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# THE WHITE COMPANY

By A. CONAN DOYLE



**W**HEN ALLEYNE ERICSON  
WENT OUT INTO THE  
WORLD, HE EXPECTED  
TO FIND IT AS PEACE-  
FUL AND QUIET AS  
SCALESBY ABBEY, WHERE HE  
HAD BEEN RAISED SINCE  
BABYHOOD BY CISTERCIAN  
MONKS. IN PLACE OF PEACE  
AND QUIET, HE FOUND TRIALS  
AND TRIBULATIONS, ADVENTURE  
AND ADVERSITY, COURAGE AND  
COURAGE, LIFE AND LOVE. THIS  
IS THE STORY OF ALLEYNE  
ERICSON'S JOURNEY INTO WAR.

ILLUSTRATED BY  
ALEX. A. BLUM

**IT WAS MID-AFTERNOON** OF A SUMMER'S DAY IN THE YEAR 1286. ALLEINE BISHOPSON ENTERED THE PRIVATE CHAMBERS OF ABBOT BERGHOSH AT ANCIENT BEALBU ABBEY NEAR CHRISTCHURCH, ENGLAND...

ACCORDING TO YOUR LATE FATHER'S WISH, WE HAVE RAISED YOU TO MANHOOD, ALLEINE. NOW YOU ARE TWENTY AND MUST GO FORTH TO FACE THE WORLD.

I PRAY TO BE WORTHY OF YOU, FATHER. I HOPE TO TAKE YOUR TEACHINGS TO MY BROTHER, THE SOCMAN \* OF WHITSEAD.

A WELL-TO-DO, MIDDLE-CLASS LANDOWNER

**WHILE ALLEINE WAS** IN HIS QUARTERS PREPARING FOR HIS DEPARTURE FROM THE ABBEY, ANOTHER DEPARTURE WAS IN PROGRESS...

YOU, HIDDLE JOHN, HAVE BEEN FOUND GUILTY OF CONDUCT UNBECOMING A MEMBER OF OUR HOLY ORDER AND ARE HEREBY CAST OUT OF THE ORDER. BUT FIRST YOU WILL BE GIVEN TO THE FORESTERS FOR SCOURGING.

BY THE BLACK ROOD OF WALTHAM, IF ANY KNAVE AMONG YOU LAYS A FINGER ON MY SOAN, I'LL CRACK HIS SKULL LIKE A FILBERT!



CATCH HIM! HE IS POSSESSED OF THE DEVIL!



**BUT THE NOISE** SPREADS THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR AND RENT SPEEDING DOWN THE ROAD AS FAST AS HE COULD...

ATE THAT AFTERNOON, ALLELYNE WAVED FAREWELL TO THE BROTHERS AND, WITH A HEAVY HEART, TURNED AWAY FROM BEAULIEU ABBEY...

GOD SPEED  
THEE,  
ALLELYNE.

HOLY JULIAN,  
PATRON OF  
TRAVELERS,  
PROTECT THEE.

GOOD-BYE!  
GOOD-BYE,  
ALL!



NIGHT HAD ALREADY FALLEN WHEN ALLELYNE, FOOTLOOSE AND HEAVY, FOUND HIMSELF BEFORE THE FOREST INN, "THE MID MEALIN," WHICH STOOD UPON THE OUTSKIRTS OF ENDMURST...

I THINK IT IS BETTER THAT I SLEEP HERE AND GO TO MY BROTHER IN THE MORNING.

HO, DAHS ELIZA! ANOTHER ROUND OF BEER AND THE COST TO THE LAST DROOP!

IT IS AN OLD CUSTOM OF THE HOUSE, YOUNG SIR, IS IT YOUR PLEASURE TO HONOR IT?

I WOULD NOT OFFEND THE CUSTOMS OF YOUR HOUSE, GOODFRIEND, BUT MY PURSE IS THIN. YET AS FAR AS INDIGENCE I WILL DO MY PART.



