of his captor kept coming between him and the riders behind.

With a wild yell, the horsemen came to an abrupt halt outside a great bronze door sunk in the wall. They leaped to the ground; and while the leader carried on a conversation with one who had opened the door, Jocelyn ran to Beatrice. She was white and frightened, but smiled bravely at him.

"Beatrice," he cried, "you are not hurt? You are safe?"

“I do not know how safe we are. But oh, I am so glad I am not all alone! It was brave of you to come after me, Jocelyn, when I was so silly as to fall from the wall!”

“Brave! It is generous of you not to tell me it is my fault for letting you climb the wall! I shall never be so feather-brained again.”

Meanwhile the leader returned, saying: “The master orders the infidel babes brought to him. Thou carry the girl, I will take the boy.”

The bronze door opened, and clanged shut behind them. A huge Ethiopian led them through many rooms and passages; finally leaving them in a large rather bare room. Three sides of it were built of a cool, greenish stone, the fourth was an intricately carved screen. Through it they could see sunlight flickering on green leaves. The servant passed through another door of exquisitely wrought-silver bronze. Returning almost immediately, he motioned them to follow him. He led them across a smaller room hung with rich silken tapestries, and furnished with couches filled with luxurious cushions, at which Beatrice cast longing looks.

But the black man had lifted a curtain on the far side of the room, and they entered a room larger and even more beautiful than any other through which they had come. The vaulted ceiling was a deep soft blue spangled with silver stars, the walls were hung with silken tapes-



tries, the floors covered with rugs of rich and rare design and color. Pillars of twisted silver supported the ceiling; while in the center of the room, a slender jet of water rose and fell from a marble basin, always balancing, at its top, an opalescent bubble of crystal, the water falling back into the basin with a tinkle that sounded like elfin chimes. Bright-hued butterflies fluttered in from the gardens, where many birds sang.

From a deep, cushioned seat rose a man, garbed in a loose robe of dark blue wool over a tunic of white silk, and a turban of azure blue fastened with a single great sapphire. He was tall and dark, with a small, pointed black beard and brilliant black eyes that scanned the children interestedly; then he spoke, in a soft voice:

“And these are the prisoners, Abdul? Were you not afraid to bear such dangerous ones with you? I wonder that you did not slay them.”

“Master is pleased to jest,” answered the children’s captor, “but they are children of nobles, from the fortress castle near Acre. Why they were outside the wall, I know not; but look upon their garb. They are not of the poor. Doubtless they would bring great ransom.”

“Verily, thou art the son of an ass, Abdul! These little ones have tongues, and could tell of my treasure house and where it is hid!”

“Nay, Master, for they were wrapped head and all, close under our robes.”

“Put them down. Go. I will talk with them. I may learn something of value.”

Beatrice was set on her feet, and the two men, salaaming deeply, left the room. At her little gasp of pain as her weight came on the hurt foot, Jocelyn ran to her, and put his arm about her to give her support:

“Sir,” he burst forth, “I have heard that many Saracens are right knightly and courteous. This lady hath suffered an injury; I pray you it may be attended to!”

The man stroked his silky, black beard thoughtfully, then he clapped his hands. A second Ethiopian appeared at an inner door:

“Bear the little lady to the Adah. Tell the women it is my bidding she should be tenderly cared for.” The black stepped forward to obey. Jocelyn, only half understanding the language used, but gathering he and Beatrice were about to be separated, clapped his hand to the sheath where his knife should be, once more with the intention of offering what resistance he might. But the boy’s knife lay where it had fallen some hours ago under the castle wall—useless. His hand dropped, and he looked around desperately.

The man watched him, a little smile tugging at the corners of his finely cut lips. Jocelyn swung on his heel and faced him, still holding Beatrice’s hand.

“Dog!” said he, furiously, “call off thy servant; he is frightening her.”

“Dog?” the man questioned Jocelyn gently, though the black eyes snapped under frowning brows.

“Aye, and thou shalt be a whipped dog, if aught harms her! For when my father and the Count Raymond find we are missing, they will bring their men, and raze this place and kill you all!”

“And how will they do this? Where will they gain knowledge of where thou art or who bore thee hence?”

“They will find my dagger and my cap. Then they will ask in the market place.”

“And thinkest thou, those in the market place will say: ‘Lo! The servants of Prince Charan passed, and bore away the babes; go thus and thus, and thou wilt find his dwelling?’ ”

Jocelyn bit his lips to steady himself and answered, though his throat felt stiff and his heart pounded too hard: “Nevertheless, no hurt shall come to my Lady Beatrice, while there is aught I may do to defend her. Thou mayest kill me first!”

“Bravely spoken! Thy father hast builded well, little Sir Knight, for thou hast shown no fear for thyself, but for thy lady, and thine own honour. Indeed, I would only send her to the women that the hurt should be attended to.” But Beatrice clung to Jocelyn’s arm:

“Jocelyn, Jocelyn, I am afraid!” she cried.

Prince Charan motioned the Negro back, and himself lifted the little girl to the couch, and very gently with



his long, slender fingers, felt the swollen ankle. He nodded to the servant, who withdrew. Then he said, "I will myself carry thee to the women where thou shalt have rest, food and hot water for the poor little foot." He lifted her easily, and strode out and across the garden, Jocelyn close at his heels.

An elderly woman came to meet them, saying, "Effendi, how may thy servant please thee?"

He lowered Beatrice to a couch and spoke rapidly to the woman, gesticulating toward the children and once to the garden. Then to Jocelyn: "Come, she is in good hands." And leading the way back to the garden, he paused beneath a window, "Speak, she will answer thee, and thou wilt know her safe."

"Sir," answered the boy, "my father taught me that even an enemy who is an honorable man, is to be dealt with honorably. If I speak, it is not to reassure myself, but to comfort her." So he called, and was answered.

"And now," said the prince, "thou, too, must be tired and in need of rest. I will call Jithra; he will care for thy comfort." And Jocelyn suddenly realized how long it was since he had eaten; how much had happened; what a strain he had been under, trying to do the manly thing. So it was only a very tired, very hungry little boy that black Jithra, answering his master's summons, led away.

In the late afternoon Jocelyn woke and stretched, laz-

ily content; wondering what smelled so sweet. Where was he? He sat up from the heap of soft cushions, looking bewilderedly around. Then remembrance swept over him—all the happenings of the day before and the early morning. He felt strong and alert once more, and surely this Prince Charan who had been kind to them so far, would send them safely home.

The curtain lifted and Jithra came in. When he saw the boy was awake, his white teeth gleamed and his black face widened in a good-natured grin. He jabbered something unintelligible, and advanced toward the couch. Jocelyn saw he was carrying an armful of clothing, and in no time the boy was dressed, surveying himself delightedly and wriggling in pleased appreciation of the loose, cool garments—a sleeveless tunic of white silk, belted with a gold-embroidered girdle, and over it an open surcoat of a deep rose color. When his yellow curly hair was combed, Jithra said to him, speaking very slowly and carefully, so as to make no mistakes:

“Master waits in the garden.” Jithra beamed delightedly, when he saw that Jocelyn had understood him.

Under the shade of the trees, near a small pool sat Beatrice and Prince Charan watching a big tawny cat, who, with her plummy tail twitching, lay at the water’s edge daintily dipping in a paw, ever hopeful of catching one of the goldfish that flashed among the lily pads. Beatrice looked up and waved a hand:

“Jocelyn! I love it here, it is like living in fairyland; everything is so beautiful, and Prince Charan treats me like a great lady! Would it not be fun to live here always?”

Jocelyn scowled, “And who was it who chided me for forgetting why we are in this land? What would Father Bernard think of such talk! Prince Charan, though a most courteous man, is nevertheless, an Unbeliever!”

“Boy, boy,” laughed the prince, “Come, tell me what would this Father Bernard of thine do if he were here in thy place?”

“I think,” answered Jocelyn slowly, weighing his words thoughtfully, “he would try to make clear to thee, many of the wonders of the life and teachings of our Lord Jesus, that perchance thou mightest come to believe in the true God. For the good father is a holy and learned man, and would know how to set it before thee; whereas I am but a boy, and have, moreover, been given over much to mischief, and laziness in learning. I wish I knew more, for thou hast been kind and gentle to us, and I would I might repay it! And then, perchance, thou wouldst let us go home?”

“Tell me of thy home, boy. Thou art from that far, cold island called England?”

“It is not cold. But it is never hot, as it is here! It is a fair and green land, filled with simple, sweet flowers; forests, where the deer stop to look at you, noble and



unafraid. There are great castles, monasteries, cities and little villages.”

So they sat and talked in the beautiful garden until dusk fell, and the stars began to come out like great white lamps hung low in the velvety blackness of the sky. Jithra returned, and set a small table near them, serving them with strange and delicious food—asparagus which they had never before seen, warm goat’s milk, great bowls of fruits, sweetmeats and cakes; and Prince Charan gravely bid them break the bread of friendship and hospitality with him.

The next morning Prince Charan, busy with the affairs of his great estate, sent his lieutenant to show the two children through his palace and his stables. From the flat roof they saw the wild and colorful array of the Prince’s horsemen at maneuvers on the plain. It was as though this was a world by itself. The palace was set in a wide, green basin surrounded by rocky walls, and Jocelyn had no idea as to which side of the wall they had entered by. Nor could he by the most adroit questioning get any information from their guide.

At last he wearied of trying, resolving to leave it till he saw Prince Charan once more. The boy gave himself up to whole-hearted enjoyment of the beauties of the palace, and the wonderful Arabian horses with their slim legs, powerfully muscled bodies and necks, and the soft and friendly eyes.

When twilight once more drew near, Jocelyn and Beatrice again found Prince Charan awaiting them in the garden by the pool. He asked if they had enjoyed their day, and seemed to find pleasure in their delight. But always when Jocelyn asked if he would let them go home, Prince Charan deftly evaded the subject. He made Jocelyn describe the castle in England; the river running below it, with the great Abbey on the other side, where the monks' voices chanted sweetly at matins, vespers, and Christmas festivals. Jocelyn told too of the time the king came to the castle during one of his tours of the land; how he had beckoned to the little five-year-old Jocelyn, and sat him on his knee and fed him sweetmeats; while the Hall was full of esquires, knights and courtiers, and the wards filled with men-at-arms and archers.

“Is not the castle at Acre far larger? Dost thou not see kings, great knights, and vast armies there also?” And Jocelyn, remembering how sickness and dissensions had weakened the Crusaders' armies, sent up a little prayer for forgiveness and lied, bravely and magnificently!

And ever Prince Charan's questioning brought them back to the simple and beautiful story of that Holy life that had inspired the ideal of the Crusades, and he listened gravely and interestedly to Jocelyn's words. At first, the boy was shy and abrupt, but gaining confidence,

he forgot himself in the greatness of what he had to give to the man, who though his captor, Jocelyn felt was also his friend.

Lamps glowing like jewels in the dusk shone from the rooms about the court, out of which drifted soft music from unseen musicians. Jithra again served them supper. Then Prince Charan clapped his hands and silent, white-robed servants removed the dishes, while Jithra in answer to an order, brought a carved golden casket and set it, together with a square of black velvet on the table. Prince Charan loosened a small key from his girdle, opened the casket, and dipping in his slim brown fingers brought forth a handful of gems, which he laid on the black velvet.

There before the three were emeralds and sapphires, shooting rays of cold fire; great rubies like drops of blood; diamonds, quivering in a rainbow haze of light. And while the two children sat spellbound, he told them strange tales of far-off lands; of great kings and princes bearing princely gifts such as these; of thieves and robbers, and the heathen gods whom they robbed; of queer yellow people with slanting eyes, who had vast knowledge and great wealth. Then he lifted one stone, deep blue as the evening sky. In it, as in the sky, was a shining star.

“See,” he said, holding it out to Beatrice, “your Star of Bethlehem, of which,” he added musingly, “though





*He bent the slim blade in an arc*





you have taught me much, I must learn more! There is a strange power in it, that it makes brave men travel so far, and a young boy dare a strong man. Take it, little lady, and always when you wear it, you shall remember this day in the treasure house of Prince Charan. And for thee, my knightly little enemy—” he turned again to Jithra, who was squatted behind his chair, as motionless as a bronze image, and took from the servant a slender sword, its hilt blazing with jewels; red and blue and green, like little dancing flames. He held the slim blade in between his hands, and bent it in an arc. When he released the point, it sprang back straight and true.

“Steel of Damascus,” he said. “There is none to equal it, in strength or sharpness; feel it in thy hand.” Light and vibrant as though alive, it fitted into Jocelyn’s hand. The boy was breathless with delight.

“For me, Prince Charan? It is far too princely a gift, and I have none for thee!”

“Nay, for I think thou hast brought me the most priceless gift in the world, as some day thou may come to understand. And now, thy sword shall bind us, one to another, in the Oath of Brother-in-Blood.” He took the sword back from Jocelyn, drew its point across the skin of his arm, and a thin red line followed it. Then gravely, he did the same to the boy: “On the wondrous names of Allah and Jehovah, one and the same forever! Take



thou the Sword, little brother. Wear it as bravely as thou hast borne thyself toward me. It is called the *Luck of the House*, and while thou and thy sons possess it, never shall thy tree fail for sons! Here," he touched Arabic characters on the blade, "is inscribed Always Faithful. Keep thou the faith! And now it is time for rest. May thy sleep be sweet, and thy dreams come through the Gate of Ivory, whence come all beautiful dreams! Jithra, bring our guests each a cup of milk."

\* \* \* \* \*

The warder of the postern gate peered through the grill. A strange sound that was, like muffled hoofbeats. But it could not be. For since those two children had disappeared, the guard had been doubled and surely would have seen a horseman approach. As the sentry on the left wall drew near, the warder called out: "Heard ye aught from the outside?"

"Nah, I 'ear naught, other than me own feet, though I listen till me ears like to burst! 'Tis main fearsome, walking this black night, never knowing but what them varmints will drop from the wall and split a man's gullet. The saints protect us!" and he turned and tramped away into the darkness.

An hour later, as the black night faded into the ghostly grey of coming dawn, the warder again peered out. "Sounds, sounds!" he grumbled. Then he reached

for the bell rope to summon the watch, for there was something, someone, in the shadow of the wall. But before the brazen tongue could send forth its warning cry, a boy's clear voice shouted:

“Ho, warder of the postern, open to me! Make haste!”

Clang! Clang! rang out the bell, and: “Who's without?” called the warder, fearing a trap, though he knew that voice, and his hands were at the bars and bolts of the gate even as he spoke.

“’Tis my Lady Beatrice; and I, Jocelyn Donham, good Robert. Let us in speedily, there be none here but us two!”

Running feet, excited voices, assured him of support in case this was a trap, and the warder shot the last heavy bolt. Reaching out strong, ready hands he pulled the boy and girl safely inside.

By this time, not only had the watch arrived, but men from the inner wards of the castle came racing in answer to the clamor of the bell, the wall sentries calling out to know what had happened. In the center of all the confusion, stood Jocelyn and Beatrice.

Then came Count Raymond, wrapped in his long white cloak bearing on its shoulder the scarlet cross of the Crusaders, and caught his daughter into his arms, saying to Jocelyn;

“Thou young troublemaker! But yesterday thy father

returned in company with many other knights, for King Richard is withdrawing his army from the Holy Land. The Baron is wellnigh mad with anxiety at thy absence! Away with ye. Later we will have explanations.”

So, later, standing by his father in the Great Hall, Jocelyn finished his story; “And, my lord, we each drank a cup of milk and went to sleep. When I woke I was sitting in the embrasure of the postern with Lady Beatrice still asleep, by my side. How we came or where we were, I cannot tell thee. That is all.”

“Where is this wonderful Sword of which thou speakest, my son?” asked Baron John. Jocelyn laid it in his father’s hands, dropping on one knee beside him.

“See, Father, it says here—Always Faithful. I shall take that for my motto, and try to be always faithful, sir. And so shall my sons, and son’s sons after me in England, when we come there once more.”

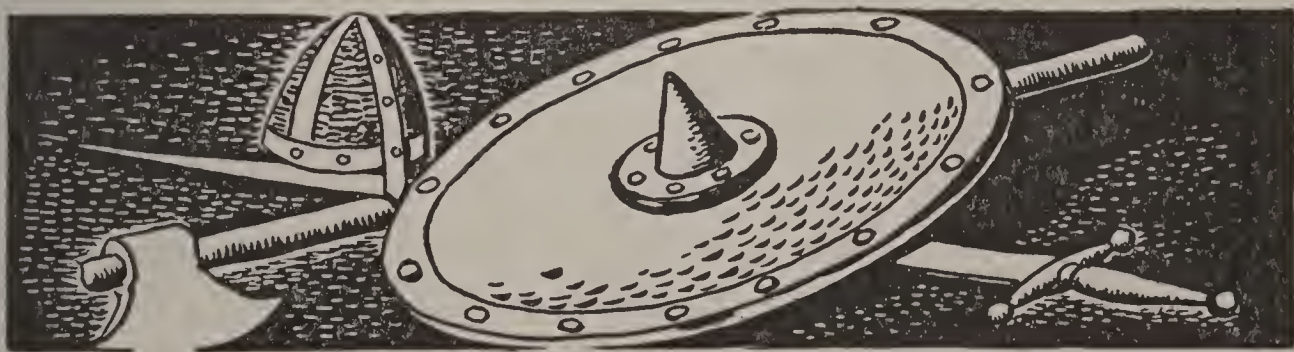
As Count Raymond said, King Richard made a truce with the Saracens, and the Crusaders retired to the coast, where they embarked for their homelands. Heavy storms buffeted the fleet, the ships were separated from each other, some were lost, some were wrecked on the shores. But the ship on which Jocelyn and his father sailed at last reached that fair and green land of which the homesick lad had told Prince Charan. The little sister with the golden curls welcomed them back to Donham Keep.



Never again did Jocelyn see the far-off Holy Land and the fairy-like minarets and pinnacles, the shining walls and beautiful gardens of Prince Charan's treasure house. It might all have remained in his memory only as a dream, growing dimmer and dimmer with the passing years, but for the Prince's gift of the Sword with the keen shining blade, and the hilt of gleaming jewels. A minstrel at Donham Keep made a ballad about it, and over and over the story was sung and told.

Jocelyn's little sons grew up in the castle. They were all taught Jocelyn's code of faith and knightly courtesy to king and peasant, friend and enemy alike. At last when the eldest boy was old enough, Jocelyn put the Sword into his hands with Prince Charan's words: "Wear it bravely; 'tis called the *Luck of the House*. While thou and thy sons possess it, never shall thy tree fail for sons; it is inscribed Always Faithful. Keep thou the Faith!"

So from father to son it continued to be handed down. Some were strong, some were weak, some may have been bad, but all tried in their own way and according to their own times to keep the Faith.







## CHAPTER III

1381

### *THE ROAD TO LONDON*

When the Peasantry Appealed to the Last Plantagenet King for Aid Against Oppression.

*In which, having been present when the great Magna Carta was signed by King John; carried to the first council of barons which was called Parliament during the reign of King Henry III; accompanying another Donham on another Crusade to the Holy Land under King Edward I; carried at the Battle of Crécy in France under the Black Prince, the LUCK was lost and found again. And self-willed, spoiled young Guy of Donham learned knightly courtesy to peasant as well as to prince.*





I N a small, but richly furnished upper room in Hugh's Tower, Guy, eldest son of Lord Donham, of Donham Keep, was busily polishing the slim and shining blade of the jeweled Sword called the *Luck*. The Sword was one of Donham's chief treasures since the long ago day when it had been given, by a mysterious and powerful eastern lord, to a young Crusading son of the house. Perhaps because of its origin, perhaps because the family always had at least three sons, as tradition said the emir had predicted—and in those days of battle and strife it was necessary to have many sons if a family was to survive—certainly the family had prospered, and in proportion the credit was bestowed on the strange and secret powers of the *Luck of the House*.

So, it was not that the revered blade needed the polishing, but it was an excellent reason for Guy to linger in his father's private apartment. He was deeply interested in an important missive that had been brought the day before by a king's messenger. Lord Donham held this in his hand as he talked to his brother, the prior of the great Benedictine Abbey of Holy Cross, that lay only a short distance from the castle.

Lord Donham tapped absent-mindedly on the dark oak table at his side with the parchment, then placed it neatly beside a pile of Manor rolls that lay there awaiting his inspection. Slowly he shook his head, his brows drawn down in a scowl, and said:

"I like not this report coming from Kent. This priest, John Ball, is inflaming the peasantry! Filling them with false ideas. They have been growing overbold in their constant demand for higher wages, lower rent. It has been growing worse and worse, since the terrible days of the Black Death, in our father's time," and Lord Donham made the Sign of the Cross. He spoke of that dread scourge that had swept through England from Europe, killing thousands in its passing, so that towns and villages were deserted; farms were tenantless; crops had grown and withered where they stood for lack of harvesters; cattle and sheep fed where they willed, and wandered homeless and untended, for there were not enough herdsmen left alive to care for them. There had



been such a want of laborers that the nobles and overlords had been forced to pay whatever was asked, or see their fruits and crops lost.

“Thrice hath Simon, Archbishop of Canterbury, punished him with imprisonment,” answered the gentle-voiced, black-robed priest.

“I would that Canterbury had not been so soft-hearted as to release him because, forsooth, he was set to die an he were kept in prison! It was not wise!”

“Wisdom goeth hand in hand with justice and mercy, brother Geoffrey.”

“I like not the idea of servage,” Lord Donham spoke consideringly. “Yet, given enough leisure wherein to till their own fields, and build for themselves homes, ’twould seem that the old plan of paying rents in labor is truly best. Parliament hath passed law whereby the scale of their wage shall not be higher than before the Plague. Bah! This hath but made for discontent, and then arises this man Ball, aggravating them more and more, and we be called for further discussion of the problem that no one knows how to meet!”

Guy laid down the Sword and crossing the room, sat on the arm of his father’s chair.

“The Plague was so long ago, Father, and how shall they get the moneys wherewith to pay the rents, and they are not paid a fair wage for their service?” He reached over and picked up the parchment.

“That is so,” nodded the Prior. “There is no use in making laws when the facts are against ye. And, for all that ye bluster and storm at them, thy people are content and happy in their little homes. Ye are not all as black as painted!” he laughed gently.

“No more than that all prelates, abbots and monks grow fat and lazy from much luxurious living!” rejoined Lord Donham, with an affectionate glance at the priest’s slight, spare figure, and lean, asthetic face softened and lighted by the serene, kindly blue eyes.

They sat silent for a moment remembering boyhood days together before one became a priest and the other Lord of the Manor. Then the churchman asked, “When dost thou go up to London to obey the Regent’s summons to Parliament?”

“Eh, it is for—Pest! Where is that parchment?” As he fumbled among the rolls in search of it, Guy slipped to his feet, and unrolling the parchment read aloud from it:

‘The Lord Regent for His Gracious Majesty, King  
Richard  
To his trusted friend, Baron Geoffrey of Donham—  
Greeting—’

“He does love thee dearly, sir,” and Guy looked up at his father—

‘Since we wish to have a conference and meeting with the Earls, Barons, Prelates and principal men of the Kingdom to provide remedies for the troubles—’

“That will be to think of more taxes, I’ll warrant—”

‘We command, by the fidelity and love by which ye are bound to your King, that on the Lord’s Day next, ye be present—’

Lord Donham reached out a long arm to take the royal parchment from him, but Guy dodged away and continued reading:

‘—in person—’

“Why does he not call thy sons? They be nearer the King’s age. And faith, maybe we might be able to think of a solution quicker than the greybeards—”

‘—at Westminster, for considering, ordaining and doing with us what may be necessary.

‘Witness, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, Lord Regent for the King’s Majesty, at Windsor, the third day of September—’

“May I not go up to London with thee, Father? Never have I seen London!”

“Thou young rascal! London’s better without thee. Give me the missive. Hast no respect for the Royal seal? Get thee away; take out thy mischief on thy brothers and sister, or amongst the esquires. And, return thou the *Luck* to my private armory. Begone!” And when the leather curtains that covered the door had dropped behind Guy, Lord Donham looked at his brother and said half in apology, half in pride: “He’s as wild as a young hawk, and as full of mischief as an egg is of meat.”



“Thou art too easy with him, brother Geoffrey. Best let us have him, and tame him.”

“Nay, thou wouldst never make a monk of him, Thomas; Simon, perhaps, but not Guy. He’s young yet. He has but twelve years over his head. But there’s good there. He will steady down.”

Guy meanwhile had sped down the stair, and into the Great Hall of the castle, where he found his sister Phillipa quietly and peacefully playing chess with Simon, one of their younger brothers. Raymond, the other, watched them interestedly.

“Phillipa,” he cried, “’tis the Knight’s move on the Queen! Am I not a doughty knight? For I am come to take thee prisoner!” He stood poised on the last step of the stair, the *Luck* still grasped in his hand. Phillipa looked up at him. She was always a little alarmed at Guy when he was in one of his wild moods, and never knew quite how to meet him.

“Nay now, Guy, let me be!” she cried, and fled across to a big carved chair, behind which she hid.

And Guy, with no intention other than to scare her, called to the two younger boys; “Thou, Simon and Raymond, quick. Get behind and catch her!” With his eyes dancing with mischief, he advanced, step by step, in slow, measured, and seemingly portentous tread toward his pretty sister, now half laughing, now half alarmed.

“Ah Guy, no! ’Tis not fair that thou shouldst tease me so! And those two little wretches wilt do thy bidding, just because I am a girl!”

“I am a robber baron,” announced Guy in an awesome whisper. “Deep in my darkest dungeon shall I keep thee, maiden, and thou tellest me not where thou hast hidden thy treasures!”

“But Guy, I have no treasure to hide! Simon,” she protested to her younger brother. “I’ll not sing Raymond and thee any more songs, nor play chess—no, nor mend thy tennis bat as I promised, if thou touchest me!”

“Master Guy.” Walter, Lord Donham’s steward stood in the wide, arched doorway, an anxious look on his face. “Is not my lord here?”

Guy swung about to face him: “What is it, Walter?” he asked.

“I thought my lord should know, there be a horde of wandering peasants, and they be plundering the farms, and raising bad feeling amongst the farmers, and such like.”

“By Saint George,” exclaimed Guy, “what’s England come to, that a few peasants can scare a grown man, even as I have scared my lady Phillipa here just by walking slowly toward her? Trouble not my father with such trifles. Indeed, I feign would see them for myself!” And he dashed for the door.

Phillipa ran after him and caught his arm:

“Guy, they may do thee some harm. Do not go, I pray thee!”

“Why, Phillipa, they be but peasants! What harm can they do me?” He grinned impishly, “Wouldst have me don helmet and buckler likewise, to go forth and ride a tilt with Sir Peasant? Nay see. For thy comforting I will carry the *Luck*; have no fear for me!” And laughing gaily, he clicked the Sword into its scabbard and ran down the steps out into the courtyard, where it chanced that a groom had been exercising Guy’s own horse.

“Stand aside,” he ordered, and catching the horse’s mane in his left hand, he leaped to the saddle. “I’ll do it fully armed one of these days!” he cried to the groom, and kicking his heels against the horse’s flanks, rode across the bailey to the gatehouse, where Parton, the captain of the guard, stepped out to meet him.

“Art just riding, Lord Guy?” he asked. “There be many strangers about. Wilt not have one of the men-at-arms go with thee, or wait ’til I myself, can bring out my horse? I couldna’ face my lord, should aught befall thee!”

“But naught can happen, good Parton. What’s come to thee? You all try to make a babe of thy lord’s son! Come, open the gate!”

Shaking his head doubtfully, Parton strode to the gatehouse: “Open the gate,” he called, and the great oaken



gates were swung wide by two of the men-at-arms who saluted as Guy passed through.

“He rides well, our lordling,” said one.

“Aye, and didst see him on the tilting field yester e’en?” questioned the other. “He nigh unseated the master-at-arms himself! A right sturdy lad!” he said with pride.

Guy cantered gaily on. At a curve in the path he turned in the saddle to look back. From a window in the turret, Phillipa waved to him. Snatching off his velvet cap, he swung it high over his head, and with it still in his hand and the sunlight shining on his blond head, he rode around the bend and out of sight.

A smithy stood at the crossroad that led to the village, and Guy reined in his horse at the door.

“Ho, master smith,” he called. The blacksmith, bending over the forge looked up, and then limped to the door, still carrying in his pincers the glowing horseshoe, on which he had been working.

“God’s day to ’ee, young master,” he greeted Guy, through his great, bushy, black beard. “How may I serve my lord’s son?”

“Only if thou canst tell me where went this ‘Peasant Army.’ Didst see them?”

“Oh, aye, master, that I have. They would have me come join with them, to march to London to see the king. And by the saints! They know not why they

would go! So, I told them I'd seen many a king in the old days, ere I got a pike through this leg o' mine at Poitiers, and that I be well enough content with my lot here. They be gone on!" He gestured down the road with the pincers, while his broad shoulders shook with his rumbling laugh. He had been none too gentle in his answer, and the peasant leader had stumbled back among his fellows in fear of the red-hot iron, brandished in his face by the big smith.

Guy crossed a hollow and rode up the opposite rise. There was a farm below the rise, and the space about it was filled with people, and he heard the murmur of many voices. Guy sat for a moment, irresolute. What had he meant to do when he came up to the peasants? He had had no idea that there would be so many of them. They seemed to be arguing with the farmer, who was one of their villeins—a Donham man, therefore to be given protection by his lord. "Well," thought Guy, "if they go on peaceably, it will be well enough, but—"

At first the farmer seemed disposed to refuse what the others appeared to be asking, for Guy could see that he repeatedly shook his head, though less and less determinedly. Then he slowly descended from the cart in which he had been sitting, called something to the woman who stood in the door, picked up a pitchfork that lay in the cart, and moved off with the crowd. The

woman started after him. A child caught at her skirt. She hesitated, lifted the child in her arms and as it put its small hand to her face, she turned forlornly back to the small cottage.

The little drama enacted before his eyes called forth an immediate response from Guy. His horse, obedient to its master's touch, galloped down to the farmyard. Guy jumped from his saddle, and went to the door where he paused uncertainly. For there, huddled on a bench with the baby still clutched tightly in her arms, the woman sat sobbing bitterly.

The child peered in wide-eyed interest over its mother's shoulder at the strange boy, with his bright, handsome clothing.

"See! P'itty!" it said, reaching out a pudgy finger, and pushing the woman's cheek. She lifted her head, and looked around, her round, rosy face tear-stained and miserable. Guy felt he must say something, so he crossed the room to her.

"Good woman," he said, "did they do aught to hurt thee?"

"No, master," she sniffed, "'twere no 'urt. But, oh zur, they ha' took my good man awa' wi' un!" And once more her face was buried against the child.

"But why? Why did he go, does he not make a profit of his land? Is he not comfortable here? Do you not have enough to eat?"



“Indeed, zur, we do very well. Peter, he do make mostly four pence a day; we have our own pig and cow, our own sheep; and good children. Oh, oh—”

“Well, what is’t then?” asked Guy, impatiently.

“ ’Twas only a week come Wednesday last, that m’lord came by on his great grey horse, an’ he did stop to ask for a cup o’ water; an’ whilst I got it for him, he did ask Peter about crops, an’ cattle—all as though he were but a farmer hisself. An’ there were all his servants about him, an’ he said we was doin’ well, an’ Peter, he was so proud-like!”

“Yes, yes, go on!”

“Then two days ago came a King’s Bailiff, an’ he says we must pay taxes for this, an’ taxes for that; we e’en must pay a tax on our oldest boy, an’ he no bigger nor yourself, beggin’ your pardon, zur! So, then when these people, they come, they tell Peter, first how they were a-goin’ to Lunnon, there to tell the King, an’ show him how it must be otherwise. An’ Peter wouldna’ listen, but by-an’ by he did listen! Then he went off with them, an’ wouldna’ harken when I called to him to come back—that it would be better to see our lord, whose lands we live on. An’ he has left me all alone with the little ones, and the farm to mind; an’ he’ll be killed, or thrown into prison! Though why I do be tellin’ all this to a stranger, an’ him, but a bit of a lad, I know not!”



“Aye, many a one that do be gettin’ away from just such as ye who think we be but as sheep and cattle! ‘I want Peter Hobson!’ saith he. Well, perchance, Peter be-ent wantin’ o’ ye!” chimed in another.

“Where is your leader?” asked Guy, flushing hotly, but striving to ignore their impudence.

“A-leadin’, your most noble lordship!” called a third, making him a mocking bow, while the others roared with laughter at the crude attempt at humor.

Another caught at Guy’s bridle. “Look’ee at the gold chain about his neck,” he shouted.

“Take your hand from my bridle, you insolent varlet,” raged Guy, “or I’ll take my sword to you!” and he laid his hand on the hilt of the *Luck*.

As though the action brought a memory of old wrongs, the humor of the crowd changed. Instead of laughter, there were angry growls and curses, and they closed menacingly about him, threatening him with their weapons. Then the nearest man snatched at the scabbard of the Sword, and before Guy could draw, had wrenched it away from him, and hurled it over the hedge. In stunned silence the boy watched the bright blade flash in the sun, for the *Luck of the House* was gone!

What awful thing might that mean for him? Even the more educated people in those days were very superstitious, and the fear that swept over Guy was so



strong, that when someone in the rear of the crowd threw a stone, hitting his horse and causing it to rear, he was taken quite unawares and found himself on his back in the road, his Sword gone, and his horse tearing riderless across the fields.

A rough hand pulled him to his feet. With distaste, Guy flicked at the dust on his clothing.

“He’ll soon be used to the dust, an’ ye gi’ him a bit o’ trampin’ on the road along wi’ us, Andrew Tanner!” jeered a young man.

“Aye, let un zee what ’tis loike tu be homeless, an’ hungry!” came another voice.

“Bring him along. On with the march. To London! London and the King!” clamored the rest. Hedged about and unable to resist, Guy found himself swept on down the road by the impetus of the mass of people.

A flood of bewildering emotions swept over Guy as they moved onward. First, sheer fury made him rage and struggle to fight through the crowd. But their solid mass, and indifference to his blows, gave him a frightening feeling of powerlessness, and their laughter and jibes brought a hot rush of angry shame at his predicament. So he trudged sullenly on until curiosity overcame him and he began to take a stealthy glance at first one, then another of those near him. As he looked he saw there, not only the dull, unimaginative face of the simple yokel, but the visionary faces of dreamers

and artists, the sturdy independence of the farmer, miller, carpenter, tiler, tailor—workmen of every sort—all with their faces and hopes set towards London and the King!

They, all grown men, were going to London to see the King, a boy not so very much older than he. Guy had come to watch them go, and whether he would or not, he appeared to be going with them! And then, suddenly, his sense of humor returned—he had wanted to go to London, but it was not thus he had meant to journey. He started to laugh.

Andrew the tanner, who had helped him to his feet, looked down at him in surprise. “What do ye laugh at?” he asked, in his slow, heavy drawl.

“You are all so foolish, as foolish as I myself. I race out of my safe home, to look at you, and you affright my horse, and steal me away. You all plod to London to see the King. How, think you, will he treat with you? Or wilt steal him, as thou hast stolen me? Come, help me to find this Peter Hobson and let me go, or by my honor, my legs will not carry me home!”

“Thy legs will carry ye to Lunnon, e’en as ours will us,” growled Andrew, and turned back to his companion on his other side.

Mile after mile, they tramped on along the winding roads and lanes, through villages and skirting towns, gathering fresh recruits to the ranks as they went. Guy

began to think all the peasants in England must be here, and that there could not be any but peasants; They stopped by a little stream to rest; some of the men produced small packets of food, some had apples gathered from roadside orchards as they marched.

Guy was too utterly weary to feel hungry, but the clear, rippling little stream held out a pleasant invitation to him to cool his dry, parched throat and wash away the dust from which he had been suffering. He threw himself down on the bank, plunged hands and face in the cold water, until at last, satisfied, he rolled over on his back in the deep grass, still warm and perfumed from the day's sun, and dropped asleep.

A grinding pain in his left hand roused him and brought him to his feet. A boy a few years Guy's senior, looked back over his shoulder as he knelt by the brook, and laughed. "Stepped on yer daddle, didn't Oi?" he said, then he stooped to drink.

Guy, white with anger and pain, took a quick step toward him; "Insolent varlet!" he said, and with a well directed kick, sent the kneeling lad sprawling into the water. The boy scrambled to his feet, spluttering, and shook himself like a great shaggy dog. Guy stood on the bank, his eyes still blazing, but his mouth laughing; the other climbed up, and faced him. He was a head taller than Guy, and heavier.

"Oi'll give 'ee the worst drubbing 'ee ever had for



this, 'ee little squirt, and make 'ee laugh 'tother side of thy mouth, Oi will!" he shouted.

"You great hulking swine," answered Guy, easily, "if you so much as dare lay a finger on me, I'll see you hanged for it! You nigh broke my hand with your clumsy foot."

"Uh-h, hung, will 'ee? Whoi, Oi could take 'ee up in my two fists, and bust 'ee in half!"

"Really?" drawled Guy. "Well, perhaps, for I am friendless here now; but get a couple of staves from your comrades yonder, and I'll e'en show you who's master!" he finished, confidently.

The other surveyed him an instant, under lowering brows, then: "All right," he grunted, "if 'ee're lookin' to get beated, 'ee're like to get what 'ee're lookin' for!" And the boy ran off.

Quarterstaves was a popular though rough game played by the peasants and yeomanry; and Guy, after watching many a bout among the men in the courtyard of the castle, had eagerly demanded instructions. Thereafter, from constant play with the men-at-arms, he had become so proficient that even they were forced to exert themselves to the utmost to ward off the boy's attacks. So he waited quite confidently for the return of the peasant lad.

The boy Alwyn was back quickly with the staves, also a large following of the peasants eager for a little





*Each held a short, thick oaken staff*





amusement presumably at the expense of the young nobleman. Pushing and jostling each other good-naturedly, shouting and cheering for young Alwyn, they formed a large ring in the center of which stood the two boys.

Guy glanced over the circle, then struck with an idea, he asked: "Is any one of ye Peter Hobson?"

"Aye, I be Peter Hobson," answered a man in the front row.

"Well, Peter, I think thee a great fool to have left thy good home! However, I am thy lord's son. For thy good wife's sake I came after thee; so 'tis because of thee, I am here, and I count on thee to see I get fair play. All ready!" he said, as he swung back to face his opponent.

He had stripped off his velvet doublet, and looked very slim and small in his white shirt and long hose, contrasted with the other lad's greater bulk, and heavy fustian clothing. Each held a short, thick oaken staff, with a hand grasping either end lightly. Each watched the other intently. Then Alwyn released the grip of his left hand, and brought his staff whirling up and slashing down toward Guy's head. But both Guy's hands came up, the bar between them caught and turned the blow. Guy followed it up with a quick, stinging rap on Alwyn's leg. The free ends swung back to the waiting hands, and both were ready for a second attack.

Again and again one or the other attacked, now with the right hand, now with the left, while the little glen rang with the echoing crack and crash of the sturdy oaken staves. Alwyn, bigger and stronger, charged into the battle like a young bull; but Guy, alert, agile and smiling, was always ready for him. At first the crowd had cheers and applause for Alwyn only. Then came an occasional grunt of approval as Guy deftly caught and turned some mighty blow delivered by Alwyn's stout wrist, always following with a quick parry.

Then Alwyn made a pass at Guy's ankles, which if it had reached its mark would have speedily ended the battle. Guy skipped lithely over it, at the same time catching Alwyn with a smart blow on the uncovered side of his head. Alwyn blinked, staggered, and toppled over on the ground, while from the crowd came some cheers for the victor and some disappointed growls.

Paying no heed to them, Guy dropped his staff, trotted over to the brook. Cupping his hands, he scooped up water and brought it back to splash in the face of his late opponent, running his cool, wet hands over the rising bump on the other's head.

Alwyn sat up, "Eh, but that were a right smart rap! But Oi be right as a trivet now, thank'ee zur! An' Oi'll say for 'ee, 'ee do be a good quarterstaff man, for all 'ee be a lord's son! Would be willin' to give Oi thy hand, zur?"

“Indeed, that I will and right heartily!” answered Guy, adding ruefully, as Alwyn seized his extended hand in the grip of his big rough one, “only it is well for me, that it is after and not before our bout. In truth, I know not which is the worse—thy foot on my left hand or thy hand on my right!”

The others pressed in on them, clapping both boys on the shoulders, offering to share their food with Guy. For in their eyes he had now proved himself by his ability not alone to play their game and to give and take hard knocks, but by his cheerful endurance of the long, hard march. Then bit by bit they drifted off to rest or find other forms of amusing themselves. At last there were left only Peter Hobson, Andrew the tanner, a third man, whom Guy rightly guessed to be the leader of the band, and Alwyn, who hung about watching Guy with a doglike admiration.

“Oi would take ’ee home again, young master,” volunteered Peter. “But, ’tis near nightfall; nigh as far back as on to Lunnon; and Oi ha’ gi’ my word to join wi’ these men in petition to our King for relief from his heavy taxes, and they willna’ leave us go.”

“Na’, we willna’!” assented Andrew, grimly.

“But, good fellow, my people will grieve when I come not home, they will send out search for me, and it will go hard with you. And how will it serve thee if they find you not, to carry me with you to London?”



“See you, young sir,” said the third, a grave, clerkly-looking fellow, “we be called ‘bondmen’; without we do readily service unto such as ye, we be beaten. What have we done that we be so kept in servage? We are men, formed e’en as are our masters; why should we then, be made as beasts?”

“Thou goest clothed in velvet and furred camlet, we in poor cloth. Thou hast wines and good bread, we have bread of chaff and drink water. Thou dwellest in ease in thy strong castle, we work in rain and wind in the fields. Nay, thou shalt come with us to London: walk with us, talk with us, share with us our scant fare, and see how all manner of people now in any bondage will follow us with intent to be made free. And perchance, if it come about that we do not prevail upon the King to provide us with some remedy, when thou art grown to man’s estate thou wilt remember all these things which thou wilt see and hear, and so act that our children may profit from it.”

That night Guy slept under the open sky for the first time in his life. Alwyn lay close by him, nor did Guy know, though he slept more soundly for it, that Alwyn reached over and wrapped his own rough but warm coat about him, then crept close to Andrew for warmth for his own body.

It was still dark when the sleepers awoke, and the march was resumed. Guy ached all over. His legs were

so stiff that he stumbled again and again as they crossed the field, rimed with frost and gleaming like silver in the greyness of coming dawn. Alwyn, stamping along, beating his arms across his body, cried:

“Look ’ee, zur, do likewise. ’Twill warm ’ee!”

Guy shivering so that his teeth chattered, answered, “I d-do hope s-something will-l, though I doubt it! I think a bite to eat would help.” He glanced at the black-browed Andrew, who never let him out of his sight. Then he drew closer to the country boy.

“Listen, Alwyn,” he whispered, “we would get to London far faster on fuller stomachs, and I would fain be in London as soon as may be, that I may seek out my father’s house there. Now, Andrew Tanner and thy leader will not let me away; though, on my honor, I would rather go on to London from here, than try to find my way back! So, I will break off a piece of this gold chain, which I hid in my shirt yesterday, and thou shalt take it, and at the first village or farm, go and find us food, as much as thou can get!”

But Alwyn shook his head in evident alarm, “If Oi should take that bit o’ gold, zur, they’d hang Oi for a thief, that a’ would! For why should a peasant lad have a gold chain? Na, zur, do na ask Oi to do it!”

“Why no, Alwyn, my hunger does not demand thy life as the price of its satisfaction. But how hast thou come thus far with no meat?”

“We’ve cotched rabbits, eated apples, and they be good folk on the way, who ha’ give us milk or cider to drink. Or mayhap, we steal it! And in the forests, one can sometime draw a bow and bring down a stag!”

Alwyn whispered the last, for it was against the King’s law to kill the deer. Nevertheless, so it turned out. Their hunger appeased, the band marched sturdily onward, through lanes and byways, passing yet another night in the forests, until at last they had reached the road that led to London. There were wide pastures here, and pleasant meadowlands, golden now under the frosty air of fall; little rivers, that turned the wheels of mills; straggling villages; a glimpse of a manor house, set in wide park lands; or the deep notes of the bell from some abbey or priory ringing out across broad acres. Now too, there were more people to be met on the road: a knight on horseback followed by several retainers; a procession of churchmen bound on a pilgrimage; more peasants on the quest to see the King and lay their wrongs before him.

The size of the band rapidly increased, and Guy wondered what would happen when they finally arrived before the gates of the great city. Andrew threaded his way among them and talked to this one or that, always taking Guy with him.

Though at first Guy raged against him for laying his hands on him, he soon took a deep interest in their



talk. Here was a farm laborer, who had to work so hard on his lord's land that he had no opportunity to raise even the barest living for himself, his wife and children; an artisan, whose taxes were so heavy there was no money left for him to live on; a laborer, who had been beaten for failing to hew and carry the required amount of wood for his master.

Remembering the talk between his father and his uncle only two mornings back—and it seemed weeks ago, Guy vowed to himself that when he was a man grown and lord of his father's barony, he too would strive to make his people content, and deal justly with them. Thoughtfully he turned to Alwyn, who always kept close at his heels.

“Alwyn, why didst thou join these people? Why didst thou leave thy home?”

Alwyn kicked a stone from under foot, and answered with his head down, “Oi ha' no home, zur.”

“No home?” wondered Guy. “Where are thy people?”

“Oi ha' no people, neyther. They came to our farm—the bailiffs—and demanded tax money from my feyther. He didna ha' enough, and one o' the men he pushed into the cot; and he—he so abused my mother—she were main buxom, and comely—that my feyther, he struck the man. They hanged my feyther for that, and my mother, she went crazed.” He ended, dully.

“Poor, poor lad,” said Guy, softly. “But was there no abbey, where the good fathers would care for thee, and give thee a home and work?”

“They be fat and lazy priests there; Oi was a-weary o’ work. Oi hated all the folk in the village—these men came a-talkin’ o’ Lunnon and the King, and how he would help us—Oi would like to see a king, and maybe be a soldier—” he broke off, shuffling his feet in the road and looking embarrassed. It was such a wonderful dream!

“When I find my father, and we return to Donham, we will take thee with us,” promised Guy. “Thou canst become one of our men-at-arms, and perchance they will e’en teach thee to play at quarterstaves!” He laughed gaily, Alwyn with him, easing the tragic memories of his sad story.

The red sun was setting through the folds of a chill fog smelling sharply of the sea. Dimly in the distance, seeming to float in the fog, appeared towers bathed in the red glow of the sunset. They were fading so fast that Guy almost felt he had dreamed them.

“That must be London at last!” he said to Alwyn. “Dost think we may get that far before the gates be closed?”

“The fog, it do be deceitful-like, zur, and Oi canna’ tell how far it may be,” Alwyn replied. But all through the crowd there ran a feeling of excitement. A herds-

man, driving his sheep to the fold, came toward them, his woolly charges filling the road from side to side.

“Be ’ee for Lunnon?” he questioned interestedly, leaning on his long crooked staff.

“Aye, that we be,” answered Andrew Tanner, shortly.

“Mebby, ye’ll not be entering this night, mebbly not at all!”

“And why not, friend?” queried the leader.

The old man laughed delightedly at being able to impart some information.

“Eh, fust come an order from the Lord Mayor and the Council, that the gates of the city be closed agin ye—there be many, oh, a very great many! And it would seem the city were a-feared o’ ye! And they howled and yelled so at that, that the young King came out on the river in his boat to try to speak to them. But they was a-howlin’ so loud no one could hear aught he said. So he did go back, an’ the gates was closed!

“Then all the rich people who live outside the city feared, and sent word to the Council that they were in peril o’ ye, to let ye in, an’ ha’ the King’s guard care for ye. So if ye hurry, mebbe ye’ll get in. Keep the spires an’ towers ahead o’ ye, follow your noses, an’ ye’ll get there!” He prodded the nearest woolly sheep into action, and moved on down the road, shouting back over his shoulder, “The tallest spire is ’Paul’s!”

The city wall loomed up gray and forbidding ahead



of them as they came down the road where the houses were crowded close together. But the great gateway flanked by two towers, was still open. The crowd poured into the narrow, dark muddy streets, where Guy, accustomed to the wide sweep of the country and the fresh pure air, felt choked. He thought as he looked up at the tall houses on either side, that surely they were about to fall right into the street.

All the houses and stores were shuttered and bolted. The streets as they passed through them were empty and deserted. The crowd turned to the left and was soon on a wider street. The houses here were much more magnificent, and there were many beautiful churches. But still ahead of them and towering over all other buildings, rose the mighty spires of St. Paul's Cathedral, and behind that, the vast bulk of the royal castle. A flock of seagulls screamed over the river as they dived for an evening meal; and here and there might be seen the tall mast of a ship.

Constables and men-at-arms kept the rabble on their way. But at last they reached the wide spaces about the great grey castle. Here were also assembled an immense number of other poor creatures, who had come from far and near on this quest to the King, to better their condition.

Guy's one thought now was how to get away, and when he had escaped, how to find his father's town

house. But Andrew and the leader of their band were set to find and talk with the chief captains, Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and the priest from Kent, John Ball. So where Andrew went, there went Guy perforce, and after them as a matter of course came Alwyn.

At last they came to the chiefs—Tyler, a hard-faced, angry man who had killed a tax collector, and John Ball, a strange man with fiery eyes and a weak chin, stubborn, and fervently believing that all men were created equal and that no man should have more power or money than another. He greeted the newcomers warmly, though looked with stern disapproval at Guy, asking him why and by what right he should consider himself finer than Alwyn. Then hurrying on without waiting for an answer, Ball told them that the King had sent word he would meet with them in the afternoon of the following day.

But all these men were getting restless, and out of control, and they feared an outbreak before the meeting, as their food was all gone, and the fog drifting in was cold and wet. There seemed nothing to be done however, and Andrew and Clarke, as Guy heard the other called, slowly returned, stopping now and then to urge patience on some of the more vociferous of the mass.

They had hardly reached the spot where they had left their own band, when an angry roar broke out behind them. Something—some little thing doubtless, as

is often the case with a mob—had fired them, and the great mass of yelling, enraged men bore down upon the city. They tore the shutters from shops, in their search for food; they broke into wine shops, and inflamed with drink and food after their long fast, they broke open prisons, and freed the prisoners. Wilder and ever wilder grew their temper. Houses, even churches were damaged, and loud above the uproar came the shout: “Down with John of Gaunt! Down with John of Gaunt!” The frenzied mob swept down the Strand to the beautiful palace of the King’s uncle, the Duke of Lancaster, in whose hands rested the reins of government.

The onward surge of the crowd swept everyone along with it; Guy found himself jostled and pushed back and forth. He was squeezed in between bodies so tightly that he could scarcely breathe, and could see nothing at all. But he fought to keep his feet, for those who fell were speedily trampled to death.

The night was bright with the flare of blazing torches. Smoke lay like a blanket over all. Through it Guy could now and then see the flicker of flame run up a wall or leap from a window. And the roar of the crowd was like that of hungry wild animals.

All through the mad nightmare he wondered what had become of Alwyn; of Peter whom Guy had come to London to rescue; of Andrew who had forced him to stay with them; and whether his father’s house was



one of those that were being broken into and wrecked. What was the portent in the loss of the *Luck of the House*? Would it mean his death in this terrible crushing tumult? Or worse, the downfall of the house of Donham itself through this wild uprising? And his own selfish recklessness was the cause of it all!

Then, out of the crush and the crowd, Guy suddenly found himself flung free, on the swirling edge of the mass. His clothing had been nearly torn from him, and what was left hung in rags and tatters. His feet were sore, his body bruised, but he was alive and out of the mob. Now he must get away, and try to find his father's house. In the glare of the burning palace of the Savoy, on which the hatred of the mob for John of Gaunt was venting itself, he looked for Alwyn, or Peter. But they had vanished, lost among the howling, fighting mass of people. Guy, fearful of being again caught up in the bedlam, slipped away down a side lane.

Up one street, down another he went, vainly searching for some landmark, or someone to tell him where he could find his father's house. Finally he was so tired that his legs refused to carry him further. He was near the arched doorway of some building. A lantern flickered dimly inside while the noise and shouting of the mob were far away. The weary lad sank down on the corner of the steps out of the wind, pulled his ragged garments as closely as possible over him, and slept.

A hand on his shoulder was shaking him. A harsh voice bidding him: "Be off, thou varlet!" roused him. He lifted his head, staring bewilderedly about him, still dazed with sleep.

"Come, off with ye ere I beat ye, ye vagabond!"

Morning was here, a new day. Perhaps this servant would tell him where he would find Donham House, and blinking, Guy looked up. The man's kindly face, though his voice had been rough, was a familiar one. His livery was the familiar green and silver of the Donham household. Guy sprang to his feet.

"Walter, Walter!" he cried, holding out his hands. "Is this my father's house? And I, all unknowing came here, and slept on my own doorstep?"

"My little master!" gasped the surprised servant. "'Tis thou thyself, in very truth! Ah, how my lord will rejoice. He is within, arrived last night, mad with grief over thy disappearance in this troublous time. Faith, 'twas but the fact that in the search for thee, when Henry the hostler found and restored the *Luck* that he had any hope of ever finding thee again."

A few days later, when young King Richard II rode out to the broad, open fields of Mile End to fulfill his promise to meet and talk with the peasants, in his train were Lord Donham and his son Guy. The boy was dressed again as befitted his rank, and was proudly wearing once more at his side the jeweled *Luck*.

He was deeply interested in all that went on—in the handsome young King, in the great and famous Duke of Lancaster, in the king's other uncle, the Duke of Gloucester. He decided privately that the King was a nice-looking boy, but that he, himself, would hate most awfully to be a king. There was responsibility enough in being a lord, particularly one who had to live up to the motto—Always Faithful! Then his eyes, wandering over the faces of the crowd, were caught and held by a short sturdy figure among the peasants—a boy. Guy's hand sought his father's arm to attract his attention:

“Father, Father,” he whispered excitedly, “yonder is the lad Alwyn, whom I promised to take home to Donham Keep with us as I have told you. May I not send one of the men for him now?”

Lord Donham nodded his approval, thinking that the rough experience among the peasants had taught the boy more in the ruling of himself, and in care and thought of these poor folk than he would have ever learned shut up in the convent under Prior Thomas.

So when they rode back to Donham Keep, in the pack train was Peter Hobson, glad indeed to be returning with his kindly overlord, to his little home, his wife and children. While just behind his young master, very proud and happy, rode the boy Alwyn, dressed in the green and silver of the Donham livery.







## CHAPTER IV

1461

### SANCTUARY

When Lancaster and York Fought  
for the Crown in England

*In which after fifty years, when the Donhams had carried the LUCK to the wars in France, first under the brave and gay Prince Hal who became Henry V; and then under the great princes who ruled while Henry VI was a child, Edward Donham, bewildered by the presence of two kings in England, finds it is not always easy to know to whom to be faithful. He seeks sanctuary for a lady in distress during the Wars of the Roses.*





**I**N about the year 1440, King Henry the VI of England, gentle, studious and fond of learning, endowed a school for “a Provost, ten teaching priests and sixty poor boys.” It was situated in the little village of Eton, across the river Thames from Henry’s mighty castle of Windsor. It was called the College of the Blessed Mary. Though meant for the education of poor boys, being under the patronage of the King, it was not very many years before the peers of the realm were sending their sons to be educated there also. Among them was the younger son of Lord Donham.

The drone of voices in the recitation room rose and fell monotonously. It is a sound that in a close room on a warm spring day, makes a fellow very sleepy.

Edward Donham sat slumped down on the hard bench. It required an intense, concentrated effort to keep his eyes from closing. He blinked hard, but his lids drooped. Then his head jerked suddenly. He drew a deep breath, and straightened up again with a nervous glance toward Dan Martin, sitting at his desk at the head of the room. Dan Martin was a splendid fellow, best liked of all the dans or tutors of the teaching priests in the school. But he brooked no inattention during his classes. His eyes saw everything that went on.

This day of all days he, Edward, must be free. For were not the King and his court passing by the school on their way from London to his castle of Windsor? A lark sang outside, its joyous notes falling down, down, crystal clear and sweet as honey in the still warm air. Edward's eyes wandered to the window again. How green the trees were in their fresh new leafage. If he slid down on the seat, he could see the sky. But Dan Martin's crisp, cool voice broke into his pleasant musings.

"Edward! Thou art no squirrel, come out of the trees! Wouldst care to remain indoors, to study Greek history this afternoon?" And as he saw the dismay in the boy's wide blue eyes, he smiled and went on, "Then give thy mind diligently to thy tasks now."

Edward, startled and wide-awake, returned to his studies with renewed energy.

When at last the class was ended, Dan Martin rose to dismiss them, saying that the Provost of the College had given them a holiday for the rest of the day, that they might show respect to their royal patron as he passed by. Instantly the boys were on their feet, cheering madly for the Provost, who had given them the holiday; for the King because he was the cause of it; and for Dan Martin, who was a good fellow! Until at last, after unavailing efforts to stop them, Dan Martin caught up the whipping rod, made of a number of birch wands, and drove them from the room.

Down the stair they went racing and shouting, Edward leading. There was a wall about the college, along the road that wound up from Stoke Poges and beyond that, all the way to London town. It was along this road the King would come. The boys scrambled up on the wall, sitting in a long row on the top, chattering like so many magpies and looking like them in their black gowns and white collars.

Roger Beaumont, sitting next to Edward, his arm about Edward's shoulder, said, "Will he be very kingly, Ned, and ride a snow-white steed, and carry a sword?"

"I hope he will, but I fear that he will not. My brother Robert is at court, and dost know what he said? Bend thy head close that I may whisper. He says 'Henry is a monk, and no king at all,' and also that on holy days, he weareth a haircloth shirt!"



Roger's round eyes widened, "Oo-oh! Ned, if thy brother comes, let us ask permission to go up to the castle to see him. They say it is wondrous fine in the castle—"

"Hey, here they come! Here they come!" shouted young Richard de Lacy, sitting at the farthest end of the wall.

"Hurrah, hurrah! God bless King Henry. God bless our noble King!" cried the boys, jumping to their feet all along the wall, and waving their caps. For the long procession of knights, nobles, lords and ladies, priests and cardinals with all their attendants, advanced down the road; a river of color, tossing banners, fluttering pennons, gleaming armor, gaily curvetting horses. In the center, surrounded by the household guards, floated the great, white silken standard blazoned with the scarlet cross of St. George.

A length behind it rode the King, a stoutish man with a gentle, dull face, and of all that gay company the simplest in dress. His face brightened when he saw the boys. He smiled and nodded, while they cheered heartily. Then reining in his horse, he raised his hand. The boys, seeing that he wished to speak to them, slipped and scrambled down from the wall, standing quietly and respectfully while he cleared his throat and spoke in a slow, heavy voice:

"Be good boys, good boys! Gentle and teachable, and

servants of the Lord. Walk always in the paths of virtue." And to the two teaching brothers with them he said, "Ground them well in virtue and knowledge, reverend masters. Forsooth and forsooth, we had rather put up with their falling short in musical matters, than in the knowledge of the Scriptures."