PLAINLY SAID AND BRAVELY SPOKEN, MY YOUNG PRIAR! BY THE THORN OF GLASTONBURY! ILL DAYS ARE COMING UPON BEAULIEU! FOR THIS VERY DAY THEY HAVE GOT RID OF THE ONLY TWO GOOD MEN WITHIN THEIR WALLS! A TOAST FOR HIM, MY GOOD FRIENDS!

WORLDLE JOHN!





AFTER THE TOMBS...  
AND YOU HAVE  
TAKEN OFF  
YOUR ROBERT?

RATHER, SAY I  
TRADED WITH A  
WYNFARER, WHO,  
BELIEVED WHEN I  
TOLD HIM THAT TO  
WEAR THE GOWN  
WAS THE SUREST  
WAY TO HEAVEN.



YOU SPEAK  
LIGHTLY OF  
THE HOLY  
ORDER, JOHN.  
WHY DID YOU  
JOIN IT?

IN TRUTH, I JOINED BECAUSE  
A FAIR DAMEEL, MARRIED AN-  
OTHER MAN. AS FOR LEAVING,  
I WAS CHASED OUT BY THE  
BRETH-REN FOR CASTING MY EYE  
ON STILL ANOTHER DAMEEL..



AT THAT MOMENT, ALL EYES TURNED TOWARD THE  
DOOR AS A LUSTY VOICE CALLED OUT...

HAI! GOOD  
EVEN TO YOU,  
COMRADS!



HOLA! A  
WOMAN, BY  
MY GODD!

OH, BE  
OFF WITH  
YOU!



AND BY MY HILT! A  
PRETTY BARMAID! HOLA,  
M.A. PETTE! A KISS FOR  
YOU, TOO!



TOO BAD, TOO BAD! MA  
PETTE IS FRIGHTENED!  
BUT HERE ARE MY SIX  
RASCALS WITH A DEAL OF  
PLUNDER! THERE'S PLENTY  
IF ONE BUT HAS THE COUR-  
AGE TO GO TO FRANCE AND  
FETCH IT!

FRENCH WEARING  
"MY LITTLE ONE"

SAMON AYLAARD IS THE NAME, COMRADES! HAVE YOU EVER GAZED UPON SUCH PILLAGE AS YOU SEE THERE? NOW ARISE ALL TOGETHER UNDER PAW OF MY DISPLEASURE! TO SIR CLAUDE LATOUR AND THE WHITE COMPANY!

I COME DIRECT WITH A MESSAGE FROM SIR CLAUDE TO SIR NIBEL LORING OF CHRISTCHURCH, ASKING HIM TO RAISE A BAND OF MEN AND TAKE THE LEAD OF THE COMPANY! THERE IS MORE CHANCE THAT HE WILL, IF I BRING ONE OR TWO LIKELY MEN AT MY HEELS. WHAT SAY YOU, GENTLE-MEN, WILL YOU JOIN ME?

I AM A MAN OF PEACE.

I'VE A WIFE AND CHILD.

THERE IS NO WAR WITH FRANCE.

THERE IS ALWAYS WAR IN FRANCE! WHAT WATH COME OVER FOLK IN ENGLAND? BY MY HILT, I BELIEVE ALL ENGLAND'S MEN ARE ALREADY NOW IN FRANCE!

WE HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF YOUR BOASTING! I WILL SHOW YOU THAT THERE ARE BETTER MEN LEFT IN ENGLAND THAN EVER WENT THINGING IN FRANCE!



BY MY HILT, I'VE FOUND A MAN AT LAST! BUT LET THERE BE A BAGER, IF YOU THROW ME, VON FRENCH, FEATHER-BED IS YOURS. IF I THROW YOU, YOU JOIN THE WHITE COMPANY.

THEN BID FAREWELL TO YOUR BED, SOLDIER!



THEY WERE BOTH MEN OF GREAT STRENGTH, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN HARD THAT NIGHT THROUGH THE WHOLE LENGTH OF ENGLAND TO SET UP A FIERCE FIGHT IN FACE OF EACH OTHER...



WITH A SUDDEN DASH SO SWIFT AND FIERCE THAT THE EYE COULD SCARCE FOLLOW IT, AYLWARD FLEW IN UPON HIS MAN AND LOCKED HIS LEG AROUND HIM, BUT BEFORE JOHN TORE HIM OFF FROM HIM AS HE MIGHT A RAT, AND HURLED HIM ACROSS THE ROOM, AYLWARD SMASHED INTO A WALL, BUT MANAGED TO REMAIN ON HIS FEET...