He beckoned his almoner from among his attendants, and receiving from him a small bag, he bestowed a silver shilling on each lad, and once more the cavalcade moved on down the road.

"A whole silver shilling, Ned, what shall ye do with a silver shilling?" asked Roger.

"Oh, let us give it to the Provost, or one of the clerks to keep for us till there be a fair, or some need; for otherwise we might lose it, and there is naught to spend it on now. There go Richard and William Tregor to the river. Hurry or they will be out in the boat before we can join them!"

The boat was a flat-bottomed one, and they pushed it along the river's edge with the aid of a long pole, taking care to stay close enough to the shore for the pole to reach the bottom. They wrangled good-naturedly as to who should have the pole first, until Roger who was inclined to be fat and lazy said cheerfully:

"I do not mind at all, if someone has my turn!" And he settled down in the middle of the boat, where

his weight was comfortably adjusted. William Tregor took the pole, and driving it deep into the water, pushed out from the bank. Laughing and talking, they punted their boat slowly along the Thames toward the long bridge that led to Windsor.

Edward lay on his back in the bottom of the boat, watching the tall trees make patterns against the blue of the sky, dreaming daydreams, for there was no one to forbid it now. The rapid clack-clack of hoofbeats on the bridge caught his attention as they drew near, and he sat up. The rider slackened his pace when he saw the boat, and waved his hand.

“Oh, ’tis my brother, Robert!” cried Ned, excitedly. “Robert, Robert,” he called.

“Good day to ye, little brother!” The tall young man called back merrily, “I am but now on my way to ask permission for ye to come and spend a day with me at the castle, if thy masters will allow it.”

“’Tis just what Roger and I were wishing for. I may bring Roger too?”

“I will see that it is all arranged, an thy behavior warrants it! So, as his Majesty bid ye walk in the path of virtue, now I must haste on my way. Fare ye well, master mariners all!” And laughing, he rode on, making a bright spot of color in his long crimson robe bordered with brown fur, as he passed under the wide spreading elms at the end of the bridge.



A seemingly endless week, filled with unusually difficult studies at last wore itself to a close. The morning of the day of the promised visit dawned and the two boys gaily took their way across the long bridge. They stopped first to skip some nice flat stones picked from the road as they passed. They paused again in the middle of the bridge to drop a handful of crumbs from a bun Roger had concealed in his doublet at breakfast lest he be hungry before dinner time. The crumbs fell into the water to lure a pair of gliding swans nearer to the two boys.

On the left of the road, as they left the bridge, the forest grew thickly from the river's bank up to the grey walls of the castle. To the right the village straggled along, offering varied attractions. Two men tossing horseshoes held Roger till Ned called him to watch another who was training a young cock to fight. A rose bush in a nearby cottage garden attracted Ned. He reached out and pulled off one of the lovely white flowers, thrusting its stem through his belt.

So in one way or another an hour passed before they finally arrived at the gatehouse of the great castle, where Robert waited impatiently. He hugged his young brother affectionately, but berated him soundly for being late and keeping him waiting at the gatehouse.

"Forsooth and forsooth," he laughingly repeated the King's favorite expression, "dost think I have naught

to do other than wait on my young rascal of a brother? Nay, but I have duties to perform and for that you are late, you must needs escort yourselves! Yonder is St. George's Chapel; behind it the houses of the Dean and Canon. Mind you do not pry into dwellings! Above the Round Tower is the Hall of St. George. The officer on guard there is a friend of mine and perchance will give you a glimpse of its glories. My lodgings are on the south wall of the upper ward; look for me there when the sun is past the middle, and we will dine. I'll warrant ye'll be ready! But where got ye this?" he added, with a serious look on his handsome face, as he took from Ned's belt the white rose Ned had picked. "Ye must not wear a white rose here, you know!" And smiling, he strode away.

They had done and seen all that had been suggested by Robert, and more. The shade of a tree in the quadrangle of the upper ward looked pleasant after their exertions, the thick green turf inviting. So they sat and watched the constantly moving groups of gay courtiers, coming and going from the royal residence and the state apartments.

Great lords and beautiful ladies strolled here and there, with much soft laughter and chatter. Occasionally someone would stop to speak to the two lads in the dress of the King's school. In a window nearby, a young man sat idly strumming on a lute. A girl came and

stood behind him, touching his cheek lightly with a red, red rose. He smiled up at her, but caught the rose out of her hand and tossed it from the window, saying: "What dost thou do with a red rose, sweet?" The scene was very gay and charming.

"When I am a man grown," observed Roger, "I too will sit on a window sill, clad in silks and velvets; and play on a lute to a lovely lady, as doth yonder gallant!"

"I would far rather be a soldier, perhaps to help win back France for England and the King again; and have everyone cheer me as a great hero. I would wear at my side the beautiful Sword won by an ancestor of mine in the Crusades. 'Tis called the *Luck of the House*, and as long as we have it and bear it faithfully, so long will our house prosper. Of course, 'tis Robert's right to wear it, for he is the eldest son, but if I became a great hero—"

Someone stopped beside them. Edward lazily noted the heavy, broad-toed shoes—like a countryman's, he thought, and out of place here as the King's somber garments had looked out of place among all his gay courtiers. At the thought, Edward glanced up quickly. A man clad in a long dark-colored robe with a hood over a dark tunic that reached below his knees, stood above them. Edward scrambled to his feet hastily, giving Roger a nudge as he rose.

"Oh, wait Ned, 'tis nice, comfortable and lazy here.



Tell me more about this wonderful sword of thine—” he urged. But Ned hissed;

“Up, Roger, ’tis His Majesty the King!” And Roger, all confusion sprang up.

Both boys dropped at once to their knees.

“Ah, thou art pretty lads,” he said to the kneeling boys. “Whence comest thou?”

Roger and Edward rose, and Edward replied: “We are here from Your Majesty’s College of the Blessed Mary in Eton, good my liege, visiting with my brother who hath come from London in thy train.”

“’Tis no place for thee, here amongst these foolish butterflies. We would not have our boys wholly lose their good morals, amongst the profligate ways and doings of our courtiers. We pray daily that these may be saved from their evil ways. Do thou be diligent in learning from the good priests at our school, and walk always in the ways of the Lord.” He smiled kindly at them. “Stay away from court and castle till hast gained much knowledge of all things good and true!”

He reached out a hand, and both lads knelt again, and kissed it. He patted their heads and resumed his walk, his head bent and the fingers of his right hand fitted to those of his left. The stately Archbishop of Canterbury with Bishop Waynflete, Provost of the College, hastened up to join him, but the King apparently did not so much as notice them.

Edward looked at Roger, and Roger at Edward. "Roger," said Edward, thoughtfully, "I think Robert was right, he is more monk than King. He would like us all to become monks, over at Eton. No, I'll never fight to win back France for him, he wouldn't want it! But let us find Robert's lodging. I am hungry."

"Hey, now, what are the long faces about?" Robert greeted them cheerily in his own apartment. "Art nearly famished? I am! Come, we will go and dine, that you may go back to your college as fat as two little piglets!"

In the great dining hall hung with magnificent tapestries blazoned with the escutcheons of the great lords of the land, Edward found himself seated next a stout, merry-eyed old lady, who promptly started to talk to him. Fortunately for Ned's appetite, she seemed to expect no answers.

"Well, well, my dear, which do you wear, a red or a white rose? Oh la! I should remember that here at Windsor, we must forsooth, all be red! But, gra'mercy! Burley," she cried speaking over Edward's head to a man beyond him, "didst hear that the King would not even look at the baby Prince, when Buckingham presented him? Nay, not even when the Queen begged him to give his little Highness a father's blessing! They say that York will be in London next week. Dear, dear! His son Edward too, to say nothing of Warwick! Well,

I think if the King is mad, as they say—What’s that you say, Robert Donham? Oh—my dear,” she went on, turning back to Ned, “do not listen to all a garrulous old lady may say! Form your own opinions. You’ll have to soon enough! Here, have more cakes. Boys like cakes!”

Ned laughed and accepted the cakes. But later as Robert walked with them down the road toward the river in the long spring twilight, he was still puzzling over the odd things he had heard and seen.

“Robert, what is all this talk about roses, what does it all mean? All that the Countess Wykeham said at dinner. You took my white rose from me this morning. Later I saw a man take a red rose out of a woman’s hand and toss it aside. Why?” he asked.

“Why, little brother,” Robert answered, “the white rose is the emblem of the house of York; they call the son, ‘The Rose of Rouen’, because he was born in that city. A great many people think that the Duke of York should be King, instead of King Henry whose followers wear the red rose. For the Duke of York is descended from the elder branch of the royal house, and stood in line to inherit the crown until the Queen presented us with a Prince to wear it!

“And now, who knows—I doubt not there will be fighting!” he finished, with a shake of his head. “But come, this is naught for you to worry your heads over!



Art over-young to fight! Run along back to your studies; I'll see thee again before I return to London." He stood for a while on the riverbank, watching until the boys vanished into the shadows of the trees on the other side.

\* \* \* \* \*

Seven years had passed since that soft spring day in Windsor. Ned, grown tall and manly, wearily leaned against a tree, hoping to get a little shelter from the rain that dripped ceaselessly from a grey, leaden sky. Nearby his four companions, regardless of the storm, quarrelled angrily. Ned's horse, as wet as he, stood dejectedly at his shoulder. Ned pulled his heavy cloak closer about him, wondering disconsolately if it would ever stop raining. If it didn't, he thought whimsically, the river which ran below Donham Castle not so very far away from this spot, would overflow its banks again, the mill-dam would go out at the Abbey; and then where would the monks' fish be!

He chuckled softly to himself at the idea, but a muffled sob brought him back to his present surroundings. He was sorry for poor Queen Margaret. He wished he hadn't been sent on this errand which had resulted in her capture—she wept and prayed so continuously! Ugh! he spluttered to himself, as a cold trickle of water ran down his neck. This was nearly as bad as that

battle in the snow at St. Albans two years ago come Shrove Tuesday. Henry's army had routed York's, his father and his brother Robert had been killed then, and now he was Lord Donham. That was the first fighting he had ever seen. He was only sixteen at the time, and since then, there had been nothing but fighting. First one side won, then the other, until at last Edward of York had taken Henry of Lancaster prisoner and Queen Margaret and the little Prince had become fugitives.

Of course, Ned's thoughts ran on, the coronation in London had been a right royal, joyous occasion, and King Edward was a right royal King. But oh, Ned was so weary of war. How he would like to be back in Donham Castle, and at peace!

The voices rose louder, and more angrily. They would be fighting amongst themselves soon, Ned thought disgustedly, and he peered around the big bole of the oak under which he stood. It was a beastly sight. No one would ever think those four quarreling men were gentlemen of England! It wasn't decent to rob the lady of her jewels and treasure.

The Queen crouched against a rock a few feet away from him, her arm about the little Prince who stood at her side. Ned's movement had attracted her attention, and she lifted great, piteous black eyes to him. He noticed that a lock of hair was plastered wet against her cheek.

“Sir,” she whispered, “thou alone of all these men hast a kindly look. Thou art young; think of thy mother. Have pity on another mother in sore distress! Help me to escape!”

Edward moved uncomfortably. What a horrible predicament! He was a liegeman of King Edward and it would be traitorous to help his enemy to escape. But back into his mind flashed the old troubling thought—who was the rightful king? Edward of York who had won the crown, or Henry of Lancaster, the weak, mad old king?

Ned’s hand lightly caressed the jeweled hilt of his Sword. Always Faithful—that was the Donham motto. But to whom should he be faithful? It was unknighly to refuse to succor a lady in distress. And the little Prince. Ned thought swiftly of his own adored mother, but he could not risk endangering her by taking them there.

“Sir, sir!” wailed the Queen, “for the sake of our blessed Savior, have pity!”

She asked in the Holy Name of our Savior! And like a flash, a vision of the Abbey by the purling water of the little river, leaped to Ned’s mind. This was Sanctuary, if he could get them there! It was only a matter of some ten or twelve miles, and he knew that country as one knows the face of a friend.

He loosened the bridle of Thor. The animal whinnied



softly. He was cold and wet too, and would be glad of a run on well known ground.

“Madam,” he spoke softly. She rose swiftly, and silently came to him, holding her son by the hand.

“Mount behind me. Set my lord the Prince before me, and I will save thee, or die! Although,” he added grimly, “death seemeth to me the more likely of the two!”

He set his foot in the stirrup, and cautiously swung into the saddle, reaching down his arms for the little prince, a badly frightened little lad who bravely held his peace and fought back his tears, though Ned could feel the boy shudder in his arms.

The wrangling of his companions continued so loudly that all other sounds were covered, and as soon as Ned had assisted the Queen to mount behind him, he turned Thor. Leaning forward he whispered in the horse’s ear, “Home, boy!”

The silky black ears signalled back that the horse understood and as though aware of the responsibility he bore, Thor stepped silently away. The soggy turf sucked at his hoofs, a branch snapped. Ned caught his breath, but it passed unnoticed by the four men who had forgotten that he had been with them. The trees shone wet through the downpour. Ned drew the little Prince back against himself, wrapping his cloak over them both.

“Wilt keep thee a trifle warmer, Your Highness,” he

whispered into the child's ear, chuckling inwardly. The little boy was such a forlorn, bedraggled bit to be called "Your Highness", while that clever, powerful man in London did so much look the part!

"Thou art very kind, sir," the child answered in a weary little voice. "So many people are unkind. The Queen, my mother, is she safe?"

"Madam," said Ned, over his shoulder, "Art safe? The child would know. I fear me, comfort is beyond possibility."

"I am well enough, but can we not make more speed?"

"Nay, Lady, I dare not venture on the road. If they follow, we can escape them better here for I know this forest well. But 'tis too wet to go faster. Also Thor is carrying double and I may not ask too much of him now, as we may need his strength later, if we are pursued!"

They plodded on through the wet woods for some time, in utter silence. The child slept in Edward's arms, comforted by the warmth of his cloak, and the rain stopped.

The trees thinned out. A road crossed ahead of them, the water running in little torrents down either side. Overhead the grey clouds were blowing out in ragged wisps, the sky brightening in rosy streaks.

Ned tightened his reins, fearful of Thor's slipping

as he stepped cautiously out into the thick ooze of the road. The horse picked his way daintily across, and once more they struck out, but through open land here, pasture and orchard. Ned drew a deep breath of relief;

“Only a little longer, Madam,” he said, “and thou wilt be safe!”

Then before the Queen could reply, a shout rang out behind them. Ned threw a quick look over his shoulder. The rain no longer hid them with a protecting curtain, and far back across the fields, he could see four horsemen plunging through the mud of the road. But even as he looked the leading horse overreached in his stride, slipped and went down, his rider with him. The second reined back, but Ned waited to see no more.

“Pray, Madam,” he shouted. “Pray as ye never prayed before! God and His holy angels help us, for if those fiends catch thee now—Well, Thor and I are at home here, and but that he carries double, they’d see nothing more than his tail waving in the wind! Do your best for us, Thor, and by God’s help, we will beat them yet!” he ended, patting the horse’s neck. The black ears flickered back their answering signal, and the gallant animal raced on, sure-footed and swift, across the orchard.

A thick hawthorne hedge loomed up ahead of them. Ned felt the powerful muscles under him gather.

“Hold tight, Madam!” he cried, as the horse sprang clear of the ground, and they flew over the obstruction.



Ned had an instant's agonizing fear—if he should slip in the mud, they would be done, and within the very sight of safety! But he landed clear on a fairly firm roadbed, and on they galloped.

A high stone wall rose on their left. The Abbey wall! Only a short distance further now. Far ahead through the lifting clouds, a towered and battlemented hill reared itself.

“See, Your Highness,” Ned cried to the boy in his arms, “that is my home, Donham! And when this is done, and thou art safe, I shall go home to my mother, and fight no more for this king or that king! Just try to be faithful to my God, my country and mine own people!”

At an open gate in the Abbey wall, he swung Thor suddenly; an instant later, pulled him up at the very steps of the Abbey church. He could hear the thunder of pursuit. Holding the little Prince in his arms, he freed his foot from the stirrup, and sprang down, turning to offer his hand to the Queen. Then he hurried them across the steps, into the great church, and up through the nave.

Above the high altar, Christ the Pitiful, reached out His arms to the hunted: “Come unto Me, all ye that are desolate and oppressed.” They passed on between the choir stalls, and the chanting monks. Edward was conscious only of color, rich, quivering in the glow of many

tall candles, and of that holy Figure above the altar.

Then behind him a door clanged, voices broke the calm; armored feet tramped in the nave. But Ned was at the altar rail.

“Sanctuary, Father, in the Name of God!” he gasped.

“Enter, son, and find peace,” answered a gentle voice. “Thou art safe here.” Then the priest’s words rang out clarion clear, echoing down the long nave and on up through the dim arches of the high vaulted roof:

“Hold! These are the protected of God. This is Sanctuary!”

Many were the noble houses of England whose families were wiped out of existence during the terrible years of the War of the Roses. But Edward Donham quietly lived out his life in the grim old castle high on its hill, content, with his family growing about him, to serve his people and his God well and faithfully. He saw England united again under King Henry VII, happy and prosperous; he heard of an Italian sea captain who sailed three Spanish ships out over the edge of the western sea, and there discovered new land and strange people. He saw his young grandson, another Jocelyn, with the *Luck* at his side, leave Donham to help win back France for King Henry VIII, as long ago he himself had dreamed of doing for Henry VI. But after one battle peace was made at last between the two nations.



Edward Donham died a happy old man. And he did not know that before many more years the beautiful Abbey of St. Cross that he loved so well would be a stark, bare ruin, a tribute to the greed of Henry VIII; or that under Henry's daughter Queen Mary, England would lose Calais, its last possession in France.









## CHAPTER V

1585

### *THE LUCK GOES ADVENTURING ..*

When Elizabeth Was Queen in England  
and the Seas Foamed with English Keels

*In which Richard Donham and his two brothers see Drake of Devon sail into the harbor of old Plymouth. They hear an old monk chanting in a ruined monastery. Richard sees it as a prophecy, and carrying the LUCK with him, he sails forth to new lands with his hero, Captain Sir Francis Drake.*





“Oh Nature, to old England still  
Continue these mistakes;  
Still give us for our Kings such Queens  
And for our ducks such Drakes!”

**T**HE wind caught the words of this latest and most popular song of the day from the lips of three young singers. The lads singing so gaily were the three young sons of Lord Donham, one of whose holdings was a manor on the river Tamar in Devonshire near to Plymouth. Here he had sent his family to live for a time during the construction of a large and commodious manor house at Donham, which would be more convenient as a dwelling place than was the old grey castle.

The boys were happy at Donham-St. Ronans. But few were the days that did not find them away from the manor, either sailing their small boat down to Plymouth, or riding down on their sturdy little Devon ponies to watch the great ships come and go. Today—a particularly great day, for were there not rumors flying of more than one fleet due?—they had ridden, for the Lady Anne Donham, their mother, was worried because of the high wind blowing.

The boys had spent most of the day on the Hoe, as that was by far the best place to sight the incoming ships. There was nothing quite so glorious as a galleon sailing up the sound, her great square sails bellying in the wind as she rounded St. Nicholas Island—Drake's Island, some people were beginning to say. The new name had appeared soon after the memorable day when that blithe sailor had come home laden with treasure. He heard that the Spanish Ambassador had come to Queen Elizabeth with a wild tale that "El Draque" had been playing pirate among King Philip's ships, so Drake had slipped behind the island to hide until the trouble had blown over.

Far out three tall gleaming ships were standing in.

"There they are!" cried the smallest of the singers, a fair, curly-haired little lad. "The *Elizabeth Bonaventure* of Sir Francis, Vice-Admiral Frobisher's *Primrose*, and the *Sovereign*."

“Nay, ’tis the *Raleigh*, the *Delight*, and the *Swallow* of Sir Humphrey Gilbert. I say Sir Francis can never get in tonight!” contradicted the second.

“Of course ’tis Sir Francis, Philip!” put in the third. “He but said that to tease thee, Jocelyn. These be ships royal, and Sir Humphrey’s are not! Besides, there flies Sir Francis’ own flag!”

“Oh, there will be brave doings, when he meets the Spanish galleons!” cheered little Jocelyn. “They fear him beyond anyone, and yet he is a merry man!”

“But a very great general, withal! I wish that I might sail out with him,” said Richard wistfully. “Come, up, you lazybones. Look at the townsfolk swarming down there on the dock, and then you say ’tis not Sir Francis himself. Who else would so many turn out for? Let us get down too.”

So arm in arm, Jocelyn, Philip and Richard Donham, singing their favorite song, swung along down the Hoe to cheer England’s greatest seaman and Devon’s darling—Sir Francis Drake—as he sailed up the bay to the harbor of Plymouth. He was putting in to refit, before going forth to release the fleet of corn ships which King Philip of Spain had seized.

The little town was full to overflowing already, with General Carlisle and his ten companies of soldiers who were to sail with Drake. Later when the rest of the squadron came in there would be even more. Then too,



Sir Richard Grenville was outfitting a fleet for Sir Walter Raleigh's colony that was to be started in that wild new land far across the seas. So it was an unusually exciting time for the folk of Plymouth.

Through the crowd, the boys wriggled their way, dodging under men's arms, or asking politely, "Is there room for a little fellow to see?" Jocelyn's curly head, big blue eyes and winning smile rarely failed to receive a hearty:

"'Es fay, 'e be surely a little 'un for a crowd!" from the good-natured Devonshire folk, many of whom had known Lord Donham's little sons since babyhood.

When at last they emerged at the water front, flushed and tousle-haired, the guns on the Admiral's ship were thundering forth their salute. Then as the sheets gave way, the ships swung into the wind, the anchor ropes whined as the huge anchors slid into the water, the sails rattled to the decks, and the great ships sat as lightly on the breast of the waters as the Queen's swans sit on the waters of the Thames. An instant later a longboat was lowered over the side and manned. Her oars flashed as she cut through the water, while the throngs on the shore roared forth their welcome to their hero—Drake of Devon!

"'Tis high time we started back home. We'll stop and have some berries and clotted cream at Mother Brown's, or what say some cakes and ale at the Queen's

Head before we start? Mayhap some of the captains from the ships would be in, even Sir Francis himself!" suggested Philip.

"I much misdoubt me that Landlord Timothy would let us," laughed Richard. "He'd say: 'Ninni, young masters, whur's the wor-rd that I let ye have ale and ye feyther not her-re. Get along wit ye, the ponies are stampin' in the co-ourt yonder.'"

"He always does. He thinks we are still but babes, with nurses at our heels!" grumbled Philip.

"Perchance we may see or hear somewhat as we go in for the ponies," offered little Jocelyn.

Under the creaking signboard, where in many gay colors was displayed a distressingly cross-eyed representation of Good Queen Bess, the three stopped to gaze through the small diamond panes of the window into the wide taproom, with its low ceiling and smoke-stained rafters. At a table near the window, two men sat talking together over platters of roast beef and big pewter mugs of ale: "Hey, laddies, come in," called one, "an' we'll tell thee tales of our gay venturing that will make your blood run faster, I'll warrant!"

Nothing loath, the boys entered, dragged up chairs and scrambled onto them while pouring out questions: "Master Barnaby, we saw ye come up the harbor, and oh, it was a gallant sight, with the sun shining on the spars."

“Good Master Barnaby, did ye meet Spaniards? Did ye get much treasure?”

“Are ye going out to take back the corn ships the Dons stole?”

“Did ye know Master Davis has gone forth to search for the Northwest Passage?”

“Is it true King Philip has offered forty thousand pounds’ reward to any who will catch Sir Francis?”

“Softly, softly, ye rascals, how can a poor sailorman answer so many questions at once, or for matter of that, know all the answers? Here, wench,” turning to the barmaid, “bring the young gentlemen cakes and ale to fill their bellies, whilst I fill their ears with tales of go-r-re, and bl-loody buccaneers!

“Now, will I tell thee how we sailed in bitter cold fogs and snow, through the straits called by the name of the great Magellan. That was when Sir Francis—only he was but Master Drake in those days—changed the name of his ship from *Pelican* to *Golden Hind*, all to honour his good friend Sir Christopher Hatton whose arms bear a golden hind on them. In a gale we lost the *Marigold*, but swept south where the Atlantic Ocean and the South Seas meet around high and icy cliffs. By-and-by we picked up an Indian pilot, and so we sailed on northward till we came to the harbour of Valparaiso, which is a Spanish town.

“There lay a great Spanish ship, that sat low in the



water with her heavy cargo, and they beat us a right merry salute!" And the two sailors pounded it out on the table with their tankards. Then they continued.

"The Dons had ne'er seen any but their own ships on those coasts, so they had never a thought of danger when we lay alongside, until Tom Moon here scrambled over the side, shouting '*Abaxo perro!* (Down, you dogs!). And we laid onto them lustily. We put her crew under hatches, for they were but few, and we took our prize to sea, where we found us much gold and pearls, and a great many jars of good Chile wine! She was a good ship and we'd lost the *Marigold*, so we kept her, and made the Negras work for us, though the Spaniards we kept prisoners."

Big-eyed, the boys sat on, their cakes and ale that they had been eager for nearly forgotten. "Oh, please tell us more!" they clamored when he paused.

"Eh, Moon, you carry on; my throat be mighty dry with so long a talk!"

So Master Moon went on to tell them how in Calleo they sailed into a fleet of ships laden with silver bars. "We speedily relieved them of the silver and picked up word of a galleon, by name *Cacafuego*, that had but recently weighed anchor. So merrily we went our ways after her. But before we picked her up, there were others that gave up what they carried on our demand. Frankie was aye a great captain! After a day or two

we overhauled the galleon, and her captain waited for us, thinking—never a doubt—but we were Spaniards too, till Frankie hailed them! They didn't try to run then, though they refused to strike their flag, till we let loose with our bow pieces, and having a fair slant o' wind slid off as she gave us the Pope's Blessing. But every shot fell short of us.

“She was no fighter, and when Frankie shot their mast overboard, they yielded, and we hooked on to her rail, and for four days we lay a-shifting of her cargo. Gold and silver—bars of it piled high. And jewels! Four days it took us, and then Frankie, he wrote this señor a safe conduct should Master Winter come up with him—that is ever Frankie's way! But they tried to tag us pirates, when we came home all around the world. Hey-ho!”

“Did Master Winter catch him again?” asked Jocelyn.

“Na, he missed the blow that took us 'round the Horn, and after waiting a month, went home thinking we were lost.”

“But they did not treat you as pirates after all?” put in Philip.

“Bless you, no. Frankie sent Queen Bess such wonderful gifts that when he brought the *Golden Hind* up the Thames, didn't she come aboard to a banquet, and herself knight him!”

“And now, you laddies had best be starting home, or

your Lady Mother will be sending down looking for you," said Master Barnaby.

Reluctantly the three got up. Moon, insisting that they take the last of the cakes with them to eat on the way, walked to the door to see them mount their waiting ponies and scamper away into the twilight.

They were late, they were scolded. But their minds were so full of the sea, scudding foam, tall ships, Spanish doubloons, caskets of jewels, that even eight pages of Latin prose for punishment did not daunt them. Philip and Jocelyn talked endlessly, but Richard was unusually silent for several days; then suddenly, he was once more his old gay self and took command, laughing and joyous.

There were long days, ranging far afield on the windy downs, with the crisp, springy turf under foot; the clean sharp odor of the golden gorse in their nostrils. One day Richard sailed their little boat, the *Swallow*, up the Tamar all the way to Tavistock. Here they rambled through the ruined buildings of the Priory, still disclosing some of their past glory, though nearly fifty years had passed since the abbey had been destroyed and the monks dispersed under orders from King Henry. The Priory was a ghostly old place, with the wind wailing through the broken arches and empty windows. A door still hanging on its rusty hinges, creaked and slammed. Jocelyn shivered: "Let's get back to the boat, Dick!"



A soft footfall padded across an empty room over them. Philip jumped to his feet:

“Come on, Josse; if Diccon wants to moon around here, let him do it by himself, or,” dropping his voice mysteriously, “with these others! I don’t like to meet ghosts, not even those of the holy monks themselves!”

At the gaping hole by which they had entered—the ruin of an exquisitely carved doorway—he paused. His grasp of little Jocelyn’s hand tightened, for beyond he heard the pad-pad of footsteps on the broken stair leading down from the old chapter house. By this time, Dick had joined them and the three stood as though petrified. On the fragment of wall beyond the door, a shadow moved. A voice hardly more than a breath chanted softly. Slowly a figure emerged into sight. A black monk’s habit made the thin white face and silvery hair seem ethereal by contrast. The faint, sweet old voice chanted:

“I will remember the works of the Lord; and call to mind the wonders of old time. The voice of Thy thunder was heard round about. The lightnings shone upon the ground; the earth was moved and shooke withal.” He lifted his head, and his sombre eyes passing over the others rested on Richard: “Thy way is in the sea and thy paths in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known—” He lifted his right hand as though in benediction, and turned down the cloister walk. The

voice drifted back: "Thy way, O God, is holy; who is so great—" It faded and was lost in the distance.

Still the three boys stood entranced, and rooted to the ground. Then with a sudden release of their muscles, they ran, scrambling over fallen walls, racing across the open spaces. With never a look behind, they sped on until panting, they stood once more at the river edge by their boat, which lay tied to the ancient Priory wharf.

Never before had they been so swift or so silent as they made sail and cast off. The little boat dropped away from the wharf, her sail filled, and away the boys darted, the water rippling with a pleasant, chuckling sound past the bows.