JOHN, HEATED BY THE BOUT, RUSHED BADLY AFTER AYLWARD. THIS GAVE THE PRACTICED WRESTLER THE VERY VANTAGE FOR WHICH HE HAD PLANNED. AS BIG JOHN FLUNG HIMSELF UPON HIM, THE SOLDIER RUCKED AND CATCHING HIS MAN ROUND THE THROAT, HURLED HIM OVER HIS SHOULDER...



AYE IT WAS! A TRICK, THAT WILL ADD A PROPER MAN TO THE COMPANY, BUT I WOULD AS SOON WRESTLE WITH THE GREAT BEAR OF NARAKE AS COME MORE AGAINST THESE.

IT WAS AS IF JOHN HAD TAKEN INTO HIMSELF WINGS. HE FLEW ACROSS THE ROOM AND CAME DOWN HARD ON HIS BACK, SHOCKED BUT UNHURT.

ONE MORE FALL, BY ALL THE SAINTS! IT WAS BUT A TRICK!







I HAD PROMISED MYSELF ALREADY THAT I WOULD GO WITH THEE. YET I WOULD FAIN HAVE HAD THE FEATHER-BED

THAT I DOUBT NOT, MY FRIEND. YET MAY WE BE GOOD COMPANIES IN SPITE OF IT.

**A**T EARLY DAWN, THE MAN WAS ALL ALONE AS THE GUESTS OF THE NIGHT BEFORE TOOK THEIR DEPARTURE...



HOLA! MY DEAR! I WISH TO LEAVE WITH YOU MY PLUNDER, SINCE I KNOW YOU ARE AN HONEST MAN.

IT SHALL BE PUT IN THE SAFEST LOFT, GOOD ARCHER. COME WHEN YOU MAY, YOU WILL FIND IT READY FOR YOU.

**S**INCE FOR SOME OF THE JOURNEY ALLDINE'S WAY TOOK THE SAME DIRECTION AS THAT OF HONBLE JOAN AND GAWARD, THE THREE WALKED TOGETHER...



AND NOW, MY MAN OF PEACE, WILL YOU NOT ALSO JOIN THE WHITE COMPANY?

YAY, I MUST GO TO MY BROTHER.



**T**HE SUN WAS HIGH IN THE HEAVENS WHEN THE THREE FRIENDS CAME TO THE PARTING OF WAYS...

IF THE GREETING OF YOUR BROTHER, WHOM YOU HAVE NOT SEEN THESE MANY YEARS, IS UNFRIENDLY, YOU WILL FIND US BOTH AT TYNNAN CASTLE TO THE NORTH, WHERE I TAKE THIS LETTER.

I SHALL REMEMBER, FRIEND! YET THINK IT WILL BE MANY A DAY BEFORE OUR PATHS CROSS AGAIN.



ON THIS ALLEINE REACHED A CLEARING IN THE FOREST AND CAME UPON A PASTORAL SCENE THAT TOUCHED HIS HEART...

I HAVE READ OF SUCH A SCENE IN BOOKS. THESE TWO, THEN, MUST BE LOVERS.



SURPRISLY...

LET GO, I SAY!

YOU UNBRED CLODY IS THIS YOUR HOSPITALITY? I WOULD RATHER WEDA BRANDED GEMF FROM MY FATHER'S FIELD THAN THEE!

QUIET, LITTLE ONE, OR YOU MAY HURT YOURSELF! YOU MUST PAY SAXON TOLL ON SAXON LAND!



AT THIS, ALLEINE RAN ACROSS THE BROOK...

GOOD YOUTH! MAKE THIS KNAVE LODGE HE! I PRAY YOU STAND BY ME!

STAND BY YOU I WILL! HE SHALL NOT HOLD YOU IF YOU DO NOT DESIRE IT.



DOGS GET OFF MY LAND! I WOULD SLAY YOU AS A COMMON DEAR-LATCH! NO ONE DARES THIS TREAT THE SOGMAN OF WINSTEAD!

THE SOGMAN OF WINSTEAD!



THEN YOU ...ARE MY BROTHER!

YOU! THE CUB-OF-BEAULIE! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN! MY DOGS SHALL BE SET UPON YOU ARE YOU TAKE ANOTHER STEP UPON MY LAND!

**W**ITH AN OATH, THE SOCMAN TURNED AND RAN FOR HIS HOUSE...

COME! I CANNOT LEAVE YOU HERE, FOR I KNOW THE SOCMAN! HE WILL TURN HIS GREAT BLACK HOUND ON US!

I CARE NOT FOR HIS DOGS OR HIS BUT, IF OTHERWISE YOU WILL NOT LEAVE, THEN I MUST GO WITH YOU!

THIS WAY! INTO THE STREAM... TO THROW THE DOG OFF! DO NOT HESITATE, FOR I CAN RUN AS FAST AS YOU!

LEAD WHERE YOU WILL... I WILL FOLLOW YOU.

WE ARE OFF HIS LAND NOW AND QUITE SAFE, FOR HE WILL NOT KNOW WHICH WAY TO TRACE US... NOW I ASK, SIR, WHY DID YOU NOT KILL HIM WHEN YOU HAD HIM IN YOUR POWER?

KILL HIM? BY MY OWN BROTHER?

HE WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU, ON... HERE IS MY PACE WITH MY HORSE! 'TIS BECAUSE OF THE ANIMAL I CAME TO SUCH A PASS!

HOW SO, MY LADY?

AS I RODE WITH THE GROUP TROUBADOUR LOST A SHOE, THREW ME AND GALLOPED OFF. 'TIS THEN THE SOCMAN CAME, TELLING ME I WAS ON HIS LAND, BUT WITH SUCH COURTESY THAT HE PERVAILED UPON ME TO COME TO HIS HOUSE TO AWAIT MY ROSES RETURN, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, I STOPPED SHORT ere I REACHED HIS DOOR. I GO HOME NOW. WHAT OF YOU, SIR?

I WILL FOLLOW TWO FRIENDS TO WHERE SIR NISEL LONGS DWELLS.

**T**O ALLEYNE'S SURPRISE, SHE BURST OUT LAUGHING AND SPURRED HER HORSE AWAY...

WHAT COULD I HAVE SAID TO MAKE HER LAUGH SO?



SINCE HE WAS NOT WANTED BY HIS BROTHER, THERE SEEMED BUT ONE CONSIDERABLE THING TO DO—TRY TO FIND SAM AYLWARD AND HORDE JOHN. AND SO, HE TOOK THE ROAD TO CHRISTCHURCH, IT WAS ALL BUT DARK, WHEN...

SAM!  
JOHN!

BY MY HILT, IT IS OUR YOUNG FRIEND!



A NEW GAME I'M LEARNING, LAD. ONE SAM AYLWARD HAS TAUGHT ME.

AN OVER-AFT PUPIL HE IS, TOO. HE HAS BY ARMOR AND MY VERY GIRT. BUT WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, LAD? WITH YOUR FEET AND HOSE WET AND BEDAMPENED?

I HAVE THIS DAY RESCUED A FAIR DAMSEL FROM MY BROTHER, WHO IN TURN LODGED A HOUND UPON US. THE DAMSEL WENT HOME AND I FOLLOWED YOU THROUGH THE FOREST.

WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY, LAD?



I SHALL ATTEND TO HIM! HELPA DEACISSLE AGAINST HER WILL AND GET LOOSE A POG AT HIS OWN BROTHER!

HO, NO! THERE WAS NO HARM DONE. LET US BE ON OUR WAY.



THE COMPANIONS HURRIED ON, FINALLY REACHING THE ENRINGS OF TAYNNHAW CASTLE...

LOOK! HERE COME SIR NISSEL AND HIS LADY. I WILL GIVE HIM SIR CLAUDE'S LETTER.

CLAUDE AT ONCE STEPPED UP TO SIR NIGEL AND HANDS HIM THE LETTER, WHEN SIR NIGEL HAD FINISHED READING...