"Diccon, what was that, dost think, man or ghost?" asked Philip in an awed voice.

"I'm not sure," was the reply, "it's long since King Harry's men destroyed the great abbeys, but still he might have been a very young monk. Did'st note the way he looked at me?"

"Indeed I did, and forsooth, shivered all over! I was glad 'twas not me. I could not have borne it!"

"Well, I wish we were home!" whimpered Jocelyn, "I'm so-oo cold! I know it's getting late! I wish you wouldn't want to go so far from home, Diccon."

Diccon trimmed sail as the breeze freshened, and sang under his breath: "Thy way is in the sea, and thy path on the great waters."

July had waned and the great fleet had at last put to sea. But it was still short of the necessary provision for so great an expedition, there being twenty ships royal, and a goodly number of store ships, some twenty-three hundred men including the soldiers under General Carlisle, and one small stowaway of whom no one was aware. He had with much forethought and precaution smuggled a supply of both food and water with him into his small and extremely precarious lair in the hold among the kegs of gunpowder and shot.

It was a very close, warm place, and he slept a great deal. This was fortunate, for a lad like Richard Donham, accustomed to ranging over the Devonshire Downs, would naturally find such cramped quarters very hard to stay in. Occasionally he would wriggle out into a more open space, where he could stand and stretch his weary, cramped muscles. Through a crack around one of the hatches, he could see a brilliant line of light during the day, so he kept a certain knowledge of the days as they passed. But a sack of food packed by a boy for his own consumption, and only a flagon of water, could hardly be expected to last many days. And Diccon was becoming, not only very tired and bored, but desperately hungry.

Five days had passed; it was quite dark when he heard the hatch open, saw a glimmer of light from a lantern, and heard a voice say:



“An’ I hears the Admiral hisself say ‘Aye, faith, an’ we’ll run into Vigo Bay and take our water and provisions from the Spanish Governor.’ Ho, ho! ’e’ll do it too, and all his captings exclaiming, ‘Was ’e crazy? Would ’e let the Dons know all ’is plans?’ and so on!”

“ ’E’s got a reason, ’e ’as!”

“So we ought to make it by the morrow! ’E calls me to ’is cabin, and ’e says: ‘Gunner, hast a-plenty o’ cartridges?’ ‘Aye, aye, sir.’ sez I. ‘Well, it’s best to be ready,’ sez ’e, ’is blue eye a-twinkling. ‘But I’ll be bound the sight of us will be all the Governor will need as a ’int to send us out what provisions we be wanting. Still, have your guns primed, Master Gunner,’ sez ’e!”

“Aye, that’s Frankie for you! ’E’s always ready!”

“That’s ten rounds, and another ten ready to hand; now, we’ll get the first lot out.” Their voices faded away; evidently they were carrying out the casks. But still no satisfactory plan of release had come to Richard. Back came the gunner, and his assistant:

“Eh, ’e’s a great ’un. And ’e wants ’is service as good in ’is cabin as on ’is decks!”

“And why not? Does not Queen Bess herself send for him, and make ’im a friend and adviser!”

“Ha, ha, did ye see the way Perkin crept out last night after spillin’ the wine down his neck at supper?”

“Never saw Perkin, but ’eard the Admiral’s voice, I did! A right noble string of oaths!”

Once more they climbed the ladder with their burdens, and after them tiptoed a boy whose heart pounded mightily, but whose mind was made up. He knew where the Admiral's cabin was, and hadn't he himself served as page many a time when his father had welcomed noble guests at the castle?

He cast a quick glance about him for a temporary hiding place. It was not too long to wait, if only no one came and found him. Behind that big chest, where the pennants and flags were kept was just what he wanted, and snugly ensconced there, he waited patiently, listening intently for all sounds. The sea was fairly calm, the great ship sped through the water under full sail. The Admiral was in his cabin.

"Faith, but how hungry I am!" thought Dick. A sailor tramped by. The ship's bell rang: 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7. Here came Perkin carrying a big tray. At last! Dick sprang to his feet, followed close behind Perkin, hesitated at the door while he took a quick survey. The Admiral sat at the table. Behind him, stood Perkin, fumbling with the dishes which he had now set on the buffet. The seaman picked up a flagon, with a despairing glance for the man at the table, and started toward him.

A swift, sudden movement brought him up short, for a slim, lithe lad in green and brown clothes was at his side. Finger to his lips, a hand reached for the

flagon. Deft, graceful, the boy crossed the room, poured the wine into the waiting goblet, and returned to where Perkin still stood, dazed and silent. Dick grinned at him, looked over the tray, selected the dish to be served next, and went about his business.

Graceful and easy in every movement, at first the Admiral deep in thought, did not heed him, and Diccon admiringly watched the sturdy, stout little leader. He did not look small sitting there, with his wide shoulders, a well-set head covered with crisp, brown hair over a high, broad forehead; blue eyes that were usually bright with merriment, and a russet beard concealing the strong, kindly mouth. The loose seaman's shirt open at the neck, showed his bronzed throat. A scarlet sash was about his waist, and a scarlet cap laced with gold, lay on the table near his plate. A fine figure of a man, a worthy hero!

When the boy once again brought the platter to the Admiral's attention, he looked up curiously:

“What's this, what's this? Where didst thou spring from, lad? Bless my soul, art an elf, suddenly created to save my temper and my doublet? Come, account for thyself, and make haste!”

“Please you, Sir Francis, I heard thou needst a proper servitor, so here I am!”

“Tut, I can see thou art here. How camest, here is my question?”



“ ’Twas not hard, Sir Francis. The men are accustomed to seeing my little boat about the ships, so did not question it, and when the chance offered, I slipped overside, and hid in amongst the powder chests.”

“My powder chests! Hm-ph, and what were my men doing that some one could get in to my powder? ’Twill bear looking into; but on with thy tale, lad. Been there five days, eh? Wert not hungry? Thirsty? ’Twould seem thy face is known to me. Who is thy father?”

“Lord Donham, sir, of Donham Castle in Berkshire, and of Donham St. Regis, up the Tamar.”

“God bless my soul! The son of a lord, a stowaway, and offering himself as my cupbearer!” And Sir Francis roared with laughter. “Well, lad, the Queen’s business will not brook my returning an errant boy, nor can I put thee ashore at our next port-of-call, for that were leaving thee to the mercy of the Dons! So my cupbearer shalt be, but mind sirrah, I’ll stand no clumsiness!”

“There will be no clumsiness, sir, I’ll warrant thee!” promised Richard, cheerily. How good that pudding smelled to the hungry boy.

“Perkin, you are relieved from service in my cabin; see that the lad here is fed, and kindly used.” Sir Francis reached for his cap and with a kindly nod to the boy, left the room.

The next morning the pinnaces sailed in, and that night the captains assembled again in Drake's cabin to celebrate the successful acquiring of the needed provisions. There they were served the delicious wines, sweetmeats and fruits sent by the Spanish Governor to "El Draque," as though to his dearest friends and guests. This time there was no slopping of wines or other disorder; and the Admiral, to the great delight of Master Moon and Master Barnaby, laughingly recounted the tale of his young stowaway who had hid among the powder chests. "Though," he ended seriously, "that is a warning. For what one can do, another may do, and with evil intent!"

For long days thereafter they sailed. A leaden sky closed down over a raging grey sea. Mountainous waves towered high, laced with wild, white streaks of blowing foam. The shrieking wind tore through the bare poles. But still they drove westward. Part of that time Richard, lying curled up in a miserable little heap in a sheltered corner, wondered dizzily why he had ever thought he wanted to go to sea. Why should anyone want to cross this heaving, tossing water simply to see new lands when he already had a perfectly satisfactory land, that never made anyone feel like dying!

Then one morning he awoke, his head clear and his appetite raging, though his legs were still rather shaky; and his enthusiasm returned with his appetite. Once

more the sun shone, reefs were shaken out of the sails. The seas raced dancing and sparkling under them. All the world seemed glorious, and to be at sea with Drake, the greatest adventure in the world.

It was not long before Richard could climb, as agile as a monkey, anywhere in the rigging. Besides, his gay humour and good-natured willingness to help anyone with any task won him a speedy liking among all the men. One day, perched high aloft on the yardarms, his keen eyes searching the blue waters, he saw a little blot on the sharp line where sky and sea met, that even as he watched grew larger.

“Sail ho!” he sang out.

“Where away?” came back from the deck.

“Broad on the larboard beam, sir.”

“Can you make her out?”

“Aye, aye, sir; a ship, sir, running before the wind. I think there are many!” Minutes passed while the sails grew steadily nearer.

“Sail ho, sir!” cried Dick, “I can see their banners now, sir. They are Spaniards right enough!”

Bugles blew, drums rolled, and a gun boomed out, signalling to the rest of the fleet to prepare for action. Now the Spaniards, seeing the ships, were shifting their course. The *Bonaventure* followed suit, the white foam boiling at her bows as she tore through the water. Rapidly they were overhauling the high-pooped ships of



Spain, which were making a vain effort to escape.

General Carlisle assembled his men on deck. The gunners were breaking out powder kegs. Everything was humming with busyness. Yet in true sailor fashion, no one ever seemed to get in another's way.

The bow guns were unlimbered. A puff of white smoke, a crashing detonation, and just short of the nearest Spanish ship, a column of water shot into the air. The *Elizabeth Bonaventure* had issued her ultimatum! As they drew nearer, the Spanish ship returned the fire with her stern chasers. But they had no effect, for the Spaniards were notoriously poor marksmen, and in no time they were within range of the English guns.

Meanwhile Dick had scrambled into the hold where he had spent his first few days at sea, and wriggled his way back to his hiding place. He retrieved a very precious bit of his equipment—the slim, Damascus blade called *The Luck of the House*, brought home by the boyish ancestor who had also gone adventuring on the seas long, long ago—all the way to Palestine with his Crusader father.

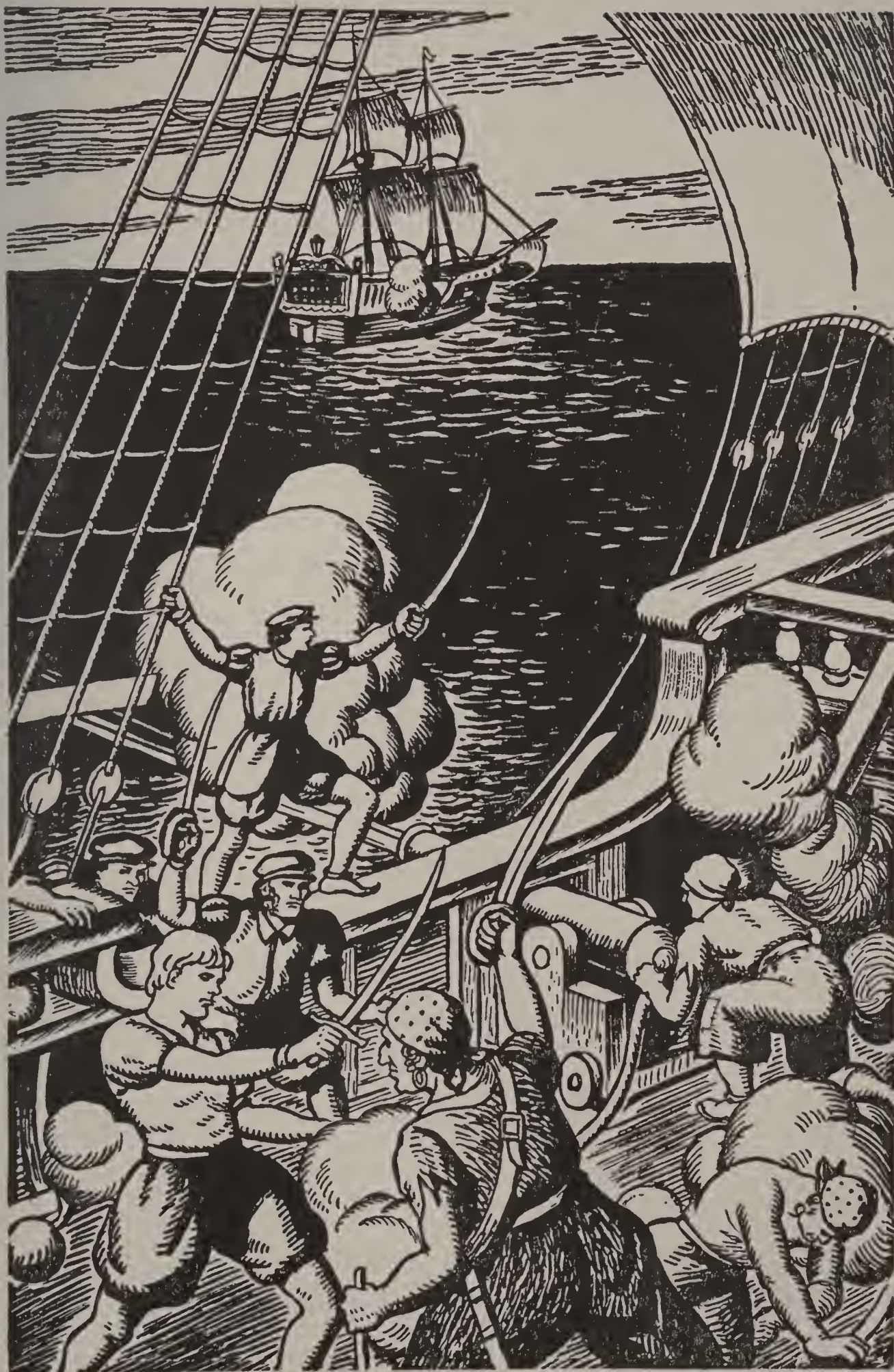
Dick had felt it his right to bring it on his great adventure. Even though it was a man's sword, it had always been handed down to the eldest son. He armed himself with the Sword and protected his body with a light steel vest. Then thrusting a pistol into his sash, he returned to the deck.

Before he had time to take in the situation, there came an ear-splitting roar, the ship seemed to leap and quiver like a cruelly spurred horse. The reek of powder filled the air. The *Bonaventure* with sails close hauled, had fired a full broadside. The tall mainmast of the Spaniard swayed and crashed to the deck in a tangle of rigging, spars and splintered wood. The topgallant sail from the mizzenmast hung over the side. This acted as a drag anchor and so removed her chance of running from the fight. But her guns still barked defiance. A splinter of flying wood from the *Bonaventure's* rail, where a spent shot had landed, struck Dick's forehead, sending a trickle of blood into his eyes.

The *Bonaventure* now ran in close to the other ship, her grappling irons were clamped on the other's rails, and the grim, yelling English crew went swarming over the side.

Once on the Spanish ship Dick merely rubbed the blood out of his eyes with his forearm. He gave no further thought to his scratch in his wild exultation of the fight. Beyond, the thunder of guns from the other ships that had come up rolled continuously. Flames were already leaping from another of the Spanish ships. The fighting became furious; Dick caught in the jam of fighting men, was swept along resistlessly. He heard big Tom Hatch, Master Gunner, call his name, bidding him get back out of the action.





*The boy faced his captor, but with the Sword in his hand*





Richard turned his head to answer. His foot slipped in the wet slime of blood on the decks, and he went down. Yanked to his feet a minute later, he found himself in the grasp of a swarthy Spaniard. Writhing and twisting, the boy tore himself loose, and faced his captor, breathless and panting, but with the Sword in his hand.

The evil, dark face grinned and leered. This whippersnapper, with his slender little blade! The Spaniard thrust with his cutlass—there would be one less English boy growing up to threaten Spain's power! To his infinite surprise, the thrust was stopped. By a boy's strength, yes, but also by strong, wiry muscles, a wrist trained to sword play, backing a blade forged and tempered by the master armourers of old Damascus! The *Luck of the House*, with its graven words—Always Faithful—on its blade, warranted Donham's faith in its luck. Suddenly the Spaniard's cutlass was wrenched from his hand. His numb, tingling fingers fumbled for his pistol. From behind Dick a shot rang out. A look of astonishment crossed the Spaniard's face. For a moment his body wavered, then it slumped to the deck.

Big Tom, his smoking pistol in his hand, grasped Diccon by the shoulders:

“Ye rascal! Did ye not hear me call ye back? Eh well, betwixt us, you and I ha' done away wi' one of the worst villyuns unhung, we have! 'Twas the

pirate, Estaban himself, and why he was on this ship is a mystery, it is! Unless he were a-plannin' to steal it and its cargo for himself. He'll steal no more plate ships and rich cargo, ever again! But he's hurted ye, lad?" Big Tom anxiously surveyed the smear of blood across Dick's face from the cut on his forehead.

"No, no, I'm right enough, Tom. How goes the fight?"

"Well enough, well enough! The Dons ha' yielded to Frankie, like they always does! Scairt of 'e, they is! But ye're all blud, laddie, how came ye by the hurt?"

Dick's hand went to his forehead bewilderedly. It did hurt. He suddenly felt sick and dizzy. The ship swung up and down so wildly—it must be another storm. Then everything went very black.

Big Tom gathered the boy up in his arms, and shouldering his way back to the *Bonaventure*, laid his limp burden on the deck in a sheltered spot, while he brought water to bathe his head. In a moment Diccon opened his eyes, and struggled up.

"Thank you, Tom," he said, "I'll be all right now. That cut must have been worse than I thought."

That night the men made merry, feasting on the wine, biscuit, dried fruits and sweets that had been part of the cargo carried by the Spanish ships. Dick and Big Tom were the heroes of the occasion. Tom must tell time and again, how he had found the boy disarming



the pirate; and Dick, the history of the famous Sword as it was passed admiringly from hand to hand by his rough shipmates.

On the morrow the necessary repairs were concluded. Laden with spoils from the Spanish ships—gold and silver in bars, rich silks, spices and rare carpets from the far countries of the Orient—the Englishmen sailed on their way.

Those were brave days, brimming over with adventure. Drake's fleet pounced on Santiago, frightening the Spanish inhabitants back into the interior. The sailors spent many happy days in this port, among the pleasant gardens and orchards. Some weeks later they made the little island of Dominica, where Richard had his first sight of Indians. Savages they were, but a kindly disposed people, who wonderingly helped the men carry fresh water and fruit to the ships. These were badly needed, for there had been much sickness in the last weeks, and many of the men had died of scurvy. The Admiral was also more than glad of the opportunity to give the ships the necessary cleansing of the holds, as well as careen them on the beach and scrape their hulls.

Richard was becoming accustomed to strange sights and new lands: coral islands, great palm trees, gorgeous tropical flowers, schools of queer fish that came out of the water and flew in the air. From the prisoners they had taken, he had also learned to speak Spanish very

readily, as he had discovered this was an accomplishment of his hero, Sir Francis, on whom he constantly strove to model himself.

A month was spent at Santo Domingo, following its attack and defeat, and the burning of a great Spanish fleet there. Then they set sail across summer seas toward the mainland, under a hot and blazing sun. Now there came an evening when the Captains, having been called in for a conference, sat about the table in Drake's cabin with a map spread out before them. Drake, sitting at the head, was showing them his plan of attack on the city of Cartagena.

"Now, gentlemen, I know this harbour, as I know Plymouth harbour itself. 'Twill offer no difficulty as to entrance. General Carlisle will land to the westward, hereabouts," tapping the map with a square-tipped finger. "He will advance along the shore, while we with certain of the fleet draw the attention of the Dons by feigning an attack on the fort, here.

"That we have settled—but, hark'ee, here's the catch! They can, with a handful of men and guns, defend this causeway, against an army! Yet it is our only means of approach, and we have no adequate plan." He meditatively stroked his tawny beard, and slowly shook his head. "Eh! but this is a hot night!

"Here, my lordling," he called gaily over his shoulder to Dick, sitting half asleep on a transom. "Wake,

thou sleepyhead, and bring us punch to wet our parched throats—and,” his blue eyes twinkled merrily at the boy moving around the table, “bring thy fresh young wits to bear on our problem. Show us how ye would cross this causeway safely, while the Dons fire down on ye. An it’s a good way, thou’lt share in the spoils of Cartagena!”

“Faith, Sir Francis, I’d not cross the causeway at all! I’d lead my men through the water’s edge, here, beside the causeway. If the tide is out, wilt be shallow enough; then let them fire along the causeway to their heart’s content. There’d be never a man in line of their guns!”

“‘Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,’” laughed the Admiral. “Indeed, gentlemen, ’tis sometimes as well not to make your stowaways ‘walk the plank’ till ye’ve tried the quality of their brains! Suppose we adopt this suggestion?” And led by General Carlisle and Captain Moon, they cheered lustily. Then they sat Diccon on the table, plying him with wine, praise and sweetmeats until sleep finally got the best of him.

So well did Diccon’s plan work that Cartagena fell to the determined onslaught of the English. Several days later, when the Spanish Governor and the Bishop came to visit the Admiral on his ship (for he was ever most courteous to his enemies and they found him very merry and polite), Sir Francis called his young cup-



bearer, and presented him as “The true conqueror of your city, Senhors. For except for him, we had never cleared the causeway!”

When in May Drake’s ships reached that fair land of flowers named Florida by the Spaniards, they sailed northwards, sacking and burning the two Spanish settlements of St. Augustine and Don Juan de Pinos. Then the fleet continued up the coast, for Sir Francis wished to visit that colony of Sir Walter Raleigh’s on the island of Roanoke. They sailed through the wide, beautiful, land-locked harbour, and anchored at the mouth of the river for the night, as a thick white fog blew in from the sea, obscuring all sight of land.

Early the next morning, with the fog thinning before the rising sun, they made their way up the river. Like apparitions taking form through the silvery mists, those three and twenty tall ships appeared to the colonists, who crowded to the water’s edge to welcome their rescuers. For they were starving. For days they had lived on nothing but what little they could find on their island, and oysters which they could dig from shallow water near by. For the once friendly and simple-hearted Indians who had kept them supplied with corn, fresh meats, and fish from their own weirs, became vengeful enemies, cunning and resourceful, because of cruel and outrageous treatment given them by a few of the colonists.

To his great delight Dick went ashore in a pinnace with Sir Francis. Finding a boy of about his own age among the colonists, Dick soon made friends with him. They wandered off together when Jeremy's hunger had been partially satisfied, each delighted at the opportunity to air his own experiences.

Dick thrilled Jeremy with the story of his fight with the Spanish pirate, showed him the Sword with its keen, supple blade, and the jeweled hilt that made Jeremy's eyes open wide in admiration. Jeremy showed Dick his Indian bow and arrows, the remains of the Indian fish weirs; and most fascinating of all, the herb that the Indians called "uppowac." Jeremy had some, all properly dried and powdered, also a pipe such as the Indians used. Would Richard like to try it? Why, of course he would and forthwith did, though at first it made him choke and cough until the tears came to his eyes.

"I cannot truly say I like it!" he panted, between coughs.

"That is only because thou hast not quite caught the trick, and at least it hasna' made thee sick!" said Jeremy, admiringly. "It does most people when they begin, thou knowst!"

The trip home to England was short and uneventful, as events go. But Dick was very happy, he would see his family once again, and have much to tell them; he would receive his share of the Prize moneys; and he had

made many new friends, the greatest and best of these being his Captain and hero. And so Sir Francis Drake remained.

But there came a sad, far-off day when having sat by him all through a long night as he raved in delirium, holding him in gentle, loving arms, Richard stood silent on the deck of the *Defiance*. He was watching the lead-sealed coffin slide into the blue waters off Puerto Bello, while the drums beat the long tattoo, and the cannon thundered their last salute to Drake of Devon.

It was only then that Richard returned to England to take up his duties as Lord Donham of Donham Manor.







## CHAPTER VI

1644

### *THE HOUSE IS DIVIDED*

When a Stuart King and a Puritan  
Parliament Clashed

*In which John Donham, son of Captain Lord Richard Donham, leaves old England for a new England. Francis, his twin brother, following his king to the end, sees his family scattered and his house fallen. He fares forth to a far country, carrying the LUCK with him. And the last of the Donhams is rescued by an old uncle.*



ON one of the top steps of the grand staircase that curved downward in a splendid sweep to the Great Hall of Donham Manor, John, sitting with his head against the carved rail, could hear Francis' clear, high voice. He was singing one of those rollicking, ribald new songs for the amusement of his father's guests. There was quick laughter and applause after each song. John hated those songs; he thought them vile! He hated those people down there—"wasters, profligates, oppressors of the poor, and mockers of those who wished to live decent, good lives!"

He dropped his chin into his hands, and wondered moodily why such people should have come between himself and his beloved twin, his one-time boon companion, Francis. They had always been so close to-



gether in all they did or thought, until they went to Eton to school where through their friendships they became widely separated.

Then had come a terrible tragedy that had swept away mother, older brother and only sister all at once. In his grief and loneliness, their father Lord Richard had turned back to his first love, the sea. He had followed it from early boyhood, when he had run away to sail with Sir Francis Drake to a strange, new land far away.

Nearly a year had passed before Lord Richard returned, and called his two boys home from their school to bear him company in the great house. He filled it with his friends, men and women who ate, drank, sang, danced and gambled until daylight was breaking. Francis loved it, and John did not. They made much of Francis, they liked his good looks and his sweet singing voice; but they didn't want him, John, about.

When the stars had paled out, the black oblongs that were the windows showed grey. The doors closed behind the last guest and John heard his father and Francis coming up the wide stairway; while one by one the footmen put out the guttering candles below. His heart ached jealously, as he watched them. His father's arm was thrown over Francis' shoulder in a comradely fashion, and they laughed together almost as though Lord Richard, not John, was Francis' twin!

Resentment welled up through John's usually sunny disposition, and he sprang to his feet in an impulse to escape. But already they had seen him, and Lord Richard drawled: "Well, well, waiting to see us safely to bed, 'John Goodman'? Best be off yourself, or you won't be able to keep awake through your friend Brewster's next sermon!"

Francis laughed, and John bit his lips to keep back the hot words that flooded his mind, and what was worse, the lonely tears that stung his eyes. He went without a word, but with his head high.

He had met the man Brewster some months ago. John's sympathy and interest had been aroused at once in what he had to tell. John loved his home, not as Francis loved it; for Francis, with his pride of family and position, loved the beautiful manor house built by their grandfather, with an almost passionate love. But to John, home meant not only the stately, rose-colored, Tudor manor house with its mile-long avenue of oaks stretching before it, but all the simple folk in the little village of Donham Rising, the tenant farmers of the great estate; and even the humble animals that served them. He spent many hours riding about, taking a deep interest in the tenants' problems, and doing his best to help ease their burdens.

One day while out on such an errand, he had stopped at the inn in the village, and there had been a traveller

resting in the taproom. Tom, the hostler, whispered as he took John's horse:

“Master John, sir, yon gentleman—’e’s a rare ’un, ’e is! ’E’s a preacher, and ’e does na’ hold wi’ neither King nor Church! ’E says its opp-opp-opp-summat we are! Mebbe ye’ll know. ’Twas a big word!” Wagging his head he went on: “Ye’ll be talkin’ wi’ ’im, I’ll warrant. It takes eddicashun to unnerstand th’ likes o’ him, I’m thinkin’.”

John, full of curiosity, had entered and speedily fallen under the spell of the old man’s learned, kindly talk.

Frequently since then they had met, and a strong affection had grown between the fine, old man and the enthusiastic boy, whose mind opened eagerly to the high ideals and lofty aspirations of the little group of devout, God-fearing people whom Brewster represented.

He told John of how to escape persecution, they had fled from the little town of Scrooby, up north, to Holland; of how difficult living had been there, kind though the people were; and of how he had returned to England to try to gain permission from the London Company to establish a settlement on the shores of America. “Here,” he said earnestly, to the boy, “God hath provided a refuge for those whom He means to save. And seeing the Church in these sad days hath no place left to fly into but the wilderness, what better work can there be, than to go and raise tabernacles for her.”



A great many ideas and thoughts had been growing and taking form in John's mind through these talks. He realized that on one hand, the people known as the Puritans were religious fanatics—hard and cruel. On the opposite, he saw how lax and thoughtless were many such as those friends of his father and Francis. In between, was Brewster's little group keeping the lamp of faith burning with a strong, pure light, seeking only for freedom to practice that faith without hindrance. So he rose early the next morning, and rode through the lovely summer morning in search of his friend. He came on the sturdy old man striding along the road.

“Good morning!” cried Brewster. “You are about early. I was going to walk to the old ruined Abbey on the river. I like to hear the birds sing their psalms of praise where once the good monks sang. Get down from your horse and walk with me.”

Springing down from his horse, John joined him, the horse's reins caught under his arm, the horse ambling gently after them.

“Sir,” he said abruptly, “I am very unhappy. My father and brother grow further and further from me, so that there is no understanding between us longer. I would that I might join your band and journey with you, to where I may be free to serve God faithfully, and,” he added, honestly, “I long to see that new land beyond the ocean!”

They had turned from the road onto a little path, where the river ran sparkling and singing beside them. Ahead the beautiful, broken arches of the great ruin of the Abbey of St. Cross rose against the misty sky, above the thick masses of the green trees. Master Brewster stopped, set his two hands on John's shoulders, and scanned his face, long and earnestly.

"My boy," came his reply at last, "what can be a better work, more honourable or worthy a Christian, than to join forces with such a company of faithful people? And if one who though young is known to be godly and to live in wealth and prosperity here, shall forsake all this to run a hazard with them, then it will be an example of great use—to give more life to the faith of God's people and to encourage others to join more willingly in it!"

Into the Hall of Donham Manor late that afternoon came Lord Richard Donham, bringing with him a breeziness of the rolling sea that he so loved. Still in his riding clothes, John stood with his back to the fire. He had been trying by the advice of Master Brewster, to come to something of the old friendly terms with Francis. Francis was sprawled indolently in an armchair, tossing bits of cake to his two spaniels sitting motionless before him, their eager adoring eyes fixed on him expectantly.