SO SIR CLAUDE AND THE WHITE COMPANY WANT ME TO LEAD THEM, YOU YOURSELVES ARE ALL OF THE COMPANY?

A-YES, THOUGH THE OTHER TWO HAVE NOT YET SEEN SERVICE WITH US.

I NOW I HAVE BEEN FOOLED. YOU WANT ME TO FOLLOW A MAN, FEARY AND ILL-HOUSED, WITH EYES LIKE A ROLLING OIL.

I WILL ASK YOU THREE MONTHS HENCE WHAT YOU THINK OF HIM, SIR GARRISON THE STRONG. I AM SURE THAT...



CLAUDE'S HORDS WERE INTERRUPTED BY A STARTLING CRY...

FLY! FLY FOR YOUR LIVES! HE'S BEEN ANGERED BY DOGS AND HAS BROKEN HIS CHAIN!

SIR NIGEL, ALONE WAS GRASPING TAKING HIS MERCHANTS, HE STEPPED UNFALTERINGLY TOWARD THE ENRAGED ANIMAL...

DOWN!  
DOWN!



IN A MOMENT, THE BEAR ONCE MORE WAS TAKEN, AND SIR NIGEL STARTED WITH HIS LADY FOR TWYNHAM CASTLE.

INDEED, COMRADE, I WAS A FOOL, NOT TO KNOW THAT A LITTLE ROOSTER MAY BE THE GREATEST. THIS MAN IS INDEED A LEADER WHOM WE MAY FOLLOW.

THERE WAS A GREAT BUSTLE IN THE CASTLE YARD, NOT LONG AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL, A MESSENGER APPROACHED ALLENE...

LORD LORING COMMANDS THAT YOU FOLLOW ME. YOU WILL WAIT FOR HIM IN THE GREAT CHAMBER.



ALLEYNE FOLLOWED THE MESSENGER TO THE GREAT HALL, WHERE HE WAS LEFT ALONE. SUDDENLY, HE HEARD SOMEONE LAUGHING BEHIND A DEARH CURTAIN...



WHO IS THAT?

ALLEYNE WAS STARTLED TO SEE THE YOUNG LADY WHOM HE HAD RESCUED FROM HIS BROTHER EARLIER IN THE GRY STEP FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN...



MY LADY! WHAT... THEN YOU ARE...

I AM SIR NIGEL'S DAUGHTER, I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU BUT SINCE YOU WERE COMING TO THE CASTLE, I THOUGHT I WOULD SURPRISE YOU.

JUST THEN, SIR ANSEL ENTERED...



FATHER, THIS YOUNG CLERK THE VERY DAY SAVED ME FROM THE SOCMAN OF WINSTEAD.

THEN I AM INDEED BEHOLDEN TO YOU, SIR... ALTHOUGH LADY MAUPE HAD NO RIGHT TO BE UPON THE SOCMAN'S LAND.

MAUPE WAS DISMISSED AND SIR NIGEL TURNED TO ALLENYE...

THE ARCHER HAS TOLD ME OF YOU, YOUNG MAN, AND I LIKE WHAT I HAVE HEARD. WOULD YOU ENTER MY SERVICE?

I AM HONORED THAT YOU WISH ME WORTHY OF SO GREAT A TRUST.



AND HERE COMES MY LADY TO MEET YOU, ALLENYE.

I HAVE FORMED A GOOD OPINION OF YOU, AND SEE THAT YOU ARE ONE WHO MAY BE TRUSTED. YOU ALSO HAVE MUCH LEARNING, I UNDERSTAND.

LITTLE ENOUGH, MY LADY, COMPARED TO MY TEACHERS.

ENOUGH, I DOUBT NOT, I WOULD HAVE YOU STAY AN HOUR A DAY TO THE TEACHING OF MY DAUGHTER AND TWO OTHER YOUNG WOMEN OF MY HOUSEHOLD.

WHAT LEARNING I HAVE AT YOUR SERVICE, MY LADY.



THE NEXT TWO MONTHS WERE BUSY AND EXCITING MONTHS FOR ALLEINE, HIS ENTIRE BETTERY OF LIFE HAD BEEN CHANGED AND HE TOOK TO IT READILY...

...OR IN THE TILT-YARD STRIVING TO QUALIFY HIMSELF WITH KNIGHTLY WEAPONS...

SEVEN HOURS A DAY HE SPENT IN THE PRACTICE OF RIDING...

IN ADDITION, FOR TWO HOURS A DAY, ALLEINE WAS TEACHING TO WARRIORS LOUIS AND TWO OTHER YOUNG GIRLS OF THE CASTLE, AS TIME WENT BY, HE FOUND WARRE OCCUPYING MORE AND MORE OF HIS THOUGHTS...

ONE DAY, SOON BEFORE THE MEN OF SIRMINGHAM WERE TO LEAVE FOR FRANCE, MADRE CAME TO LOUIS, LOOKING PALE AND ILL. SHE SOON LEFT TO GO TO HER CHAMBERS...

AGATHA, IS YOUR MISTRESS ILL?

IT IS NOT AN ILLNESS THAT KILLS, ONLY THAT IN THREE DAYS THE CASTLE WILL BE AS QUIET AS A PRIORY, IS THAT NOT ENOUGH TO CLOUD MY LADY'S BROW?

TRULY, I HAD FORGOTTEN THAT SHE IS ABOUT TO LOSE HER FATHER... EX... WHY DO YOU LAUGH?

OH, SIMPLE, SIMPLE! YOU SO SKILLED IN LEARNING, CAN YOU NOT READ A WOMAN'S HEART?

WITH THESE WORDS, AGATHA RAN AWAY WHILE ALLEINE STOOD STAREING AFTER HER, SCARCELY DARING TO PUT FORTH IN THE MEANING WHICH SEEMED TO UNDERLIE HER WORDS...

EVEN BEFORE DAWN ON THE DAY OF DEPARTURE, THERE WAS GREAT ACTIVITY IN THE CASTLE. SIRMINGHAM AND BATTLE AND BATTLE OF WAR DRUM CALLED ARCHERS AND STEEL-CLAD HORSEMEN TO ASSEMBLE IN THE GREAT YARD...



**1** DANVILLE ON A BALCONY OVERLOOKING THE SEA, ALLEBYNE WAS SAYING FAREWELL TO RADELL...

ALAS! WHY IS IT THAT YOU ARE SO SAD, LADY?

THOSE BRAVE MEN! HOW MANY OF THEM ARE GOING OUT AND OH, HOW FEW WILL RETURN. WHY MUST I HAVE BEEN BORN A ROMAN, TO STAY AT HOME AS USELESS AS A BROKEN BOWSTAVE.

**2** ALLEBYNE SUDDENLY LOST ALL CONTROL OF HERSELF AND CRIED...

YOU ARE OF SUCH VALUE TO ME THAT NOTHING ELSE MATTERS! YOU ARE MY HEART, MY LIFE, OH, MADRE, I CANNOT LEAVE YOU WITHOUT A WORD OF LOVE, IF I COULD HAVE BUT ONE WORD OF HOPE FROM YOU TO TAKE TO THE WARS WITH ME— BUT ONE!

OH, ALLEBYNE, I CANNOT... IT IS SO SUDDEN. HARK! THERE IS THE CALL TO ARMS! GO, YOUR PLACE IS AT MY FATHER'S SIDE. WH HIS LOVE AND ALL ELSE MAY FOLLOW.



**F**OR A MOMENT, RADELL STOOD WITH HER WHITE SLIM ARM IN ALLEBYNE'S, THEN SHE TURNED AWAY, AND LEFT HIM HOLDING HER VEIL AS A TOKEN...



**S**HORTLY AFTER DUSK, THE COMPANY WAS ON ITS WAY. A COLD BLAST BLUW IN FROM THE SEA. SIX NOBLE LORDS, WITH LADY LOBBING BY HIS SIDE, FOLLOWED HIS MEN TOWARD THEIR GREAT ADVENTURE...

MY SWEET, I AM LOATH TO PART FROM YOU, YET YOU SHOULD NOT RIDE TOO FAR.