John noticed that his father's handsome, ruddy face

brightened as he saw the twins together, and he dreaded the moment when Lord Donham became aware of the feeling of hostility in the air. For he knew that though lack of understanding, and impatience with what he called "John's nonsense" often led his father into an attitude of intolerance, Lord Richard dearly loved both his sons.

Francis quickly dispelled his father's happy idea with his first words: "Our John here has turned dissenter, Father! Faith, he consorts with a dissenting preacher, and would have me do likewise!" And he laughed, jeeringly.

Lord Richard sighed. All his life the bond between himself and his two brothers, Philip and Jocelyn, had been very strong, and he longed to have his own lads as happy. Perhaps their mother would have known how to deal with them. He did not! He shook his head and answered, "Tut, Francis, I do not know what devil has come to you two lads! Ye are so alike, ye rub each other wrongly constantly; 'tis high time I sent ye both back to college. Ye're idle too much!"

"Sir," flared back Francis, "we may look alike, but there, thank Heaven, the resemblance ceases! I make not friends of snivelling saints! Nor do I hold disloyal, traitorous opinions of my King!"

"Come, John, what's your answer to this condemnation of your brother? The Donhams are good Chris-



tian gentlemen and loyal subjects of our King, and he is the head of the Church in England.”

“Sir,” answered John, respectfully but decidedly, “the Church has but one head—God. If the King were as loyal to his people as his people are to him, he would not try to force them against their conscience. And sir, I do not question Francis’ choice of friends, though I love him, and feign would see him choose more wisely. Nor will I allow him to slander those whose company I find elevating!”

“John, this is no way for a son of mine to talk. You will have no more to do with a man that sows such seed in your mind! Hereafter ye take your associates from among those whom I choose!”

“But, sir, I have no liking for their sort of life. Let me go with my friends, or at least permit me to bring Master Brewster here—”

Lord Donham got to his feet, his face flushed with anger. “Never!” he thundered, in the voice he rarely used save on the quarterdeck of his ship. “Never! And I’ll have no more talk of these people. If you go with them in defiance of my wishes, ye may stay with them. My house is not open to canting hypocrites!”

John’s gentle voice answered firmly: “Father, you are wrong. We are not canting hypocrites as you say, but Englishmen, with all of English tradition back of us. When have not Englishmen refused to be oppressed for

long? If we are not free to worship God in all simplicity here in England, then we will go to a land where we may! There is that great new land across the sea. You were younger than I when you ran away to sea and made a voyage there. And those splendid Captains and Admirals that you so admire, were fighting for religious liberty. Yet my grandfather did not disown you, and refuse you his roof!”

But Lord Richard turned from him impatiently: “I did not set myself up as more virtuous than my father and brothers, and Sir Francis Drake was ever a devoted and loyal servant of Her Majesty! Go, if ye will, but keep your tongue from making odious comparisons with great men!”

“Let me not go—for go I must from an England ruled by a tyrant—lacking a father’s love and home ties,” said John pleadingly, holding out his hand.

Lord Donham refused it angrily. “Though I acknowledge King James is no such ruler as was our Queen, I will brook no traitorous utterances such as yours! Go if ye must, but sully not the loyal name of Donham longer!”

“Oh, John Goodman, John Goodman!” laughed Francis mockingly from where he lounged in his big chair.

“You have named me John Goodman, brother. Very well, it is a name of which to be proud; I pray I may

live up to it! While I live I shall bear it, but if ever I have sons, they shall not be denied their rightful name! And wheresoever my path may lie, I pray thee, always remember no matter how you bear me in mind, my love is still yours. You may carry the Donham Sword, but I shall carry in my heart our motto—Always Faithful—” John turned on his heel, and quietly left the room.

\* \* \* \* \*

The years that followed were bringing war and havoc ever nearer to the Donhams, as to the rest of England. Lord Richard Donham and his son, Francis, Philip Donham and his three sons, of Donham-St. Ronans in Devonshire, were all ardent Royalists. Francis and one of his cousins, Gilbert Donham, were frequently at court in attendance on the King. Jocelyn Donham, the third and youngest of the three Donham brothers, had never married, and lived the life of a happy carefree squire on his estate deep in the beautiful Cotswold hills.

He loved his brothers, his nephews, his dogs and his horses, and cared not a whit for King or Parliament, so long as they left him in peace. But when year after year passed, with Parliament never called and the fines and taxes growing heavier and heavier on the people so that King Charles and his favorites might enjoy their extravagant pleasures, Jocelyn and a great many other country gentlemen became more and more ready to resist the unjust burden laid on them.



“Faith,” he would say jovially, “if those two rascally nephews of mine at court must have moneys, let them come to their uncle Jocelyn and ask for it! But give it in unjust taxes for other men’s extravagances, I will not!”

When Francis married Daphne Lovell, the beautiful young daughter of Lord Lovell, the wedding took place at the Church of St. Margaret in London. There was much ceremony and afterward a great reception which the King and Queen graced with their presence. The King laughingly told Francis that it was well he was taking the Lady Daphne back to Donham Manor.

“We grieve at your departure from our court. Still, though the Lady Daphne might make a very charming young widow, we would grieve yet more for your sudden death. For on my honour, I love you, Francis!” he said.

So they left London, and at Donham Manor the following year their son was born, and christened John Anthony Lovell. The christening took place in the beautiful church, which had once been part of the great and stately Abbey of Saint Cross, and where rested many past and gone Donhams—abbots, knights, crusaders, lords and ladies of the Manor.

Old Lord Richard looked curiously at his son Francis when the name of the child was pronounced. Never had there been mention of that other John, since he had

walked out of the house and out of their lives seventeen years ago. And this was the first indication that John was unforgotten by his twin brother. But the child was called Anthony, and nothing further was said about his other name.

Little Anthony was the pride and joy of the house and the idol of his grandfather. He told the small boy tales of high adventure on the seas, taught him to sail a small boat, and must needs have him astride a horse as soon as his sturdy little legs would support him. Jocelyn Donham came often from Longdayle to make long visits at the Manor. He vied with his brother in his efforts to spoil the adored little boy, who gave "Unc' Josse" a whole-hearted admiration and affection in return, but remained unspoilt.

The years slipped happily away, though the Puritan party was growing stronger and more dominant. Indeed many of the aristocracy were siding with them against the wild extravagances of the Court, as did Jocelyn. Already the threat of civil war menaced the country. When it finally came, the Puritans under Oliver Cromwell swept through the land, hammering down the desperate resistance of the Royalists, burning and destroying castles, manors, cathedrals, and even in some cases, the tragic remains of the ancient Abbeys.

On a bright October morning, Francis Donham stood on the terrace of Donham Manor. Below on the drive-

way, his troop—men whose forefathers had followed his—waited. Here on the terrace was his family whom he must leave, trusting them to other loyal servitors, hoping that here in this secluded spot they would be safe from the Parliamentary troops.

He kissed his white-haired father; bent and lifted his son, dark-haired, with dark eyes like his beautiful mother, into his arms.

“Anthony, little son, Father must go to fight for his King, and you must be a brave soldier. Soldiers obey their officers and Grandfather and Mother are your officers—”

“Thir,” replied the little fellow bravely, “I will keep care of vem ’til you return!”

“And, you will return!” said Lady Daphne, as he turned to her. “For I shall be waiting and watching for you always, until you do!”

“I will return, sweetheart! God and all His angels guard you safely, ’til I come.” He swept off his plumed hat, and stooped to kiss her, his vivid blue eyes unusually grave. “See,” he laughed, as he straightened up, “I carry with me the *Luck of the House!*”

He drew the jeweled Sword carried by many a son of the house of Donham, since it was given to one by a Saracen prince; brought it, gleaming, to a salute. Then he ran down the steps, leaped to the saddle of his waiting horse; and at the head of his troop, a gay handsome



Cavalier, rode away to join Prince Rupert's army at Edgehill.

But Richard shook his white head as he watched them depart: "I would that he had taken my advice, and sent you to my brother Jocelyn, my dear. I feel you would have been safer there. But he was ever headstrong and willful, and I am an old man!"

\* \* \* \* \*

Three years later, a cart travelling along the highroad, stopped at a crossroads.

"'Ere 'ee be, muster," said the carter. He leaned back and shook the sleeping man slouched between two bags of grist for the mill. He had begged a lift from the carter some distance back.

"Eh, what?" he yawned, as he sat erect. "Oh, here, are we? Thanks, my good fellow. Here is somewhat for your trouble," giving him a coin. "And this," handing him a second, "will perchance keep your tongue from wagging!"

"Thank'ee zur, thank'ee! Nor don't 'ee be forgettin' I telled 'ee, there be Roundheads about here!" And the carter touched his forehead and drove on.

Francis Donham stretched, looked ruefully down at his worn, dusty clothing, settled the Sword, which had been carefully concealed under his coat—one must guard the *Luck* these days!—and set out down the lane that would bring him home.

The sun was sinking as he came to the great, wrought iron gates at the entrance to the park. His old, passionate love for the beautiful place swept over him—his home! One of the gates stood open. That was careless, but there would be time to speak to the lodge-keeper later. The lodge looked empty anyhow. The occupants were perhaps at church—Godolphin was a devout chap.

Francis followed on up the long drive under the Donham oaks. Not often had a Donham come home so unceremoniously. He noticed that the park did not look well-cared for. But that would be owing to the master being away, and a shortage of labor due to the war. He had, in the joy of being home once more, forgotten for the moment that the King's cause was lost, the King in flight to Scotland; he, himself, a fugitive. And Donham Manor? Perhaps later it might be confiscated by the Roundheads.

But Francis pushed the unhappy thought away. His wife and son were there waiting for him. That evil rumor that the Roundheads had already been here could not, must not, be true! And no one had seen him but the carter, an honest, stupid oaf. Surely all was well.

Then he was past the last of the great oaks; the wide, beautiful sweep of the great house lay before him. The slanting rays of the sun touched it with ruddy light, the many-paned windows twinkled—Francis stopped short, his breath caught in his throat—

Slowly, slowly, more fearful than he had ever been in all his life, Francis mounted the steps of the terrace. He had fought joyously, fearlessly, as he had lived joyously and fearlessly. But now he was afraid—not for himself—he could never be afraid for himself—but of what that terrible desolation might mean!

Windows were broken. Some hung open. The lock of the heavy, oak door was broken, the door scarred in many places. He pushed it open and entered. The Great Hall felt cold and damp, and smelled of death and destruction. Broken and overturned furniture lay about; tapestries were ripped from the walls; through the arched door leading into the little private chapel, he could see ruin! Over all lay an air of desolation.

He suddenly ran up the stair calling, calling, finding room after room all in confusion. He went hurriedly from one to another. No one anywhere, nothing at all! In his father's room, four candles, burned almost down, stood at the four corners of the big carved bed. So his father was dead!—he thought dazedly—had died before the house died! But Daphne, and their little son? Then it was true, that rumor that he had heard. They were all gone; he alone was left alive!

Slowly he went down the stairs again. On the landing, he picked up a dilapidated toy, a favorite with the boy. He thrust it into a pocket and crossed the Great Hall to the long gallery. Strangely enough, this room



was the least damaged. The portraits on the wall looked out over his head. They were only pictures, he thought, they did not know that the Donhams were destroyed.

He stopped in front of that one of his wife, painted by Sir Anthony Van Dyck. He looked at it long, as though it might give him some clue as to where the original was. Then sadly he turned away. Even that was only canvas! He sank into a chair, burying his face in his hands.

The rasp of his sword as it slipped against the floor, roused him. He balanced it in his hand, and laughed bitterly: “The *Luck of the House!* And the house has fallen, fallen with England’s King! There is no place for me. I have kept faith. I have given all I had—home, father, wife and son. There is no more. Perhaps John has sons,” he thought confusedly, “three sons for the House of Donham! What would Puritan John do with a jeweled Sword, and a worn-out Cavalier brother? He promised so very long ago that he would always love us. Suppose I found means to reach him—”

Swiftly Francis rose and made his preparations. There was little to do. The miniature of his lovely wife copied from the Van Dyck portrait, that he would take; he was the last of the Donhams, Donham Manor was but a shell. The soul of it was dead. Doubtless the beautiful church, the last resting place of his ancestors was gone, probably blasted to a heap of stones by the Puri-

tans. The grim old Keep on the hill yonder, built by those early Norman ancestors of his, still stood. Unoccupied though it was, it seemed more alive than the Manor, frowning down on the dancing river, and sunlit meadows. He fancied if they had not deserted it, it might have protected them. But how he had loved this gracious, beautiful house!

He went to the door, hesitated and came back, crossed to the mantel. With a quick look around, as though there might be someone there to spy on him, he pressed a piece of the carving, releasing a spring and opening a concealed recess. He stepped inside. Below him a narrow flight of steps led downward into darkness, but he never gave it a glance. Another spring opened a small cupboard in the wall. From this he took a fat, heavy little leather bag that chinked as he lifted it. A second trial produced a metal-bound box, from which he took several pieces of jewelry and a piece of yellowed parchment which he studied for a few minutes. Then he thrust them, together with the bag, inside his shirt, and closed the panel again.

At the door of the room, he turned for a last look, whipped out his Sword and saluted the portraits: "Gentlemen, the last of the Donhams bids you farewell!"

\* \* \* \* \*

His vague, and heart-broken questioning of a fright-

ened villager brought him only the meagre information that his father had died. There had been the burial. Then the day after, a regiment of Cromwell's soldiery had arrived and driven off all the cattle, defaced the old church, plundered the Manor house. No, Lady Daphne had not been killed, nor indeed, harmed. She had escaped with the child through the old secret passage to the castle. But they had sickened from exposure and died, they were buried in the old monks' burial ground, where the Abbey was. That was all the villager knew. Every one else had fled two days ago, because they heard the soldiers were coming back. The man was dull and stupid from fright, and Francis could get nothing further from him.

In misery and despair, he made his way to the coast, where he hid away on a ship bound for France. From there, he took passage on another bound for America, utterly indifferent as to what his destination might be. His only desire was to leave England and his lost happiness behind him.

\* \* \* \* \*

Captain Taylor of the Parliamentary Army sat at a table on which were many maps. The captain was not studying the maps, but the defiant figure of a small boy standing in front of him. The lad's velvet coat was torn, his lace collar soiled and ruffled, black curls tumbled



about his small flushed face, and his hands were tied behind him.

“Well, what did you bring this child here for?” the captain asked sharply.

“He is the child of a ‘Malignant,’” answered the trooper who had brought him in.

“Untie his hands!” snapped the man at the table.

“He is a child of Belial, and a very imp of Satan,” grumbled the trooper making no move to obey the captain’s order.

“Nevertheless, he is but a child, and can do no harm. Untie him instantly! I am not warring on babes.”

“The psalmist saith: ‘Oh, daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones,’” quoted the trooper, with a falsely pious air covering his triumphant smirk at having gotten the better of Captain Taylor.

The captain who had joined the Parliamentary cause from political reasons and risen to command through his military ability, had very little sympathy with the constant applying of the Psalms. He glowered angrily, but before he could reply the child, who up to now had not uttered a word, spoke:

“You are not a good soldier,” he said in a clear, cool little voice. “My father says, ‘First of all, a good soldier obeys!’”

“H-r-m-ph, unusual teaching for a Cavalier to his

child!” growled the Captain, his unsatisfied annoyance with the trooper still in his mind. But to settle matters without further argument, he reached out and with his own knife cut the rope binding the boy’s hands, asking as he did so: “Where is your father, boy?”

“My father fell at Naseby. Fighting for our King, as do all good Englishmen!”

“Said I not, he was an insolent brat!” muttered the trooper from a corner of his mouth, adding aloud: “So may they all perish in their iniquity!”

“What was your father’s name?” asked the captain, ignoring the remarks. The childish mouth tightened, and there was no answer.

“Where is your mother?” persisted the captain.

Tears came to the boy’s dark eyes. He brushed them away with a grubby hand, gulped hard and answered unsteadily: “She—she died.”

“Poor little lad! Where were you going?”

“Captain,” interrupted the trooper again, feeling that the officer was being much too easy with this haughty young Royalist, “the Lord hath delivered into our hands, a messenger of the Philistines, carrying aid to our enemies—”

“Hold your tongue ’til you are spoken to!” snapped the harrassed captain. “What have you to say to that, boy?”

“I am carrying nothing; I do not know what he

means! I had lost my way, and only asked him to give me some directions, and he grabbed me, and called me names—a ‘Phil—’ that thing he just said, and a ‘Malignant.’ Of course I kicked him! He deserved it, he’s a liar and a rebel—” The boy was indignantly pouring out his story when someone rapped on the door and opened it.

A rather stoutly built man, with short, curling gray hair, a ruddy cheerful face, blue eyes set about with wrinkles made by laughter, entered. The blue eyes were clouded with sorrow now, and he walked heavily, as though some joy had gone out of his life. “Captain Taylor—” he began, paying no attention to the other occupants of the room, when he was interrupted by a cry from the boy.

“Unc’ Josse, oh, Unc’ Josse!”

Jocelyn Donham gave a quick amazed look, and held out his arms, just as the boy flung himself into them.

“Why, little Tony! My little lad!” he crooned, as he held him close. “But we all thought you dead, along with your dear mother! They told us so. No one could tell us anything definite about what had happened. Taylor,” he said, turning to the surprised Captain, “This is my great-nephew, whom I was grieving for as dead. There are none of his own people left. I will accept all responsibility for him if you will allow me to take him home with me.”



“By all means, my dear Donham. I am only too glad now that he was brought in to me by an over-zealous trooper, who had some wild idea that the boy was carrying information to the enemy. Take him along. We will go over that business matter at some other time.”

As they reached the door, Tony looked back at the captain, then gravely offered him his hand.

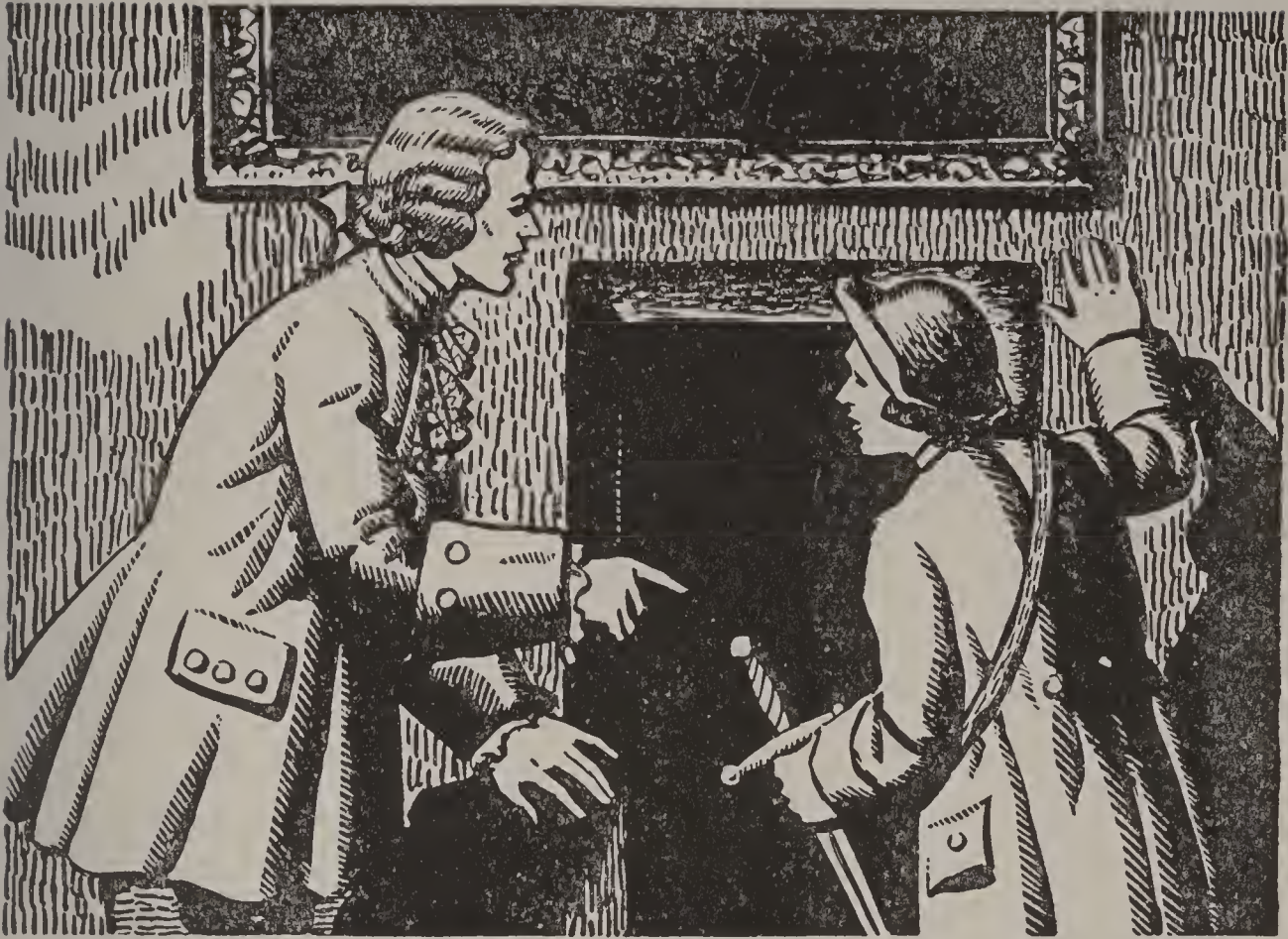
“Thank you, sir, for being so decent to me, perhaps I was wrong about *all* good Englishmen fighting for the King!”

So Anthony rode down to Longdayle with his great-uncle. He was fatherless and motherless, and Donham Manor was lost to him. Yet there was still his beloved “Unc’ Josse.” And some day, he thought, in some mysterious manner, he would find the famous Sword—the *Luck of the House*. Through its uncanny power the Donham luck would return, and he would win Donham Manor back. And little Tony was fairly well content.

He had no means of knowing that though the day was to come when a king would reign once more over England, and Donham Manor be given back to Donhams again, the *Luck* had gone far away across the sea.







## CHAPTER VII

1761

### *THE LUCK LEADS THE WAY*

When America Was an English Colony

*In which Beau Denham, Carolinian descendant of Lord Francis Donham, carries the LUCK to win succor in an Indian raid.*





**T**HE ship in which Lord Francis Donham had sailed from England with the vague idea of finding his brother John, landed him in a Carolina colony instead of the Massachusetts Bay colony. Indifferently he remained, until at last, fired with the zeal and enthusiasm of his neighbors, he conceived the idea of founding a new house in a new land. Dear memories helped in the planning of a house that, while not as large, followed line for line his beloved lost home in England. A slip of a pen in signing a paper, altered the sound of his name somewhat and he was content that it should be so.

His grim preoccupation, his mysterious fund of

wealth, earned him a strange reputation. Nevertheless the old man brought to his house a young bride, and before he died, exacted a promise from his son that the house should be finished according to his plans. Here for a hundred years, the family grew and prospered.

On an October day when the summer's heat was past and the Carolina plantation owners, free from fear of the swamp fever, were returning to their plantations, Mr. Francis Denham's twelve black oarsmen tossed their long oars in the air. Their barge slid gently up to the wharf. It was located at the foot of the smooth green lawn that swept up to the terraced gardens leading to the wide brick mansion. Behind it towered the stately live oaks, draped with silver-grey Spanish moss. Far across a deep meadow where three or four horses lazily switched their tails, lay the stables and the cabins of the slaves. On the other side brooded the dark mystery of the forest.

Francis Beaufain Denham, generally known as "Beau" to distinguish him from his father, leaped over the side and stood eagerly waiting for the rest of the party to disembark. Mr. Denham, very handsome and dignified in a plum-colored velvet coat laced with silver, stepped onto the wharf from under the awning at the stern of the barge. First he handed out his wife. Then with equal ceremony he assisted Sally Waring, Anne Colleton and Margaret Russell, who were followed by three boys, Mr.



Granville, the Denham boys' tutor, and little Rutledge Denham.

“Oh, Sally,” cried Margaret Russell, “aren't you glad that Beau had a birthday, and brought us out here to celebrate? Is it not beautiful! Beau, how can you bear to go to town and leave it?”

“That is only because you always live with the fresh, salt tang of the sea in your pretty little nose, Margaret,” laughed Beau. “Sally and I are mighty glad to get away from the heat, the humidity and the chance of fever in the spring and come to the sea. Though I love River Lea Plantation, and am always just as glad to get back!”

As Mrs. Denham led the laughing, chattering group of boys and girls on toward the house, Mr. Denham paused for a word with Duclos, the plantation overseer, who had been on the wharf to greet them as they landed. Beau had noticed the worried expression on the man's face and glanced back, wondering momentarily what it was all about. But Rhett Blake's arm was about his shoulder, Stuart Colleton was speaking to him, so he went on, talking gaily to his guests. But Duclos still looked worried, and interrupted his employer's conversation:

“Mr. Denham, sir, I wish you had remained safely in town. There is trouble brewing amongst the Indians again, sir.”

“Why, nonsense, Duclos. Governor Lyttleton has put

a stop to all that. The Cherokee chiefs are confined at Fort George. Everything is quite quiet again.”

“Yes, but *m’sieu*,” answered Duclos, gesticulating excitedly, his French ancestry dominating as it often did in moments of excitement, “there ’ave been the despatch riders. I myself, saw one of these riding to the city in all haste. He said that the Indians were gathering for the attack; they are wild with rage! It would appear that in some way the commandant at the fort was decoyed without and killed, and in retaliation the hostages at the fort were shot! *Mon dieu*, sir,” he wailed, “he said that the Cherokees ’ave already attacked one settlement, and almost completely wiped it out!”

“Come, come, Duclos. This is doubtless an exaggeration. At any event they are a long way from here. If they should be on the warpath, they will never penetrate as far as this! Why, man, I would certainly not have brought Mrs. Denham and these children here, if there had been any fear of that.”

“*M’sieu*, one came from the city. That one carried news to the fort that Lieutenant-Governor Bull had secured Regulars from North Carolina, to take action against the Indians!”

“That explains it then, Duclos,” answered Mr. Denham with a sigh of relief, “I saw Mr. Bull less than a week ago, he told me then that the troops were coming by transport. It is a wise precaution, no more. We want

no such trouble again as that with the Yemassee to the south twenty years ago. But after all, the Cherokees are friends and allies. The confinement of the chiefs at the fort is only a temporary gesture to satisfy a few hotheads. I doubt if there can be any truth in the tale the despatch rider gave you. He was probably laughing up his sleeve at the ease with which he fooled you! Come over in the morning, Duclos, and give me a report on the affairs of the plantation." With a pleasant nod he dismissed Duclos, and hurried after the others.

An elaborate supper was laid on a long table set on one of the terrace gardens. The flower beds all about the stone coping were filled with lavender flowers imported from England. Their rare, fleeting scent seemed like the ghost of the rich, heavy perfume of the jessamine, the magnolias and the oleanders of last spring. The sky blazed with massed sworls and streamers of crimson and gold from the westering sun—a royal canopy over a beautiful scene.

Beau looked up at his father, as he approached. "What did Duclos want, Father? He looked worried. Is anything wrong with the colt? And did you ask where Jeanne was?"

"No, nothing is wrong with the colt, Beau. As for Jeanne, I did not ask. Perhaps she is shy of your guests."

"'Tis a pity that our being here should cost Beau the pleasure of having his friend at supper with him," teased



Sally Waring, her eyes alight with mischief. Waring Hall, Sally's home was River Lea's nearest neighbor, and Beau and Sally had played and quarrelled together from babyhood.

Before Beau could voice his answer, Rhett Blake, on Sally's other side, tactfully changed the subject to ask if they might not go to the stables to see the new colt. For the breeding of fine horses was a matter of great pride among the plantation owners of the Carolinas and Virginia, and the new colt was sired by Mr. Nightengale's imported horse *Shadow*, which had won the four-mile heat at the New Market race course the season before. In an instant the group was deep in a discussion of horses.

But the visit to the stables was postponed, for from the kitchen quarters appeared a procession, headed by a serious-faced little French girl. She was carrying with great care an enormous cake, gleaming with frosting and surrounded by lighted candles. Behind her trooped the Negro house servants, led by Cleo the cook, her fat and jolly face beaming under her bright-colored turban.

"Happy birfday, Marse Beau, happy birfday!" they chorused their greetings. Jeanne Duclos carried the great cake to the table, and gravely set it in front of Beau, her face flushed with embarrassment and pride.

"Happy birthday, M'sieu Beau," she said shyly, "I have made for you the birthday cake with my own

hands, by direction of kind Madame Cleo, and I hope your years may be as bright as the candles!" Even as she spoke, a playful breeze swooped down. For an instant the candles flared up into tall, thin points of flame, then they flattened under the gust, and flickered out.

"Oh, oh!" gasped the little girl, her hands flying to her mouth. "The omen. It is terrible!"

The laughing Negro faces changed, the whites of their eyes rolling in horror, even as the group at the table hushed their chatter. But the moment's tension was quickly broken by Mrs. Denham's pleasant voice:

"Bring a fresh taper, Thomas; the breeze has spoiled our pretty cake." And Beau hastened to thank Jeanne for her wish for him, and for her efforts in making the cake for him. It was cut and proved as delicious as it was imposing. All joined forces in persuading her to come in and dance with them in the house after supper was ended. But her eyes were fearful every time she glanced toward Beau.

Mr. Denham, who meanwhile had risen and gone up to the house, now returned, carrying in his hands a carefully wrapped package.

"Beau," he said, standing by the boy at the head of the table, "This is your thirteenth birthday. You have entered your 'teens, and are no longer a little boy, so I am giving to you the Sword that was your great-great-grandfather's. It is a rarely beautiful thing—whence it

came we have no knowledge, but undoubtedly it is of very ancient origin. It has always been called the *Luck of the House*. It is not a toy for you to play with, but an honorable thing with which to defend the meaning of our family motto, Always Faithful: to bar the gates of our house against all that is dishonest and untrue."

As Beau laid back the wrappings, the other boys looked at him with a new respect, and a little envy of the gift that seemed to them to speak of the dignity of approaching manhood. The jewels in the hilt caught the glory of the evening sky, and flamed blue and green and crimson; and the girls cried out at the beauty of it.

Beau fastened it on and touched it with some reverence in the look on his face; and in his heart a resolve that was not unlike the old vow of knighthood—to fear God, honor the King, and defend his lady, though in view of many things he had heard recently from his father and his father's friends, there was a little reservation in regard to King George III.

Mrs. Denham rose: "Come, children," she said, "our musicians are waiting. The mists are rising over the river; I think we had better go inside the house before there is any danger of getting the fever."

A nightingale sang in the thicket beyond the house. When an owl gave a long quavering hoot, the nightingale hushed its burst of music abruptly.

"They are shy little birds, and so sweet in the night,"



said Sally, pausing at the door, "I wish the owl hadn't come and frightened him away! Oh, Beau, do you feel very grown up? Just think, in a few years more, we will all be going to real balls. I shall have a ball gown of taffetas from London, and my hair shall be powdered. You shall be my first gallant, and wear your beautiful new dress sword!"

"That is one advantage I will have over Rhett Blake," laughed Beau, "if I wear it now, will you give me the honor of the first minuet, Sally?"

Sally caught the skirts of her gaily-flowered muslin gown, and swept him a laughing curtsy, "Indeed, I am honored, for is it not your birthday?"

The owl hooted again. Its weird quavering note was echoed a little further off, as the heavy oak door closed behind Sally and Beau.

The servants hurriedly cleared away the supper things in the gathering dusk. "I doan' lak dat bird. He done got a mean way ob singin'!" said one.

"Doan' soun' lak singin' to me! Unh, unh, soun's mo' lak he brewin' sumpin eebil!" assented the other. They carried in the last trayful and shut the kitchen door closing in the household of River Lea, from the brewing evil which crept ever nearer on noiseless feet.

In the ball room opened especially for the occasion, the mellow light of many candles shone on the gay little group of boys and girls, advancing, retreating, bowing

in the stately measured tread of the minuet. Again they would romp gleefully through a Virginia reel to the music of the Negro fiddlers led by old Cato, his fiddle tucked under his chin, his grizzled head nodding, his foot beating out the time. Mr. and Mrs. Denham looked on, serenely talking and planning; while from the doorways, dusky faces peeped surreptitiously, white teeth gleaming delightedly.

Then suddenly the peaceful gaiety of the scene was shattered, the air torn with hideous sound—the war cry of the Cherokees; and mingled with it, screams of terror, shrieks of agony. The music ceased abruptly, the children stopped dancing, silent, stricken dumb and motionless. The Negroes in the doorway added their frightened moans to the clamor.

It seemed to Beau as though hours sped by while they all stood frozen with horror; though actually Mr. Denham was on his feet instantly, his voice calm and cool. He quieted the Negroes, and set them to work barring the windows, whose heavy outside shutters had fortunately been closed earlier to keep out the swamp mists. The doors were further barricaded. He sent Beau and some of the boys to the gunroom to collect guns and ammunition and take them to the upper rooms. Others of the Negroes he sent to carry buckets of water to the same rooms, as from there the defense could be better carried on.

Without exception the boys went eagerly to work. Even little Rutledge helped valiantly in lugging powder and shot, while under Mrs. Denham's direction, the girls did their share in the preparations.

Mr. Granville, the young English tutor, who had been unpacking in his room, came running down. "What is it, sir?" he questioned. "Everything seems to be a fire outside. And that ghastly row! Surely, it is not the Negro's barbaric idea of celebration, is it?"

"No," said his employer, grimly, "you are going to get a little insight into what it means to live in a country whose former masters resent our intrusion. Can you handle a musket? All right. Get upstairs and take charge of the front of the house. Keep down below the windows as much as possible and do not blaze away at shadows too recklessly. What ammunition we have must be made to count, and to last as long as possible. Tell Beau that I wish to see him immediately in the picture gallery. I will come up myself as soon as I have talked with him." He turned to his wife:

"I wish I knew what had happened to poor Duclos and his family! to say nothing of our field hands! But if only Duclos were here—" he broke off with a troubled frown.

Mrs. Denham threw a glance over her shoulder at Jeanne. "Indeed, I too, wish he were. That poor child with her white face and the tears streaming down it as



she works, tears at my heart! And she keeps saying over and over, 'The candles, oh, the candles!'

Mr. Denham bit his lip, and turned away his head, "My dear, we must not let one affect us, for the good of the whole! I am going now to talk with Beau in the gallery. When I go upstairs, you and the girls are to stay in the great hall unless I send for you; you will be safest there."

The upper rooms where the valiant little group of boyish defenders and their Negro helpers guarded every approach to the house, were lit with the reflection of the blazing cabins and stables that had been fired by the savages. Their leaping, dancing forms were visible in the ruddy glare, silhouetted against the billowing clouds of smoke, on which their shadows danced with them, grotesque and misshapen. Though as yet there was no concerted attack, now and again a shot rang out from a window, as some warrior ventured near enough to try the effect of a fire arrow and came within range of the muskets.

Across one room, Granville stumbled in the dark to where Beau crouched by a window, reloading his gun.

"Your father wants you, downstairs in the gallery, Beau," he said, "he did not say what was wanted, but I think you had better hurry."

In the gallery, Beau found his father waiting for him by the carved mantel of the fireplace, over which smiled

down the painted likeness of the first Francis Denham. Across Mr. Denham's arm hung a dark cloak. His face was very grave.

"I am going to send you on a very dangerous errand, Beau," he said. "God knows I would rather go myself. But without Duclos here, there is no one I can leave in charge. Therefore I must stay, and let you go to town for help! Under this portrait is hidden a secret which the first Francis may have planned for just such an emergency as this, and which may yet save us all if you can carry out your part. The secret has been handed down from him by father to son. Watch closely!" He turned to the mantel, pressed firmly on one of the roses carved into the woodwork, and slowly and silently a panel slid back, disclosing a narrow dark opening.

"This leads to an underground passage that has its opening in a little cove, far down the river. Go carefully down the stair. At the bottom, place your right hand on the wall and follow on. Do not take your hand from the wall; that is your guide. There are other openings to the left. One leads to a small room, where we shall take refuge if the worst comes to the worst. At the end of the passage, you will find a small canoe with a paddle. Slide out the canoe and head down the river for Charleston. When you arrive, find either Moultrie, Francis Marion, or Thomas Middleton. Tell them to bring the Charleston Riflemen, and come with

all speed by the Broad Path! I need not warn you that there is desperate need for haste! Now, off with that white satin coat, and put on this cloak instead.”

He laid the dark cloak about Beau’s shoulders, and for a long instant looked into the boy’s steady blue eyes, then bent and kissed him.

“God bless and guard you, my beloved son, and guide you safely through! I will hold the candle here until you are down the steps.”

The steps were narrow and steep. By the time Beau reached the bottom, the last faint glimmer of the candle light was lost. As he felt level ground under his feet, he called back: “All right, Father. Good-bye!”

His voice echoed strangely, beating back from narrow walls and low roof. He heard the click of the closing panel. A momentary panic swept over him in the darkness, but as he half-turned to retrace his steps something hit against his leg. The *Luck of the House!* And the memory of his father’s voice rang in his ears, “. . . . to defend the meaning of our family motto—Always Faithful!” Courage came back to him, warm and strong, he had a duty that must be performed; and he reached out his right hand, feeling for the wall.

For a seemingly endless time, he moved forward into the utter blackness, seeing nothing, feeling nothing but the damp, clammy brick wall under his hand. The ground was rough and uneven beneath his feet, and



though he went as fast as he dared, he had to walk carefully. From the feel of the wall the passage constantly turned and twisted.

Beau thought he might be walking around and around a vast circle, for all that he could tell. The darkness was so thick that it seemed to press down on him, almost as though he could feel it. The air was heavy and smelled damp and earthy. Once he stumbled and fell, and the clanging of the Sword and the gun that he carried echoed over and over. He got to his feet with a horrible fear that in some way he had turned around and was facing the wrong way. But he reached out to the right, felt the wall, and went on.

After a while he began to wonder how long he had been walking. Perhaps when he came to the end, it would after all be in Charleston itself. He might come out in St. Philip's Church and scare the verger; or in the cellars of Mr. Stuart's new house on Tradd Street. Mr. Marion was often there. It would save the boy a lot of time. He tried to keep his mind on the possibilities. Otherwise it would wander back to what might be happening at River Lea. At last he was conscious of a different feeling in the air. The close heaviness was gone, the darkness ceased to press down on him, and he could hear the soft sliding ripple of water. Then he bumped into a wooden barrier. He felt it over carefully, and touched the bolts and hinges of a door.

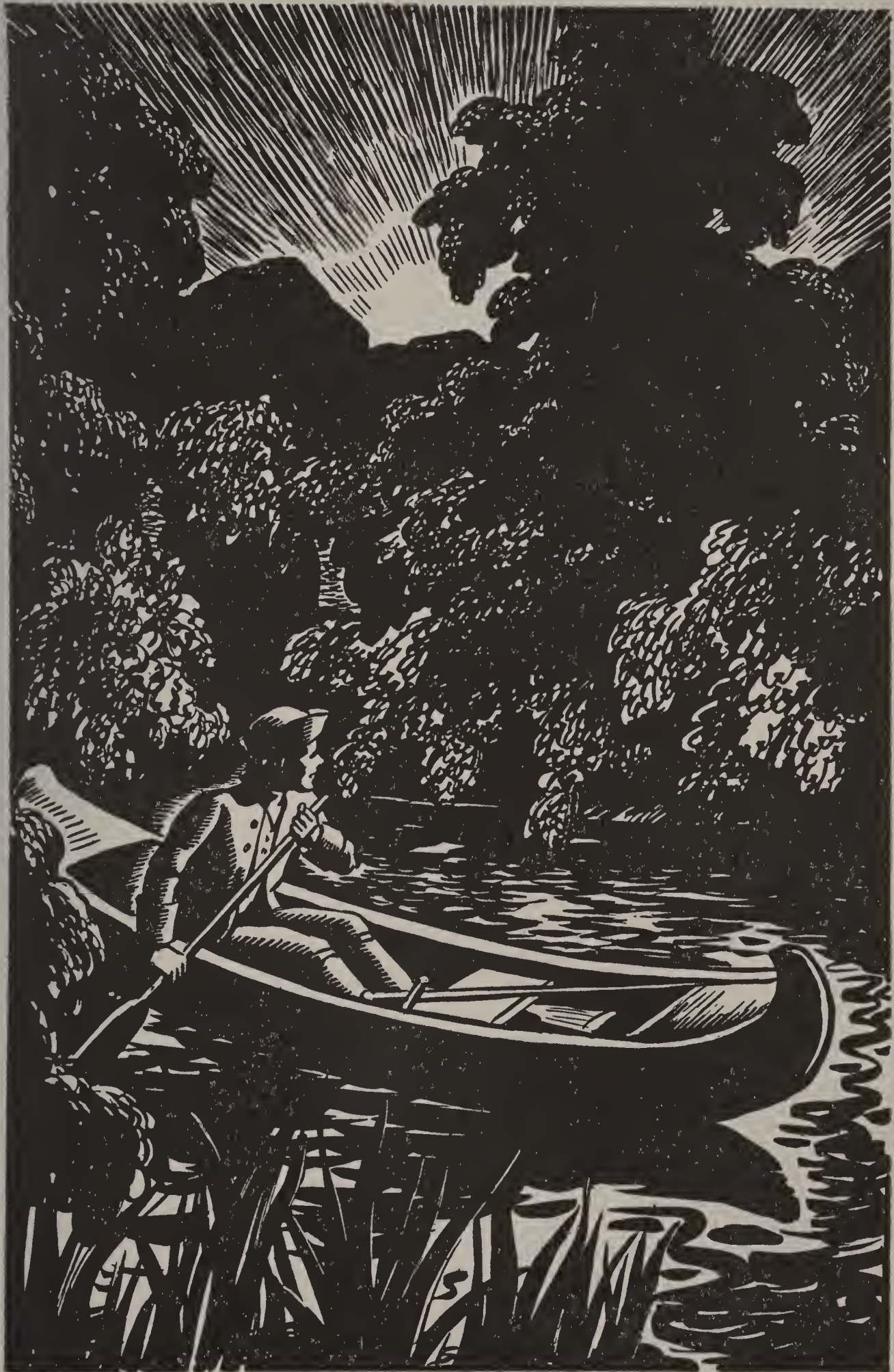
It was the work of only a minute to open it. Evidently the hinges were well oiled, for it swung easily and noiselessly. Beau took a deep breath of fresh air, set down his gun close to the door, and turned to search for the canoe. The passage was quite wide here by the entrance, and the canoe rested on two logs against the opposite wall. It was light and easy to lift; Beau carried it out.

The little cove was well protected by a thick screen of bushes, the river water rustled through the sedge grass at his feet, and he slid the canoe halfway in. Then he went back for his gun and pulled the door shut. He observed that it was well hidden by vines and bushes. Then he returned to the canoe, laid his gun with his powder horn and the Sword in the bottom, stepped in and gently pushed out into deep water with the aid of his paddle.

The passage had taken him a long way. Even in the daylight the house would not have been visible from the entrance of the passage. Only a dim red glow indicated where it now lay. The night was clear but dark, with tiny pinpoints of starlight high in the heavens. Its peace was broken only by the far-off howling of the savage enemy. Beau shuddered, and driving his paddle deep into the water sent the canoe skimming out onto its shimmering surface.

There was no knowing when or where an attack might come with the Cherokees on the warpath. For





*Then he gently pushed out into deep water*





all he knew the woods might be full of them. Even in the dark the chance of discovery was great, for behind him the passage of the canoe was marked by a trail of phosphorescence, and every stroke of his paddle sent tiny balls of light whirling through the black water. The occasional drip from his paddle blade as it was lifted from the stream, might be heard by ears trained to the sounds of forest and river.

However luck was with him in more than name. For it happened that none of the Indians had penetrated beyond River Lea. Mile after mile slipped away under the swift-moving canoe, and there was no further sound than the silken whispering of the long needles of the pine trees, the stir of some wild thing in the bushes at the edge of the river, an occasional twittering of a sleepy bird, and the little rushing sound made by the passing of the canoe.

Time dragged on; Beau's arms grew stiff and weary, but his will was firm, and the blade of his paddle still drove clean and hard into the oily black water, sending the little craft shooting onward. The river was no longer a winding stream, but a broad sheet of water. He could feel the current running strongly to the sea, and was deeply thankful that it should be going out instead of coming in against him.

His eyes were aching with the effort to see ahead into the darkness, when low on the horizon appeared a new

light, not a star of the heavens, but veritably a star of hope to the weary lad—the lantern in St. Philip's Church! This lantern was hung there to guide mariners to port, and never was its friendly beam more welcome to any mariner.

A constable on duty was tramping along the sea wall on his lonely night watch. Thinking he heard a voice calling from below the wall, he held his lantern out over the water to see who could be out there in the dark at this hour of the morning. His jaw dropped in amazement when the flickering light illumined a little canoe, and a white-faced boy occupying it.

“Please give me a hand,” gasped Beau, “I am so stiff, I can hardly move—”

The watchman pulled him up on the wall, helped rub the cramp out of his aching muscles. When Beau had told his story, he blew his whistle for another constable, who came running.

“Mate,” said the first, “take over my watch with yours; there's no time to be lost! This lad's all the way from the plantations, alone! The Cherokees are out; he's come for help from Cap'n Middleton and the Riflemen. I'll go with him to rouse them!”

In the early dawn, with the air fresh and sweet and the shadows long on the grass, the British Regulars were already on the march to the relief of the Indian-infested country. They drew to the side of the highway to let pass



the Charleston Riflemen. Mounted on the fleet Carolina-bred horses of which they were justly proud, they galloped down the Broad Path, as the highway was then known, on their way to the rescue of River Lea. Beau rode with them.

There was a fierce, short fight, of which Beau kept only a blurred memory of the crash and rattle of musket fire, the shouts of the Riflemen, the yelling savages. Shutters were flung wide in the upper windows of River Lea House as the defenders, their spirits renewed, cheered the coming of their rescuers, and expended the last of the hoarded ammunition in a crossfire attack.

And when at last the Indians had been driven off, and the doors of the house opened again to welcome these good friends who had come so swiftly to their aid, Beau stumbled, exhausted and half-dead with sleep into his mother's arms. Dimly he could hear Captain Middleton say to his father, who was white-faced and drawn from the terrible strain of the long hours of horror:

"You can well be proud of the lad, Denham. He will make a good soldier, and I'll warrant we will be needing them. Not against Indians only, before he's a man grown; but for these damned Writs of Assistance. They'll be the means of provoking a war between our King and His Majesty's colonies. Mark my words!"

Beau wearily opened his eyes, and smiled at his father:

“Then sir,” he said, “the *Luck* will be drawn for God, my country and the ladies, God bless them!” And he laid his back against his mother’s shoulder, and drew her arm around his neck.







## CHAPTER VIII

1779

### *THE FORT IS OURS!*

When the Colonies Revolted Against  
Unjust Laws and an Alien King

*In which is told a very little of how John Donham called Goodman, fared in New England. How a descendant of his bore in his heart the motto written on the LUCK. And how a New England Dunham, a Carolinian Denham, and an English Donham, though unknown to each other, see a new nation born in 1779.*





**T**HE first dim light of morning showed in the eastern sky, touching pale the waters of Narragansett Bay. A rooster sent out his shrill salutation to the dawn. There was no stately manor here, just a white farmhouse of the type of most New England farmhouses. It was as simple and plain as were that little band of Pilgrims with whom a youth called John Goodman had come to make a home in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. As the years had passed on, he had once more taken the name of his fathers. And as the settlements grew, children of his had moved on to settle here in Rhode Island.

In the attic of the Dunham farm, Daniel Dunham

turned over on his cot, thrust a tousled head from under the bed coverings, blinked his eyes, and then drew his head back, very much as a turtle retreats into its shell. But the rooster crowed again, and his challenge was sent back by another and yet another from neighboring farms. Daniel, with a disgusted grunt, sat up rubbing his sleepy eyes. He shivered in the chilly air and pulled the gay patchwork quilt up over his shoulders.

But that would not do! He had to get up and feed the cows. He had to start the fire on the kitchen hearth so that there would be breakfast when the chores were done. Besides, he had come to a great decision last night before he went to sleep, and that must be discussed with father and mother. He resolutely pushed back the bed coverings, and jumped out onto the icy floor.

Two younger boys still slept peacefully in the big double bed. Daniel looked at them speculatively as he scrambled into his rough homespun breeches and jacket, and he decided against waking them. They would have to do their own waking soon enough if he carried out his intentions, he thought. He crossed the room, and bent to lift the trap door that shut in the narrow stairway. The bed creaked as David rolled over, and snuggled down again with a contented little snore, while the heavy warm quilt slipped slowly to the floor. Jesse on the other side of the bed made a little whimpering protest, and pulled the sheet up under his round rosy chin.



Daniel tiptoed softly back and gently pulled the quilt back into place.

“You’d better make the best of it while you can!” he nodded to the two humped figures in the bed, as he slowly lowered the trap door over his head. He hurried quietly down the stair, stopped in the big kitchen, where he built up the fire, and swung the crane holding a great pot of porridge, over it. Then he let himself out of the kitchen door.

For the space of two or three minutes he stood there, forgetful of his work and revelling in the beauty of the morning—the gold and bronze of the autumn trees, slashed by the brilliant crimson of maple leaves; the far blue hills; the serene, unruffled water of the bay reflecting the brightening sky. The air smelled clean and fresh, spicy with the perfume of ripe apples. Daniel suddenly had a great longing to be going out adventuring, care-free and happy, over the water, beyond the hills. He was thinking of his ancestors, in the stories his father sometimes told on winter evenings sitting before the fire.

Well, he was going adventuring! It would be grim and hard, though, for General Washington needed more troops. Daniel was tall and strong for his age, many boys of fourteen or fifteen had gone, and his father was too lame to serve with the army. But the thought of his father, the sounds of an awakening household, and the lowing of the cattle brought him back to the immediate

duties to be performed before breakfast could be eaten.

When he returned to the house, he stopped outside the door to wash. A shiny tin basin stood on a shelf beside the big rainwater barrel. His father was already there, rubbing the water from his ruddy face and curling beard with a rough towel. He was a large powerful man for all his lameness, with a genial and humorous twinkle in his blue eyes that endeared him to everyone.

“Good morning, son,” he said cheerily. “Finished my chores ahead of you today! The water is cold, but it will make you all the more ready for breakfast, and I think I smell sausage and hoecake!”

Dan splashed the cold water over his face and head, scrubbed his hands, slicked his thick fair hair down and went in, his cheeks rosy and his blue eyes shining.

By now the bright sun shone through the many-paned windows of the low ceiled kitchen. The floor was freshly scrubbed and sanded. It was a pleasant cheerful room, and the whole family gathered around the table while Deacon Dunham said a simple blessing. He followed it by a prayer for the safety and welfare of General Washington and the cause of liberty.

Daniel ate in silence for a time, busy with his thoughts. At last he looked up to find his father watching him with sympathetic eyes.

“Well, son, what is on your mind?” he asked. “You must have thought it all out by now.”

“How did you know I was thinking something out, Father?” asked Daniel, in surprise.

“And were you not?” Very gravely came the question.

“Yes, sir, it’s this. I must be off to enlist in the army. They need men, you cannot go. I am a good marksman, I am as big as most men, and I ought to go. It isn’t as if you didn’t have David and Jesse to help you with the farm—”

“But, Dan!” broke in Deborah, who was a year older than her brother, “you are much too young, and you are so nearly ready to go up to Harvard!”

“Hush, Deborah,” said their mother. “Your father and I have been expecting this. We cannot expect him to stay home in safety when the need of the country is so great.” She spoke so calmly that Deborah gazed at her in wonder. But Daniel, glancing at her swiftly, saw the pain deep down in the steadfast grey eyes that were watching him lovingly. Gently he reached out his hand and covered hers clenched tightly under the table.

“My boy,” said Deacon Dunham, “I have realized for some time you were becoming restive under all the insults and ignominies that the British here in Newport are putting on our folk, even since Colonel Barton succeeded in capturing General Prescott. But remember that they are not all like that. There are Englishmen, such as Pitt, whose sympathies are with us in our fight for liberty. Do not go into this war with hate in your



heart; rather with a cool courage and determination. Remember that our forefathers came to this land to find freedom to worship God, and liberty, which God willing, we will yet attain! The motto our family bore in England was, Always Faithful; we make little of such things, but it is good to remember! Have you made any plan as to how and where you will go?"

"Yes, Father. Captain Adams is going to rejoin his regiment in Connecticut. He will take me with him, if I can get across the bay to meet him before noon today."

"So soon, Dan?" asked his mother softly. "For how long shall you enlist?"

"Until we have won!" answered the boy. "There have been too many short enlistments, Captain Adams says, with the men leaving to go home to tend crops. They are organizing a new corps, where every man enlists to the end."

"But, why can't I go too?" demanded Jesse, "I can beat a drum! I could beat a drum as loud as anyone!"

This made them all laugh, and when a little later in the morning with a few necessary things packed into a knapsack, Dan bid them all a sad farewell, Jesse was still begging to be allowed to go with him.

"I want to be faithful too!" he said. "Can't I, please?"

His mother put her arm around his sturdy little shoulders, hugging him close, and answered:

"You must stay home and be faithful to us and your

work till you are bigger, little son. We will need you and David, you know!”

\* \* \* \* \*

On a dark night in July, 1779, a private soldier tramped back and forth, musket on his shoulder, in front of a farmhouse high above the Hudson River, where it narrows to run between towering cliffs on either side. He was Private Daniel Dunham of the Fourth Battalion of the Light Infantry Corps, sun-burnt, sturdy and very smart in his blue and buff uniform. As he tramped to and fro on his beat, keeping an alert watch on everything about him, his thoughts roamed over the two years that had passed since he left home. They were two long years of hard fighting and hard living, full of dangers and privations that had made a man of him at sixteen. He was very proud of his assignment to the Light Infantry. Together with all the men in the command he admired and loved their leader, the brilliant, daring General Anthony Wayne. Because of his reckless bravery and ready resource, they had nicknamed him “Mad Anthony.”

Dan knew there was something important going on in the farmhouse that night. Just after dark, a party of men on horseback had ridden up and gone inside with Colonel Febiger of the First Battalion. There were lights behind the shuttered windows, and the faint rumble of low voices. The men had been in there nearly

two hours. Dan swung on his beat, and tramped toward the door of the house. Just as he reached the path, the door opened.

The light from inside illumined Wayne's keen face, with its beak-like nose and square, determined chin. It threw into sharp silhouette the figure of his companion, a man of more than ordinary size, broad-shouldered, with a splendid military carriage. With a thrill Dan realized that it could be no other than General Washington. As he brought his musket sharply to salute, he heard General Wayne speak:

"I would storm hell, General, if you would only plan it," he said emphatically.

"Hadn't we better try the other first?" the Commander-in-chief's deep voice replied, and they both laughed, as they stepped outside.

Wayne's sharp eyes caught sight of the boy standing stiffly at attention, and he gave him a quick scrutiny.

"I want a word with you, sentry, when I return. Wait here." And rejoining his companion, they walked on to where General Washington's horse and escort waited. After a few minutes' more talk, General Washington mounted, and the horsemen rode off into the night. Wayne stood watching them out of sight, and then slowly returned. He was deep in thought as he passed Dan, still standing at attention waiting for him.

Dan knew that it was not the place of a private sol-



dier to address his commanding officer. He wondered just what he was to do, when General Wayne entered the house and closed the door behind him. Dan was supposedly on guard duty on a beat. But his commanding officer had given him orders to wait here until he returned to speak to him. It was an embarrassing position to be in.

There was still a light inside. Dan could not tell whether the officers of his own regiment had gone out by the other door through which General Washington's escort had passed to rejoin him, or if they were still in the house.

He was beginning to get stiff standing there, when the door opened again. Colonel Febiger, Colonel Fleury—a Frenchman—and Colonel Butler of his own regiment came out together, he heard Colonel Butler's gruff "Good night, sir." Colonel Fleury's lighter tones "*Bon soir, mon chère générale!*" and General Wayne's voice from inside answering. Then Febiger caught sight of him at the side of the path:

"What are you doing standing there, sentry? Why are you not on your rounds?" he asked sharply.

"The General told me to wait here, sir," Dan answered.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" Colonel Febiger ejaculated, and turning he re-entered the house. An instant later he once more came out.

“General Wayne says for you to step inside, sentry, he has something to say to you. I’ll tell the other sentry on the go to relieve you until the General dismisses you.” He returned Dan’s salute, and went on his way.

From the small entry hall, Dan went into a room at the left where were a few lights. General Wayne sat at a large table, on which were spread maps, pens, an ink-horn, a few empty goblets. Several chairs pushed back as their occupants had left them, stood about it. The General looked up as he entered.

“You are the sentry who was outside as I came out? Did you know the officer with me at the time?”

Dan hesitated. Was this a time when it was better to have been blind, he wondered? Perhaps it was, but he had been brought up to speak the truth, no matter what the consequences.

“Yes, sir. It was the Commander-in-chief, sir,” he answered.

“Did you hear anything that was said?”

“Yes, sir.”

“What, exactly did you hear?”

“I heard you say, sir, that you’d storm hell for him. I guess we all would, sir, if you would lead us!”

The general’s lips twitched into a smile. “Thank you, sentry. Now answer me truthfully. What did you understand me to mean?”

“Stony Point, sir. It’s pretty heavily fortified. It

would be hard to take, but General Washington wants King's Ferry again. That's pretty generally known."

"What do you know of the fortifications there, sentry, or is that something else 'pretty generally known'?"

"Well, sir, I've seen it."

"You have seen it?" The general's keen eyes bored into him. "Now look here, boy. Tell me when you saw it, what you saw of the fortifications."

"Perhaps I ought not to have done it, sir, but yesterday, when I was off duty, I thought I'd try to climb Donderberg Mountain. I picked up quite a bit of woodcraft from some of our Indian guides, sir. I got around to the front without much difficulty. There are a lot of rocky ledges. Guess they have been used rather often as vidette posts by both the British and our men when we held Stony Point.

"Anyway, I came out on one, lay down and wriggled over to the edge. I could see all over the country, sir! The British frigate *Vulture* anchored in the river; Fort Lafayette over at Verplank's Landing, and right down into Stony Point. They have set up two lines of abatis made of tree trunks and brush, and what looked like a series of redoubts with some twelve pounders mounted in them. That's about all, I think, sir."

"H-m-m. What's your name?"

"Daniel Dunham, sir. Fourth Company, Major Hull's Battalion."



The general sat silent for a moment, drawing imaginary lines with a dry penpoint on one of the maps. Then having evidently come to a decision, he looked up with his quick, keen glance.

“Could you take me there, do you think, Dunham?” he asked.

“Why-er—yes, sir.” Dan answered a little doubtfully. “It’s a pretty stiff climb though, sir. The forest is pretty thick, and there are only a few trails.”

There was an instant’s pause, then General Wayne’s face relaxed, and he broke into a shout of laughter.

“Am I getting fat, is it my uniform, or do I really seem so ancient to you, Dunham?” he asked at last, with a broad grin. “Well, never mind—” With a quick return to his former manner he continued, “Report here by nine o’clock in the morning. You will accompany me up the mountain. Here,” he picked up a sheet of paper, and scribbled a line on it, “give this to your sergeant; you are relieved from further duty for tonight. Get to bed and to sleep. It’s a hard climb even for the young and slim. And Dunham,” his voice changed and became hard, cold, and menacing, “mark me. If any word of this escapes your lips, it will mean instant death! I will not suffer any one to pass with his life who betrays or in anyway endangers the cause! That is all.” He was deep in his work again, before Dan was out of the room.

The man to whom Dan reported the following morning, was a very different person from the military commander in his handsome uniform, his white wig, his ruffled shirt and high stock. This man wore just such clothes as Dan himself wore—rough clothes fit for forest running or mountain climbing. The General's naturally dark hair clipped close under his broad-brimmed hat made him almost unrecognizable. Long before they were halfway to their destination, Dan had lost his awe of him, and was talking as freely as to his father, or even as to his own friends. Dressed this way the general indeed seemed very little older than many of his chosen friends.

He asked Dan about his home and his family, and told of his own childhood, and the despair of the good old uncle who was educating him, because of his preference for organizing his boy friends into armies and conducting mimic battles! He told too of his school days in Philadelphia; he spoke with admiration, of General Washington's leadership; of the great advantage to the Continental Army in the formation of the land in New Jersey and New York. All the time they were working their way higher and higher, up the steep slopes of the mountain.

At last they came to a little trail. Dan recognized it as the one along which he had gone to the rocky ledge and from which he had been able to look down into the

fort. The two men moved forward cautiously. However, there was no sign of lookouts. The British were quite unaware of the nearness of the American army, and felt perfectly secure in their strong little fortress.

After a thorough survey of the situation, the General moved back on the ledge and sitting with his back against the wall of rock, he started making notes and drawing a diagram of the fort.

“Ugly place to attack!” he muttered as he worked. Dan, who had been lying on the edge looking down at the river and the fort jutting out into it, rolled over and sat up, his eyes shining.

“It reminds me of a story my father used to tell me, sir, about how the English seaman, Admiral Drake, long ago attacked and conquered the Spanish port of Cartagena. It was like this place—the only entrance, a causeway—”

“Yes,” the General had laid down his pencil, and was looking at him intently, “and how did they attack?”

“They made their way along the edge through the water. The Spaniards were taken entirely by surprise, and Drake conquered the city.”

“Not a bad suggestion. Might very well apply it here.” He studied his sketch again, put in a few lines, moved over to where he could once more look into the fortress, staring down at it as though picturing the action. Then he shoved the papers into his pockets.



“Come along. This will do for the time. And if you can hold your tongue, there may be a promotion in this for you. Not promising anything, understand—” he swung about and plunged into the thicket on the downward trail. Dan followed, his heart beating high with pride and admiration for his general.

For the next few days, the Light Infantry Corps worked as it had never worked before. Drill, drill, drill, and always more drill with the bayonet; and rumor flew like wildfire through the camp, though nothing was confirmed. The men knew that there had been several scouting parties, that even General Washington had gone with General Wayne and an escort of horsemen under General Lee, somewhere—it was not known where! There were small parties out guarding the roads to keep information regarding them from reaching the British. Then, one day a scout detail came in with the news that they had been out hunting dogs, that all dogs at nearby farms had either been killed or sent away!

“Now, what do you suppose that was for?” asked Peter Van Horne of his friend Daniel Dunham. The two were sitting outside Dan’s tent. The day had been intensely hot, heavy, and close, with the sky seeming like a blue metallic bowl pressed down over them. Now the night was breathless, though heavy clouds were slowly piling up behind the mountains. And now and again there came a rumble of approaching thunder.

“Can’t guess,” said Dan, looking up from the letter he was writing to his mother to tell her of his promotion to sergeant. “Maybe they were keeping someone awake at night! Glory, but it’s hot!”

“Isn’t it, though! Do you think that thunderstorm will get here? It might cool things off and make that eternal bayonet drill Mad Anthony is so crazy about a little less unbearable! What do you think he’s planning, Dan?”

“Strangely enough, Pete, he hasn’t consulted me on that point. And of course you know generals usually do consult some obscure little sergeant before they make their plans!”

“Oh, if you are going to be smarty, I’ll go find some one else to talk to! Your new rank has made you awfully close-mouthed,” and Peter got to his feet in a huff.

“I’m sorry, Pete, really. I just wanted to finish my letter. Oh, hello, it’s raining. Let’s go in and get some sleep; perhaps it will get cooler.” He picked up his writing things, kicked the two stools inside the tent, and with his arm over Peter’s shoulder, the two went inside.

But the rain was only a shower, and did not cool the air very much. The next morning after inspection, instead of the customary bayonet drill, the entire brigade was ordered out on the march under full equipment. They were given no destination, but as they swung

southward along the river, excitement and eagerness for the anticipated action ran high. The men found it difficult to restrain themselves.

Through steep and narrow trails, they wound their way. On all sides were towering rocky crags and thick forests. The air was heavy and still. At a brawling, noisy little creek, they were halted to drink, and to eat their slim rations. There they were given their first orders that indicated definite action; thereafter marching was to be in single file, and in silence.

Over the foot of Donderberg Mountain, and out into a valley dotted with lonely farms they went, until as darkness fell they were halted for another rest. In a hollow concealed from the river the entire brigade lay hidden, awaiting the final orders that should call them to arms.

Dan listened to the orders read in a low tone and stuck the bit of white paper given him in his hat. This was so that they might know which were their own men. For there had been one battle in the dark, where in the confusion there had been no way to distinguish friend from foe. Wayne wanted no such catastrophe again. Dan had been detailed, with nineteen other men under Lieutenant Gibbon, to lead the left wing to the front line of the abatis, and to cut through it, opening the way for the rest of the column. They were to have no charges for their muskets, except for the center column,



which was to attack straight along the causeway, after the opening had been made.

Silently they made their way forward. The tide was out in the river and Dan felt the scratch of rushes against his legs. Then waist deep they struck out at an angle till they reached the steep rocky bank. But somewhere, a picket heard the splash of water, caught the glint of light on a bayonet, and fired his gun to give the alarm. A drum in the fort rolled out its call to arms.

Then Dan realized they had reached the tangled mass of tree trunks and brush. His axe was swinging into it, along with the others. He could feel it go down under the steady blows. Another instant and he was over the ramparts. Throwing aside his axe, he unslung his bayoneted musket, and charged with his comrades into the midst of the fort.

From the right he could hear the triumphant shout of the watchword: "The fort is ours! The fort is ours!" From the center came the sharp rattle and crack of musket fire, mingled with the roar of the British cannon.

The fight did not last long. Even the British cannon could not stop the furious assault that was coming from all sides. It was redoubled, as the men caught the news that General Wayne was wounded. Then came the cry of "Surrender! Mercy! Mercy!"

Dan heard it, and even in the madness of the fight withheld a thrust of his poised bayonet; for as in other

battles there came to him a quick memory of his father's words: "Do not go with hate in your heart!" The British were throwing down their muskets, and on every side the Americans had ceased their attack. They had won!

Pushing his way forward through British and Americans, past the dead and the wounded, Dan came to where a group of officers had gathered. In the center wearing a head bandage through which a red stain had spread, General Wayne stood facing the British colonel who had been in command. The Englishman drew his sword and offered it hilt first, to the General.

"Sir," he said in a low voice, so low Dan could barely hear it, "I feel it no disgrace to offer my sword in surrender to the man who could plan and execute such a brilliant project, and not the least of your triumph is that in your hour of glory, your men heeded the cry for mercy."

Dan drew a deep breath of relief as he heard the General's voice make a reply. He was about to turn away when he felt the General's eyes meet his own, and he signalled Dan to come to him. The Colonel had left when Dan reached him, but his aides and Colonel Febiger were there still, and he leant heavily on Lieutenant Fishbourne's arm.

"Glad to see you came through it safely, sergeant," he said, "I shall be sending a communication to Gen-

eral Washington in an hour. You shall carry it, 'Brevet-Ensign' Dunham." He smiled at the dawning surprise on the boy's face.

\* \* \* \* \*

There were two more years of the long struggle. Then, down on the shore of the York River where Count de Grasse's great ships lay at anchor; where after the ten-day battle that had ended in surrender the armies of Washington and Rochambeau were encamped; where the troops of Lord Cornwallis were slowly stacking their guns before the long lines of American troops and their French allies, it was here that Ensign Dan Dunham at last found time to stroll leisurely down the street of the little, shot-torn village of Yorktown. The road was ploughed with furrows made by cannon balls and rutted with the tracks of heavy artillery wagons. The brick houses, scarred and seamed with bullet and shot, interested him hugely. In all his four years with the army, he had never before been in the South, and it was all very new and different to his New England eyes. He observed the stately, square brick houses, with their white doorways and deep porches; gardens, that even so late in the fall, still were a riot of flowers. He rather wondered how it would feel to live in one of these homes; to be waited on by Negro slaves, with nothing to do he supposed, but ride about superintending things.



And Dan decided that, after all, he much preferred his own New England farm.

He stopped by the side of the road to watch a handsome bay mare picking her way daintily through the muddy street. Her rider was a Major in one of the Carolina regiments. Dan, without a thought of envy in his heart, admired the sleek beautiful animal and the well-tailored set of the man's buckskin breeches and blue uniform coat. Dan also noticed the Sword swinging against the Major's leg and showing a glint of jewels in its hilt. Lucky man, to have a sword like that, thought Dan.

The major returned Dan's salute, reined in the mare, and with a quick pleasant smile, asked if Dan happened to know whether the house he was approaching was one where certain British prisoners were quartered.

"I don't know," answered Dan frankly, "I guess so, there's a soldier on guard at the door. Were you looking for someone?" Dan felt a warm, unaccountable liking for this stranger, quite apart from his handsome face and accoutrements, his pleasant manner or the beautiful horse he rode. There was something oddly familiar about him, and Dan wanted to hear his voice again, with its soft, southern drawl.

"I went to school in England as a boy," smiled the Major, "and I am told there is an old school friend of mine here. I'll stop and ask. Thank you!" he called

back, as the mare moved impatiently away to the south.

Dan watched him go in, saw him come out again a few minutes later, spring into the saddle and ride away. He would probably never see him again, there were so many officers here. Already a good many regiments—particularly the Carolina ones—were moving on.

He walked slowly past the house. In the window, two British officers sat at a table there, lazily playing a game of cards to while away the time. A scrap of their talk drifted out to Dan.

“By Jove!” exclaimed one, “That Yankee chap here just now called himself Major Francis Denham—I’ve got it. I mean, who he looked like as he stood there, with his hand on his sword! He might have stepped out of one of the portraits at Donham Manor, the family seat of my uncle, Lord Donham. He was the one who made his son resign from the Guards because, he said, y’know, that some member of the family had come to the Colonies generations back, and he might be killing his own kith and kin. Almost the same name, too. Odd, what?”

It was odd, thought Dan, for the name sounded like his too. He was tempted to go in and ask the Britishers about it, but high and far a bugle blew calling the men back to camp. Dan hurried to answer its summons, and the moment when the three branches of the Donham family might have met, had passed.



## CHAPTER IX

1865

### *THE HOUSE IN THE SOUTH*

When North and South Met in Civil War

*In which a Dunham from the North rides into the South in 1865. Where the LUCK, for many years now only a ceremonial sword worn on State occasions and to balls, has once more been drawn in warfare. Where a Dunham meets a Denham and rescues an old portrait, as a second old house suffers from a civil war.*





**I**N the early spring of the year 1865, the Union Army under General Sherman having fought its way through the South to Georgia, was slowly working back up through the Carolinas, the desperate Confederates disputing every mile of the route. Word had come in to Union Headquarters, that a clever Confederate spy was operating from a certain big plantation house in the Tidewater section. Orders had forthwith been given to the colonel of a Massachusetts regiment deploying on the left wing of the army to make a thorough search. If possible, he was to capture the spy and put a stop to the source of information to the enemy.

In River Lea House, toward which Colonel Dunham

of the regiment was leading his men, Frank Denham leaned against the edge of his mother's dressing table watching the movement of her slender fingers. She was patching his jacket which had already stood rather more mending than had seemed possible.

"There, honey," she told him as she took the final stitch, "I think that will last a little longer. I hope so, as it is almost the last of yo' daddy's clothes. What we will do when they are all gone, I really do not know!"

"It looks beautiful, Mummy, I don't mind mends. You do it so that it looks like part of the jacket," he answered admiringly, as he slipped it on. He picked up her scissors and an end of thread, snipping it off in minute bits, "Mummy, that Yankee army is gettin' very near, isn't it?" he asked, keeping his eyes fixed on his piece of thread.

"Yes, honey," she answered gravely, "it is. So near, that if it were not for the old secret passage, I could no longer get any information through to our army."

"Mummy," he cried desperately, "suppose they should catch you! Oh, suppose they should come here and catch you!"

"They mustn't catch me, sweetheart, I wouldn't be much use to the Confederacy if they did! Don't you worry, we have fooled them before, you an' Hannibal an' Mammy and I! And we will again, if we need to!"

Frank turned to the window and gazed down the long



avenue, his face troubled. "Don't you hear noises, Mummy? Sounds? Like trampin'? Listen, isn't that a bugle call?"

She joined him, putting her arm around his shoulder, and listened. "Maybe you are right, honey. Send Mammy to me. If anyone should come, there is no one in the house but you and your grandmother, who is very ill! Hurry, dear. I trust you to do your part!"

The approaching regiment had come to a halt. Colonel Dunham rode forward to the great wrought-iron gates that barred the road before them. They were very beautiful gates, and the bolt that held them shut was fashioned like a sword, slim and perfect in design. The Colonel turned to his adjutant:

"Odd, isn't it? I wonder what its significance is. These wealthy Southern plantations have had so many romances woven about them."

His call brought out an old, bent Negro from the lodge to open the gate to them.

"Afta-noon, Cunnel," he said, "You'm a-wantin' to go up yondah to de gret house, suh? Yessuh," and he drew the sword from out of its clamp.

"What is the sword for, uncle?" queried the colonel leaning from his saddle, with a quick pleasant smile for the old man.

"Lawtsy, suh, ah dunno. It sho' ain't no use in tryin' to keep you-all Yankees out, dat's certain! Hit look lak

Massa's Sword, but dis un jes' fasten de gate, ah reckon!" Grumbling, he stumped back to his little cottage.

The Colonel rode slowly up the wide road. Straight away it stretched, a magnificent driveway bordered on either hand with a double row of ancient live oaks. As he advanced, the house came into view. Framed in the drifting grey moss that garlanded the trees, it stood stately yet hospitable for all its unkempt appearance. Deep-fronted, of old, rose-colored brick with many high twisted chimneys, it had he thought an Old World look. Ivy and rose vines clambered over it. A wide terrace stretched across its front.

He dropped the reins over the head of his big grey cavalry horse, dismounted, and leaving his adjutant below, he went up the steps. The door stood slightly open, letting in the soft warm spring air. He lifted the heavy iron knocker; the crash of it reverberated from the deep hall beyond. He waited, but there was no answer, and after a second attempt, he stepped through the open door into a great, dim, cool hall. A beautifully carved staircase swept upward in a gracious curve before him. Through a window beyond, he could catch a glimpse of terraced gardens stretching down to the river's edge.

A slight sound drew his eyes to the right. The fitful glow from a smouldering fire on the hearth lit up a small erect figure, standing in a doorway. An indignant young voice questioned his entrance.

“I am Colonel Dunham of the Federal Army, now occupying this territory. May I speak to your—parents? Or the head of the family?”

“I am the head of the family, suh,” was the haughty reply.

“I beg your pardon!” said the Colonel gravely. He gave a quick thought to his own carefree youngster about this boy’s age, at home with mother, brothers and sisters in the comfortable, homely little white house in the little New England town. “I must notify you of the necessity of quartering my troops on your plantation for the time being. I will endeavor to see that they commit no nuisance.”

“I have no way to forbid it, suh!” was the answer. “But I will ask you to try to keep your men away from the house. My grandmother is very ill; she is upstairs.”

“And is there no one else here?”

“Some of the servants, suh,” he added quickly, for though he knew that of all the big staff of house servants River Lea plantation had once had, there were left only Hannibal and Mammy and their son, Cassius, it might be as well not to let the Yankees know it.

The Colonel stood thinking for an instant. “If you can accommodate me and a couple of my officers in the house, I think I can arrange the rest satisfactorily,” he said finally. “Only, first I must search the house.”

“Search the house, suh!”



“Yes, my errand makes that imperative. I am warned that there is a rebel spy hereabouts. If he is here, he will be caught.”

The boy's fair face flushed angrily, and he made as though to interrupt. But the Colonel continued steadily:

“Sorry, my boy, but it's the fortunes of war, which you seem luckily to have escaped so far.”

“Escaped!” and there was a world of grown-up bitterness in the boyish voice. “Very well, suh. Search, and be damned to you!” But his voice broke on a sob.

Colonel Dunham stepped out on the terrace, and sent an order for a detail of his men to guard all sides of the house, and prevent anyone from leaving on any pretext. When he returned, accompanied by his adjutant, the boy was standing where he had left him.

In silence, they mounted the staircase. From the top of the house down, room after room, they searched carefully, and there seemed an endless number of rooms.

“Gosh, Colonel,” ejaculated the young adjutant. “what did they do with so many rooms? We could nearly quarter the whole regiment here!”

In utter silence the boy led them around. On the second floor he stopped before a closed door, his hand on the knob. “This is my grandmothah's room, suh, may I ask that you entah alone?”

“Don't do it, Colonel!” said the irrepressible adjutant. “It's a trap!”

“Suh, the Denhams are gentlemen, and know when they are dealing with one! Colonel, she doesn’t know anyone. If you are very quiet, you won’t disturb her.”

“Denham, eh? And a sword! Well, here’s an odd coincidence!” muttered the Colonel; then to his adjutant: “It is all right, Lieutenant; wait here!” And he crossed the threshold.

On a huge mahogany bed with high carved posts, lay a little old lady with snowy hair. Her eyes were closed, one frail, blue-veined hand rested on the counterpane. She seemed scarcely to breathe. By her side, a Negress, slowly swaying back and forth in a rocking chair, looked up as they came in and whispered:

“Marse Frank, Marse Frank honey, yo’ hadn’t oughter bring nobody in here! Ole Miss, she mus’n’t be ’sturbed!”

“Very well, Mammy Pheely. This officer just wants to be suah Grandmothah isn’t hidin’ any spies in her room!”

“Sorry, madam, it is an unpleasant duty that must be done.” Colonel Dunham entered quietly, and made his inspection swiftly but thoroughly. As he passed the great bed where the sick woman lay, the delicate eyelids lifted, the eyes looked straight at him:

“Always faithful,” she murmured faintly, with a whimsical little smile, and closed her eyes again, though the little smile remained as they left the room.

Frank led the Colonel down the stairs into the great hall below. They passed through charming reception rooms, into a library filled with bookcases and comfortable chairs. The room was lighted with a wide bay window. The sunlight streamed in through diamond-shaped panes of glass in the center of which was set a coat of arms. While Colonel Dunham and his adjutant measured the depth of bookcases, tapped panels and discussed the possibilities of concealed hiding places, Frank watched them with amusement.

“Wouldn’t it be exciting if you really found something there?” he suggested, “I always wanted so much to have a secret hiding place in the house.”

After a fruitless search, they went on to the dining room, filled with gleaming mahogany. At the end of the room hung a full-length portrait of a handsome young officer in Confederate gray.

“That is my fathah,” said Frank, proudly, “and my grandfathah, at the other end. They always hang so. When I am grown and have a son, my portrait will hang in Daddy’s place, and his in Granddaddy’s.”

So they made the rounds, coming at last to the long picture gallery on the other side of the great hall, where hung the paintings of the belles and beaux of past generations. Smiling beauties, in white satin with powdered wigs. Men in silks and velvets, and plumed hats, each wearing proudly a slim, jeweled dress Sword. Lovely



ladies in crinolines and curls; men in uniforms. All were gazing calmly down on this young son of their race.

Over the fireplace, the portrait of a man caught and held the Colonel's attention. For the cool, insolent, amused eyes seemed to follow every move they made, only to be gazing out over his head when he examined it. He turned to the boy at his side.

"Of whom is this a portrait, if I may ask?" he said. "There is a strange fascination about it; he seems to smile. Yet there is an infinite sadness back of it, and oddly enough, I feel as if he were someone I know!"

The boy laughed, for the first time in a friendly way: "That is odd, suh, indeed. Most people say he is wicked lookin'. He is the first Francis Denham. We always have a Francis Denham in the family. There is a legend that this first one was named for the English pirate, Drake."

They returned to the great hall finally; and in all the big house, from top to bottom was found no hint nor trace of the suspected spy.

The Colonel dispatched his adjutant, with orders for the regiment's disposal on the plantation; and himself, settled down in the library for consultation with a couple of his officers.

Dinner was announced to them, with a formality strange in these war-torn days, by a little Negro boy.

They followed him into the dining room, where they were greeted by Frank, with the poise and courtesy of an equal.

Candles shone in the dusky, dark-panelled room. The meal though scanty and very simple, was served from beautiful old china and silver, by a dignified Negro butler. They had nearly finished, when the Colonel heard his orderly, at the door of the room, arguing heatedly with the butler.

“What is it, O’Reilly?” he asked, raising his voice slightly.

“Will the Colonel plaize tell this naygur to be afther lettin’ me in to him? ’Tis a message I have for the Colonel!”

“May I take the liberty to give an order to your servant? Hannibal, O’Reilly is my orderly. Let him in.”

“Yessuh, yessuh, ef yo-all says so! But here, gemplemen doan’ like to be ’sturbed at dinner wid business, no suh! Go in, so-ger.” The picture of offended dignity, Hannibal stepped aside to let the orderly in. The message being a regimental matter, the Colonel rose hastily, beckoned to his adjutant, and the two left the room.

Frank looked after them anxiously. This matter of being master of River Lea Plantation was not easy, but at least he had managed to quiet the Yankees’ suspicions of a spy! The big old house had appeared innocent enough! He chuckled softly. Oh, but they had

fooled these soldiers! He slid out of his chair: "Excuse me, please, gentlemen. I must go to see how my grandmothah is."

"Where is your famous Southern hospitality, youngster?" jeered one of the officers. "How about some coffee to top off this skimpy meal your niggers have given us?"

"We haven't had coffee here, suh, for a year! If you-all want that, you had better get back to your camp, and eat the food you stole from us, instead of sittin' at a gentleman's table where you don't belong!"

"Why, you impudent little nigger-driver, you! I'll teach you to talk differently to an officer of the United States Army!" And he started up from his chair.

"Oh, shut up, Hicks," cut in the second. "Can't you try to be decent and act like a gentleman, even if the Colonel is not here? You provoked the boy."

Frank turned and walked out of the room. But once through the door he ran as though with wings on his heels, across the hall and up the stairs. At the door of the room where his supposed grandmother lay ill, he rapped out a quick little signal.

"Come in!" called his mother's soft voice.

Two candles burned on the dressing table, in whose mirror was reflected the pretty face of the slim, dark-haired young woman. She smiled over her shoulder at the boy: "Well, honey?" she said.



“Mothah darlin’, you were wonderful! An’ so was Mammy Pheely! The Yankee colonel is nice. Isn’t it funny, Mummy? He’s a Yankee, but he *is* nice. And doesn’t he look like Daddy? Was that why you said what you did to him? I was scared then! But those others are beasts, Mummy!”

“Nev’ mind, Frank honey, we’ll beat them yet! I am afraid of that Colonel, though. He is cleverer than the others who have come here, and he mustn’t have any reason to suspect that your Grandmothah is neither so old nor so ill as she appears to be, or he might realize that the spy he’s lookin’ for could be a woman! You may have to help again, darlin’.”

“I wish I could help more, Mummy. If I were only bigger, I could do more!”

“Sweetheart, Mummy wants her little boy. It’s hard enough havin’ her big boy out there, in danger—Oh, if this horrible war was over, and your daddy was home again, with the darkies singin’ in the fields and cabins, and their pickaninnies playin’ around—no, darlin’, I’m not cryin’, and I am glad I can help the Confederacy! But this Yankee Colonel does look so like Daddy, and he is a gentleman. I’d so much rather just think they were all Yankees!”

Night came down over the big, old house, patterned with such loving care from a yet older house in England, by a homesick man. Across the plantation came the

many sounds of the encampment of the Union soldiers. Back and forth on the terrace paced a sentry. Somewhere on the second floor slept the two young officers, and on the couch in the library lay the Colonel of the regiment.

Tired out, he had thrown himself down for a much needed rest. So soundly did he sleep that even the protesting creak of a stair under the light pressure of swift-moving young feet did not disturb him.

In the dark, silent hall, Frank stood listening. Reassured by the stillness, he stole across the wide, familiar room, and into the long gallery. Moonlight streamed through the windows in a white splendor. By its light he made his way to the fireplace. Over it, the builder smiled down from the picture and seemed to watch his namesake press on a carved rose, even as he himself had done, long, long ago in the loved old home in England.

With a slight click, a panel slowly slid back. In the white moonlight, the narrow opening gaped blackly. Frank, waiting for the messenger who was to meet his mother, gave the same quick, little rapping signal which he had used earlier on her door. Then he started back in surprise at the nearness of the whispered answer.

“Oh-h,” he gasped, “Lieutenant Harlee. This is Frank. They are here, a regiment of them camped on the plantation. The Colonel is here in the house, sleep-

ing. He came in and searched. I had just time to send Mammy Pheely up to Mothah—she played a sick grandmothah—you remember how well she can act? And she thought it would leave her free, so she could come and go. But he's stayed, and she daren't leave her room, 'cause they are lookin' fo' a spy, and if they knew she was it!" Here his voice faltered, "She says she wouldn't be much use to the Confederacy then. But—"

"All right, old man, I understand," Harlee said comfortingly. "Now, here are some papers for Mrs. Denham to take care of. Tell her to put them in some safe place 'til the Yankees leave. Can you tell me just how big a force they have, and when and where they are planning to move?"

"I've heard quite a lot," Frank said. Carefully, he repeated all he knew, and all that his mother had told him to say to her messenger. The lieutenant checked details as he proceeded. Twice he looked up, silencing the boy with a gesture. The old house seemed unusually full of those mysterious sounds old houses always have.

At last, satisfied that he had all the information they could give him, Lieutenant Harlee turned once more to the secret entrance, paused, sniffed, and whispered:

"Frank, has there been a fire in the fireplace recently? I smell smoke!"

"Oh, yes, there was a fire in the hall; it gets chilly there at night."



“Very well,” doubtfully. “And don’t you worry about your mother! There’s nothin’ more she can do at present, anyway. The Yanks are pushing forward all along the line. General Johnson is falling back. Our food supplies are pretty near cut off, so all we can do is to sting ’em as they go, and hope for a turn in the luck. This lot will probably be on their way by morning!” With a pat on Frank’s shoulder, the lieutenant was swallowed up in the gaping, black hole.

For an instant, his footfalls echoed back as he made his way down the narrow stair, and along the passage that led to the river. Then there was silence, and Frank released the spring that held open the panel. As it swung shut, the silence was broken suddenly, by rough voices, quarreling, and a scuffle outside.

Frank jumped. Some one might be coming. And he was here in the night, with a package of papers containing he knew not what! The secret panel had closed; it was slow in opening. He could not wait for it, so as to conceal the packet there. It was very flat, so he reached up, and thrust it inside the back of the painting over the fireplace. The first Denham concealed another secret beside his own, now!

Frank softly stole across to the window, thinking as he went, that the moonlight that had seemed so silvery white when he entered the room, really looked much more like sunlight, it was such a ruddy color. He had

nearly reached the window, when a long tongue of flame, shot up and over it. A raucous voice bellowed:

“Yah-h, nigger-drivers!”

Fire! Not much wonder they had smelled smoke! Frank sped down the long room, across the great hall, and up the staircase to his mother’s room.

Fortunately it was in the opposite wing from the picture gallery, but he must warn her, first of all. He pushed open the door, excitedly spluttered out his story. Mammy Pheely punctuated it with: “Lawsy, Marse Frank!” “Fo’ Gawd’s sake, Missy, git outen dis!”

“Mammy,” said Mrs. Denham, “go wake up those Yankee officers. Tell them its probably their men who have started this fire! Call Hannibal and Cassius, send them to the upstairs windows with water. Frank, the Colonel, quick!” Then, as Frank started: “Frankie, the papers Harlee gave you—where did you put them?”

“They are all right, I’ll take care of them!” he called back, as he raced down the stairs, two steps at a time.

At the library door, he hammered with both fists, shouting for the Colonel. The boy then dashed to the other side of the hall. The fire stretched out ghostly, reeking fingers of smoke toward him as he reached the door. The murky glow inside stopped him momentarily. But remembering that Lieutenant Harlee had said to put the papers in a safe place, he set his teeth, took a deep breath of air, and entered the smoky room.

Reaching up behind the picture, he felt for the packet. He could touch a corner of it, but try as he would, he could not get hold of it. His eyes stung with the smoke; the fumes were making him choke and cough. He could hear people calling, the gathering roar of flames; the hiss of steam. Still he struggled to get the packet.

Outside the room someone was shouting for him: "Frank, Frank, where are you?" He could see the shadowy figure making its way toward him through the smoke, it looked monstrous in the flickering light of the fire. He made one more desperate effort to reach the packet, then the Yankee colonel spoke:

"What are you trying to do, sonny? Come out of this room quickly before we are caught!" said the kindly voice. "You can't take that picture down. Here, I'll do it, if you won't leave it. Run!" He caught the sides of the frame, freed it from its hook, and reached the door, Frank close at his side, just as a burst of fire shot into the room.

"There's no hope of saving it now!" he shouted, over the roar of flame and the crash of a falling wall. "We'd better see about getting out the old lady from upstairs, before the fire spreads further." Standing the picture on the floor, against an inner wall, Colonel Dunham started to the door for help, when a half-clad, smoke-begrimed man appeared on the staircase, and the once trim and dapper young adjutant said:



“Beg to report, sir, fire’s under control. That wing is entirely gutted; the falling wall put out the last of the fire. And I regret to say, sir, that we caught the men who started it. Two of our own, sir—and drunk as lords, sir!”

It was five hours later, when Frank saw the ruin again. He had gone back to his mother’s room, where he had slept fitfully and nervously; time and again he woke to sit upright, the reek of smoke still in his nostrils, and the horrid crackle of flames echoing in his ears. The morning sun shone down on a shattered wall, and a blackened pile of brick hid forever the entrance to the secret passage. Burnt fragments of furniture showed here and there, and a faint haze of smoke hung over all the wrecked wing.

Frank stood and gazed down at it. Dimly he remembered bright days before the war began, when the house overflowed with guests, music and laughter. There had been dancing in the ballroom beyond the gallery, gone entirely now. Negro boys, their white teeth gleaming with good-natured smiles in their black faces, attended the horses that had been ridden in from neighboring plantations.

He flung back his head. The *Luck* would come back to the house when the war was over. Perhaps there were more Yankees as fine and kindly as this Colonel. And the Confederate States and the United States could

lie side by side, North and South, in peace and friendship.

A hand fell on his shoulder, the Colonel looked down at him and smiled:

“Cheer up, youngster; we have saved part of it for you—the best of it! And that is what we hope to do for the country: save as much as we can. It is a terrible war. But when it is over, God willing, we will try to rebuild more strongly than before, so that if ever a foreign enemy molest us again, we will all stand shoulder to shoulder, strong and ever faithful to the best and noblest that is in us! Now come and tell me why, of all the beautiful paintings in the gallery, it was this particular one you wanted to save? I am interested in him, you may remember.”

Frank caught his breath—there was that packet! Indeed it was lucky it was the portrait of the builder of the house, instead of just any of the others, without any particular story! So, perched on the arm of a chair, facing the picture, he told the legend that had grown up about the old portrait.

“You see, suh, he was the very first Denhem heah, when the Colonies had just begun. Nobody eveh knew where he came from; he just appeared one day from a ship that had been driven ashore in a storm. And he smiled, just as he smiles in that picture, when anyone asked him where he came from, and he neveh told any-

body—just smiled. He built this house out of ballast brick from England, and he even made plans for the gardens, though I suppose he neveh saw them finished. And he bought slaves. Some people thought him the devil himself. They called him ‘Devil Denham.’ He was very rich. One of the stories is that he had been a pirate and had a buried treasure, so that when he wanted money, he went out and dug it up! Daddy says that when he was a boy, he once saw a funny old map on a piece of parchment that was supposed to be the map to the treasure! I would love to find it. It would be great fun to dig up a buried treasure!

“By-and-by,” Frank continued, “when Devil Denham was a very old man, he married, and he left his son this house, a beautiful Sword, and a little old painting of a beautiful lady that’s up in my mother’s room—” he stopped, and shot a quick glance at the Colonel, and then hurried on. “It’s rather fun, having a queah person like that in your family, don’t you think so?”

“Yes, indeed. He is rather a splendid looking person, too, in that picture, isn’t he? And is that the sword that he left his son? What became of it?”

“The *Luck*? Yes, that’s it. Daddy has it. My daddy looks just like him,” said the boy, wistfully. “You know, suh, you look like him, yourself. I think that is why I liked you right away, even if you are a Yankee.”

“I am glad we are friends, Frank. Some day, perhaps,



I will come back when we all have the same flag again, and we will be good friends—your daddy and I, my son and you. War is a horrible thing. Brother fights against brother—even as in that civil war in England, which sent first Roundhead, then Cavalier to settle in this land. The same was true later. When our forefathers had to fight to gain liberty for our land, they too, were fighting their own kin. But we must be faithful to our ideals.”

O'Reilly, the orderly, appeared in the doorway, “I'm afther reporrting' to the Colonel, that the rigiment is ready to move, sir-r; and the Colonel's ho-orse is waitin' outside.”

A setting sun, throwing long shadows across the blackened ruin of the right wing, saw quiet settle down once more over River Lea.

\* \* \* \* \*

When at last that bitter war was over, the *Luck* was brought back to River Lea, but the man who had carried it away would never return. He slept his last, long sleep at Gettysburg with thousands of his brothers-in-arms.

River Lea was closed, for there was no money to keep it up, and Frank and his mother moved into a little house in Charleston, so that Frank might attend a school opened by a Confederate officer for the sons of his com-

rades. Together, on their last day in the big house, mother and son went to bid farewell to the portrait of the late master of River Lea, and there Mrs. Denham gave the *Luck* into Frank's hands.

"You are all the man I have now, honey," she said. "And the *Luck* is yours. Your father would have wanted you to have it. We are goin' to be very poor, but we'll never give up the *Luck*; only my darlin', I pray it will never be drawn in anger again!"

"We may be poor for a while, Mummy. I've got a lot to learn. But we'll keep the *Luck*, and I'll bring you, and it, back to River Lea," he replied. Mrs. Denham smiled—looked at him, slim and tall beside her. She realized then that her little boy was gone forever.

Colonel Dunham came a few years later, looking for them, but the house was still closed, the grounds forlorn and desolate. Years after he came again, an old man now, and drove through the wide swung wrought-iron gates, up a beautifully cared for driveway. He passed under the festoons of silvery grey moss drifting down from the oaks, with azalea and jessamine in bloom on all sides; and on to the lovely old house, bowered in its climbing roses and ivy. A trim Negro butler answered his knock, and in answer to his inquiry, replied:

"No, suh, de massa ain't home. Ol' Miss, she died long about a mounf ago, an' Massa, he done gone to Yurrop to trabble.





*There Mrs. Denham gave the Luck into Frank's hands*





“Yes, suh, I’ll sho’ remember to gibe him yo’ card, but suh, won’t yo’ come in an’ see de gyardens? Dey’s mos’ particularly beautiful dis year, an’ de Massa, he’d be moughty angry effan I done let a frien’ ob his go widout offerin’ his hospitality, suh.”

So once again the Colonel stepped into the well-remembered hall, and out onto the terrace beyond to gaze over well-kept gardens sweeping in all their springtime loveliness down to the river. For a while he sat, smiling over old memories, deeply glad that his young friend had done so well. Then he returned through the hall, glancing toward the great open fireplace, almost expecting to see again the slight, indignant young figure that he had first seen there. Instead his eyes were drawn to the portrait hanging above it, insolent, smiling eyes seeming to meet his amusedly—the portrait he and Frank had rescued that night from the fire. Under it in a glass case lay a sword with a jeweled hilt—the *Luck of the House*.

The Colonel shook his white head and smiled back, “A-ha, my friend,” he said softly, “I’ve learned your secret for I’ve been to England. But I’ll not tell. The *Luck* will find its way back to Donham Manor in its own good time.”







## CHAPTER X

1918

### *THE LUCK COMES HOME*

When North and South Stood Side by Side with the  
Land of Their Fathers to Uphold Honor and Faith

*In which the LUCK at last finds its way home. And  
a Donham, a Dunham, and a Denham join hands  
over it in the old English manor house.*



**T**HE Great War was over. The guns along all fronts were silent after four long years of horror. Little by little the soldiers were returning to their homes.

Serene, waiting, and still, in the golden haze of the late English sunshine stood the Manor House of Donham. Its mullioned windows shone in the light of the setting sun that had known it down the long centuries of its life. The sun seemed to caress with the loving fingers of a friend, the mellow rose-hued brick walls and the tall, twisted chimneys, overgrown with ivy. Rose vines trailed over the balustrade of the flagged terrace that lay across the great breadth of the house.



Their dried leaves and orange-red haws rattled in the chilly breeze.

Below the wide, low stone steps, the thick green velvet of the turf spread out on both sides of the once justly famous Avenue of Oaks. The trees had marched two and two on either side of the drive, straight away for a full half mile to the gates. Now, but a single line on each side remained. The scarred and patched turf was a mute reminder of their former grandeur. They had gone along with other timber from all over England, to help build the trenches and dugouts in Flanders and France. They had gone so that the sons of this ancient land and its allies should have such scant protection as the mighty oaks might give against a barrage of enemy shell fire.

Now the old, old house awaited the return of its youngest son. This man was the last hope of the family, and the pride of the old man, who stood waiting, even as the house waited, at the head of the Avenue of Oaks. Then clear on the air, came a high, merry, hunting call. It was answered by many cheering voices in the distance.

“He is coming, Godolphin!” cried the old lord, shaken from his usual dignified calm. His butler stood behind him in the doorway, where all the servants were gathered.

“Yes, your lordship, it sounds like the old days, hearing Master Charles coming home this way!”

Old Lord Donham took a step down from the terrace. Surely, he thought, he could hear the clang of the great wrought-iron gates.

Then up the long driveway swung the high cart, drawn by a smart young hackney stepping at a fine pace. The driver's whip cracked and a spurt of gravel flew out from the roadbed under the wheels.

"Yoicks! Gone away!" carolled the driver who suddenly reined in. The cob, thrown almost to his haunches, came to an abrupt stop: "No, not gone away, but come home!" he continued. With a leap, young Charles Donham was down from the cart and up the wide steps, calling back to his two companions: "Come on, fellows!" and then: "Granddad!"

Ignoring the outstretched hand, the gentle dignified "Welcome home, grandson," from the old gentleman, the lad flung his arms around the thin, old shoulders and kissed his grandfather heartily.

"I've been to France, y'know, and we all get kissed by some general one time or other! Oh, I say, it's good to be here! There are a couple of chaps with me—Yanks, Granddad. My grandfather, fellows," he said to the two khaki-clad young men, who had followed him slowly up the steps. "He'll be good to you." Charles led the way through the great door, inside which a group of servants waited for a word of greeting from Master Charlie.

“How are you, Godolphin?” he said to the butler. Godolphin had tears of joy in his eyes and a quaver in his voice, as he spoke his welcome to the young heir of Donham Manor.

“Gregory. Mary. Susan. Where’s Mrs. Braden?” he demanded, as he shook hands with the devoted servants. “Oh, there you are!” as the housekeeper, dignified in her black silk dress came forward.

“And glad to see you safe at home again, sir. We all are, the same as his lordship! Eh, but he’s been difficult, these last two days, waiting for your arrival!”

“Dear old chap. He has had some hard knocks, and he’s old for that; but we’ll try to cheer him up! The war is over, thank God!”

“Thank God for His goodness, indeed sir!”

“But, where is Nana, Mrs. Braden? My homecoming won’t be complete, if I have caught her away. Don’t tell me—” he broke off suddenly.

“Oh, no, sir! She’s got a bad bit of rheumatics, that’s all. She’s looking for you to come to her room, sir.”

“And that I will, right away. I brought a couple of friends home, Mrs. Braden. Have Susan fix things for them, please.

“Granddad treating you right, you fellows? How about a ‘spot’ right now? Then I’ll have to tear myself away to see an old lady upstairs, who tried to bring me up as a gentleman, poor soul!



“Godolphin, we’d like a whiskey and soda, somewhere near a roaring fire.” Thrusting a hand under his grandfather’s arm, he led the way across the Great Hall, with the wide beautiful stair that swept up and across it.

Dimly gleaming from shadowed corners old suits of armor stood, as though those who had worn them still held vigil over the honor of their house. Heavy red brocade drapery hung at doors and windows. Through a low door at the rear, they entered a small, cheery room, gay with bright chintz, the walls a soft apple green. A fire danced on the hearth. Beyond the leaded panes of the bow window, grey spirals of mist eddied up from the silver ribbon of water, over tiers of terraced gardens.

One of the two other young men crossed over to the window and stood looking out, over the gardens down to the river. On his face was a bewildered, doubting expression.

“Granddad,” said Charles, settling the old gentleman comfortably in his chair, “did these silly asses tell you their jolly names? This one sitting here is John Dunham. That one staring out into the gardens is Francis Denham. Odd, isn’t it? Of course, we just naturally gravitated together—but I must have written you about it—Will you excuse me a moment?” he rattled on. “Must run up to see Nana, you know. Be back in a minute.” And off he dashed.

Charles Donham had been barely sixteen when he had joined the flying corps a year ago, just after the second of his two brothers had been killed at the front. His father, colonel of a famous regiment—one of England's "Old Contemptibles"—had gone in the first year of the war. So now he and his old grandfather were the last of an old family whose roots went deep into English history. The two Americans were attached to the flight squadron to which Sub-Lieutenant Donham had been assigned, and had taken an immediate liking to the blonde, young English lad with a name so similar to both of theirs.

Francis Denham had come from a Southern state proud of its aristocratic French and English ancestry. John Dunham, true to the tradition of his family, had lost no time in answering his country's call to arms, and had gone straight from his freshman year in a New England college. They had trained at the same air-school, been assigned to the same flying unit, and contrary to all records, had both come through unscathed.

Lord Donham deliberately and slowly clipped the end of his cigar, studying John Dunham's face as he held a lighted match for him. He was struck by the similarity in the looks of these three boys. They might easily have been taken for brothers, their features were so alike.

"So all you lads have names curiously alike? Strange that ye should have met together, out there in France!"

Before John could reply, Francis Denham swung away from the window, saying abruptly as he did so:

“Strange, sir? Yes, but this is stranger! Why, I know this place! I think I could find my way almost anywhere in it! It’s—it’s—”

“How’s this? What do ye mean?” snapped the old man.

“Why, sir,” answered Francis, “It’s my own home all over again! The Great Hall, only we have no armor in ours; this room; the gardens out there terraced down to the river; the rose-colored brick of the house. And now tell me, am I right? Through the great doors to the left of the hall, one goes through the reception rooms. Beyond them is the library, built to the ceiling with bookcases. Its windows, too, are bayed out like this, but of stained glass with a coat of arms blazoned in the center. To the front is a wide corridor, and at the end, running the depth of the house, is the dining room.”

“The banqueting hall—yes, yes, that is so. What of the other side?”

“We have only one side left, sir. The other was destroyed during the War of the Confederacy. Wait! That reminds me, there’s an odd story connected with that—”

“What’s the yarn?” asked Charles, returning as suddenly as he had left, “I say, young-fellow-me-lads, how’s the giddy effect?” He advanced into the room. He had



discarded his blue aviator's uniform for a tweed suit whose sleeves and trousers were both considerably too short, mute reminders of the schoolboy who had gone away. "A relic of the days of my youth! Is Denny there giving us a yarn? What is it? You all look as though something was a bit strong for you. Even Johnny over there. He rather scorns us as rattle-pates!"

"Cut out the ragging, Babe, this is really interesting," answered John. "It sounds as though Denny has an American duplicate of your ancestral castle—"

"Oh, hold on a bit, this isn't the ancestral castle! This is sort of Tudor, you know; the castle is just a windy old ruin over on a hill across the river. I'll take you there one day."

"Charles!" ejaculated the old gentleman, a bit testily, "hold your tongue! I think this will be interesting to all of us, if you will give someone else an opportunity to talk! But, I am an old man. Too much excitement tires me I find. After dinner we will take your friends into the Long Gallery, and the ballroom. It may be there will be something of further interest to you, Lieutenant Denham." He rose and bowed to them with an old-fashioned formal courtesy. They accompanied him to the foot of the staircase, watched him slowly ascend; and then with one accord they all three turned toward the door.

John looked at his wrist watch. "How about the

ancestral castle, Babe? Is it near enough to take a look-see, before dinner?"

"Right-o, it's only a few miles, and if my old gas wagon is still able to go, we could make it. There is a glorious view from Hugh's Tower; it will be a bit dark to explore much, though I doubt if it would be dark enough for the ghost—"

"Now, Babe, don't tell us you are going to pull that one!" protested John.

"That's all right, Johnny, old boy!" put in Francis. "You are a rigid old Puritan. No self-respecting ghost would dare appear for you in an old castle, only beautiful ma'am'selles in French châteaux!"

John flushed to the roots of his fair hair. The other two laughed gleefully. John had been chased by a German plane one day. After escaping, he had made a forced landing in the garden of a château behind his own lines, where he had been found by the young daughter of the house. Thereafter any excuse was sufficient to take him back, and it was a source of constant amusement to his two friends.

"Speaking of ancestral things in general," he said, talking to cover his embarrassment, "did I ever tell you of the beautiful star sapphire Mademoiselle Huguette wears? It is an old family jewel. She calls it the Star of Bethlehem. I have never seen a more beautiful thing!"

As they talked, they had followed the curving drive-

way that led around a low hill to the rambling, stone stables. On they went under a wide arched gateway into a paved court with a great stone watering trough in the middle. The hands of the clock set in the gable of the building pointed to six. Charles pulled a bellrope as they passed through the gate, and a stable boy came to meet them.

“Hello, you’re young Hobson, aren’t you?” asked Charles. “Know anything about my old car?”

The lad grinned, and touched his forehead in salute, “Yessir, it’s all a-waitin’ for you. We’m knowd you’d be a’wantin’ o’ it as soon as you came home!”

“Get it, please,” said Charles. “You know, fellows, this car of mine is the only one in the family! Granddad thinks they are an abomination!”

In a few minutes the three were roaring down the driveway in the low swung roadster, out through the great iron gateway, along the lane to the village, and across the bridge over the river. A blacksmith’s shop stood by the road, where a narrow path wound upward through the dense growth of trees. At one hand the hillside sloped steeply to the river and meadows below. On the other rose a rocky, precipitous wall, topped by a grim old ruin.

The brakes shrieked as the car came to a standstill before the ancient gatehouse that blocked the road. Charles produced a huge old key. Putting it into a great



iron lock in the small door in the center of the massive gates, he turned it with some difficulty, and pushed the door open. They went in, the building smelled damp and earthy, and was so dark that at first they could hardly see. But they felt their way through to a narrow, curving stone stairway, built in the thickness of the wall and lighted by only a slit in the masonry. John stepped into the embrasure, and looked out through the slit.

“Bully place for a sniper!” he said.

“Just what it was for,” answered Charles, “only they sniped with a long bow and arrows in those days! We used to have great games here, Josse, Gil and I and some of our friends, playing we were knights of old. You remember the day we came down in the fog in that little cove on the Normandy coast, and I told you the story of one of our early Norman ancestors, who rescued his foster father? It was somewhere right down there that they were fighting, I imagine. At least we always thought so.”

They had come out into a large low-ceilinged room, with thick walls, bowman’s slits to the front, and two windows facing the court. “This was the guard room, probably.”

They walked around, examining the antique winches and massive chains that raised and lowered the portcullis.

“What a floor!” said Francis. “What’s the idea of

having the holes in it? It would be a bully way to break a leg! Why, they are right over the passage—road—whatever you call it!”

“Yes, if an enemy got past the portcullis, and into the causeway, we just gave them a shower of boiling oil or lead through these little slots!”

“Lawsy! The original sprinkler system! Talk about poison gas, we haven’t got so much on them, after all!”

Another flight of stone steps brought them out on the broad, flat top of the gatehouse. From the parapet, they looked down over the treetops, to the wide meadows threaded with the silvery river. They could see the little village of Donham Rising, Donham Court, and farther up the river, the broken arches of the ruined abbey of St. Cross. Behind it all were the rolling, purple downs with twilight settling over them.

Francis left the other two there, and strolled along the ramparts toward the tower, which, he decided, must be the one Charles had spoken of as Hugh’s Tower. He thought amusedly of John’s scorn of the ghost, and wished he had asked Charles for more particulars.

A door from the rampart led into the tower. There were several rooms. Francis peered into first one, then another. The second had several pieces of old furnishings in it; a great chest against one wall, a weather-stained old oak chair, a large carved table, worn and battered. A tattered rag of tapestry flapped on one wall.

He stood gazing at it, wondering who had been the last occupant of that room, and what things might have happened there. Through the window on the far side of the room, he could see a bit of the river, the eddying mist over it, drifting into the hollows and across the fields—

A beautiful young woman turned from the window, her dark hair curled about her face, and hung down at the back of her slim neck, over her wide lace collar. Her gown was as mistily grey as the drifting vapor above the river. There was a look of great joy on her face, and her hands were stretched out toward him. A soft voice seemed to drift by him:

“Francis, Francis, at last you have come!”—

The chilly fall breeze blew through the room. Francis’ hands were clenched so hard the finger nails seemed to cut into his palms. No one was there. His imagination was playing him tricks! This old place brought a memory of an old miniature at home! Francis shook himself. Though he had an uneasy feeling about leaving that room, he squared his shoulders and pulled his uniform coat down, as though about to face a superior officer.

“About face! March!” he said aloud, then he heard Charles’ cheery voice calling him:

“I say, Denny! Where are you? Oh, here’s where you got to. Didn’t see the ghost, did you? A woman in



grey, who stands at the window and wrings her hands and sobs. Wish there was time to take you down to see the dungeon, but we'd best be cutting along or we will be late for dinner."

They made their way down the crumbling stairway in the tower, through the ruins of what once had been the Great Hall of the castle, and across the grass grown court or lower ward, to the gatehouse. A few minutes later the roadster was snorting its way down the path.

Dinner in the dark oak-panelled dining hall was over and the table had been cleared. Old Lord Donham sat back in his stately chair, listening to Charles and John, as they told him of a fight high in the clouds. But Francis was lost in his thoughts of this old room, so like the one he had known all his life. Candlelight shone on the long table, candles glowed from the walls.

Francis turned his head. Behind Lord Donham's chair over the fireplace, hung a full-length portrait of the old nobleman painted some twenty or thirty years ago. At the opposite end of the room was another portrait—Charles' father in the brilliant uniform of a Guards regiment.

Francis remembered that at home the portraits hung much the same way. His grandfather was in a similar position to that of Charles' father—a young man, a gay, dashing cavalier of Lee's army of the Confederacy, who had gone gaily forth to war never to return. He was

painted in his gold-braided grey uniform, with a deep crimson sash, his hand resting on the jeweled hilt of a Sword, the same Sword that was hidden safely in his kit bag! It was a crazy thing to have brought that with him, but somehow he'd had to! It was odd nobody at home had mentioned its absence, but tradition said it always went to war with the son of the house.

The *Luck of the House!* He had often wondered about it, for the family luck had failed that last time, when the Sword had been brought home to a lonely little boy in a ruined home. Or had it failed? That lonely little fellow had grown up into his splendid father, who had brought back prosperity to his people, to the old Negroes of the place, yes even to the town near which their home stood, perhaps to an extent that it had awakened the State itself.

And over the fireplace there hung in River Lea House an old painting, blackened and scorched in spots from the disastrous fire that had destroyed the right wing of the house. A slim, white hand rested on the hilt of the Sword. Queer how the Sword kept coming to Francis' mind. And the handsome, haughty face of the first Francis Denham, the man who had planned and started River Lea, still smiled out, triumphantly withholding the secret of his origin. Perhaps this was the clue—this older house so like his own!

He started suddenly from his reverie. The others

were rising, and Godolphin was holding back the portieres. They passed down the wide corridor, across the Great Hall lighted by many candles. A huge deerhound lying with his nose between his paws, his eyes fixed on the entrance, rose and stalked to the side of his master, whose hand touched his head caressingly. On they walked through a dark arched passage into the Long Gallery. This too was lighted with many candles, whose soft, mellow light was reflected in golden pools on the polished old wood of floor and panelling.

“Don’t you have electricity anywhere in the house, Lord Donham?” asked John.

“No! A garish thing! Spoils old houses. Wouldn’t have electric lights. There is electricity installed in the kitchens and the stables; but not here, not while I am alive!”

From the walls of the Gallery, men, women, and children gazed serenely, endlessly out into the room. There was generation after generation of Donhams. They were the people who had lived here with only one break, the ten years when England had been ruled by Parliament under Oliver Cromwell. After this Charles the Second had given back the Manor to Anthony Donham, the son of the man who had fought for his father.

On the wall close at hand, was a large painting of three little boys, handsome sturdy little chaps in socks



and sailor suits. Next to it was a portrait of a beautiful young woman.

“That is my mother,” said Charles, gentle voiced. “The next one is my two brothers and myself. Gil went down in the battle of Jutland, Jocelyn went west on the Somme, just a year ago. We were awf’ly good pals—

“This,” he went on, moving down the long wall, “is a great-uncle who was with Nelson at Trafalgar. We rather run to the sea. There was one who sailed with Sir Francis Drake. But I am stealing your thunder, Granddad!”

“Go on, go on! It was *my* uncle Charles who was at Trafalgar.”

“Oh, yes sir. And it was your brother David who was with General Havilock in India, wasn’t it? This is he in the red coat. Think of fighting in a costume like that! This lovely lady in white satin is of the Stuart time. I think it is a Van Dyck, isn’t it, Granddad?”

The old man nodded his fine, white head. Francis Denham drew a deep breath. It was only canvas and paint. But the beautiful dark eyes seemed to smile out a welcome to him from under dark curls that clustered about her face and hung down on her wide lace collar.

“She is a ‘lovely lady’! Just who is she?” he managed to say, though his voice sounded unnatural.

“Oh, she’s the woman whose ghost weeps for her lost husband up in the castle!” laughed Charles.

“Charles, don’t be ridiculous! These are the portraits I have a feeling that you may be interested in, Lieutenant Francis Denham!” The old man’s voice was grave and impressive. “This was the Lady Daphne Lovell, the wife of Francis Donham, the heir of Donham. He was an ardent Royalist, and was reported killed at Naseby. His wife died from exposure and shock in the old keep, where she had fled to escape from a Parliamentary raid. Their son, a mere child, was found and brought up by an old uncle, the estate being given back to him on the restoration of the monarchy.

“Now among some old family papers, there is a story that some of the tenants claimed that Francis Donham came back to the Manor after the battle of Naseby, looking for his family, only to find the place had been sacked by the Cromwellians, and his people dead, or missing. He disappeared again, and nothing further was ever heard of him. And with him disappeared one of the ancient treasures of the house. The portrait over the mantel, on the opposite side of the room, is he.” His keen old eyes watched Denham’s face, as they turned to the portrait of which he spoke.

Denny whitened a little under his heavy tan, as his look met the look on the handsome, arrogant face of the portrait. It was a familiar face, younger and gayer

than the one he had wondered about so many times. Denny's gaze moved downward. A slim, white hand rested easily under its fine lace ruffles, on the jeweled hilt of a Sword. Denny turned on his heel, and started for the door, regardless of the others.

"What is it, Denham? Where are you going?" Lord Donham's voice was surprised, and curious.

"The Sword, sir," answered Francis, simply, "I was just going to my room to get the Sword!" He was utterly unconscious of his two friends, who were looking at him in surprised silence.

"The Sword? The *Luck of the House!* Here, now! What makes you think you have the same Sword?"

"Why, sir, it is. Just as your Lady Daphne, is the lady of a miniature at home! And that name you used; we have always called the Sword, the *Luck of the House*, though there seemed to be no particular reason that I know of. I will get it." He was gone from the room, and was running up the stair, two steps at a time.

"Granddad, you certainly staged a pretty piece of drama! What made you think of it? The name, or his story of his home?"

"Both, I think, but it was also his strong resemblance to this picture. Though the Sword was something far beyond my imagination.

"And now, sir," he said to John, standing silent, smiling, "have not you too, a link in this strange story?"



For your name also is only a matter of a letter misplaced or hastily written at some time, perhaps.”

“Well, you see, I knew most of it. My grandfather was interested, and has often told me the story, when I was a little chap. He had a diary, written by John Dunham, or Donham. He went to America with the Pilgrims in 1620, because of his sympathy with the so-called Puritans in their persecution by Charles the First and Archbishop Laud. He must have been a brother of that Royalist ancestor, for whose sword Denny has gone upstairs. The sword my grandfather saw in a portrait that he rescued from Denny’s grandfather’s burning home, during the Civil War. He was here once also and saw this painting, and so connected the whole thing.”

“He was here, in this house? By Jove! Why then, did he not speak? How utterly incomprehensible!”

“Not at all, sir. We are very proud of being Americans, really!”

Francis came back through the door, carrying a slim, long roll of gray cloth, which he laid on a table, and proceeded to unwrap. The other three drew close and watched, with an interest too deep for words. The removal of the wrapping disclosed a chamois case, from which Francis drew the Sword.

Its scabbard was of silver, inlaid with gold arabesques. The gold hilt was set in a curious design, with rubies, emeralds and one single large diamond. It lay there,

twinkling in the radiant light of dozens of candles—back in the room from which it had been taken by that other Francis, so many, many years ago.

The old man bent to examine it: “Wonderful, wonderful!” he muttered, “after all these years!” And lifting his fine old silvery head with its keen eagle profile, he stood erect facing his grandson, and laid a hand on a khaki-clad shoulder of each of the two young Americans.

“Thank God,” he said, reverently, “there are still three sons of the house of Donham! The *Luck* has come back!”

And Denny looked across at Charles: “But she didn’t weep, Charlie. She smiled!” he said.







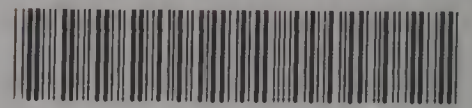








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