LET ME RIDE YOU TO THE EDGE OF THE FOREST, MY DEAR LORD, THEN I SHALL BID YOU GOOD-SPEED.







THAT NIGHT THE COMPANY SLEPT AT ST. LEONARD'S, ALMOST IN SIGHT OF BARKINGLASSBY. AT EARLY DAWN, THEY JOURNEYED ON, THROUGH EXUBRY AND LEP. A GREAT CROWD BROKE OUT FROM THE GATE TO MEET THEM.

YOUR PREYON, GRACIOUS LORD, I AM THE MAYOR OF THIS ANCIENT TOWN. WE ARE IN SORE NEED OF YOU! TWO GREAT GALLENS, CAPTAINED BY VILLANOUS PIRATES, FLY THESE COASTS AND PREY UPON OUR CITIES!

I HAVE HEARD OF THEM, TETE-NOR, AND SPADYBEARD. ALTHOUGH WE CANNOT TARRY HERE, WE SHALL PREVAIL UPON THESE ROVERS TO LEAVE YOU IN PEACE.

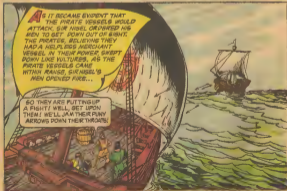


SIR NIGEL, WITH THE HONOR, LED THE ARMY INTO THE CITY. SUDDENLY, A ROAR BOOMED OUT...

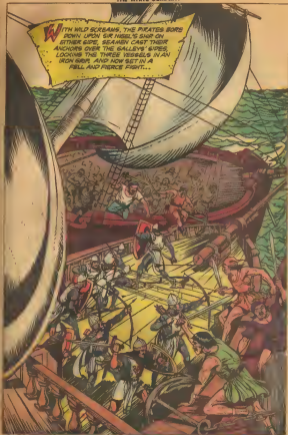
MAYOR! MAYOR! WHAT OF THE CLANG AND SCALLOPS YOU HAVE PROMISED ME?... BUT, BY ST. MARTIN OF TOURS! WHO IS THIS THAT RIDES BESIDE YOU? IF IT IS NOT MY DEAR LITTLE GAME ROOSTER, OR NIGEL!

BY MY FAITH! SIR OLIVER BUTTLESTHORN! RIGHT GLAD I AM TO SEE THAT YOU HAVE MUSTERED A PARTY!



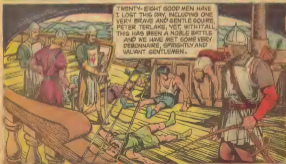


**W**ITH WILD SCREAMS, THE PIRATES BORG  
DOWN UPON SIR HESSEL'S SHIP ON  
EITHER SIDE, SEAMEN CAST THEIR  
ANCHORS OVER THE GALLEYS' SPORES,  
LOOKING THE THREE VESSELS IN AN  
IRON GRIP, AND NOW SET IN A  
FELL AND FIERCE FIGHT...





WHILE THE PIRATES HELD THE UPPER HAND, THEY KILLED WITH MERCILESS ABANDON. BUT WHEN THEIR LEADERS FELL BEFORE THE ENGLISH BLOWS, THE FIGHT WAS ALL BUT OVER...



TWENTY-EIGHT GOOD MEN HAVE I LOST THIS DAY, INCLUDING ONE VERY BRAVE AND GENTLE SOURD, PETER TERLAGS. YET, WITH IT ALL, THIS HAS BEEN A NOBLE BATTLE AND WE HAVE MET SOME VERY DEBONAIRE, SPRIGHTLY AND VALIANT GENTLEMEN.

**T**HE SLAVES IN THE GALLEYS WERE WILLING ENOUGH TO FOLLOW THE ORDERS OF THEIR NEW MASTERS AND ACCOMPANIED SIR ANGEL TO THE COAST OF FRANCE. ON THE MORNING OF FRIDAY, THE TWENTY-SIXTH OF NOVEMBER, THEY REACHED THE NOBLE CITY OF BORDEAUX...



THIS PATCH I PLACE UPON MY LEFT EYE AND WILL NOT TAKE OFF UNTIL I HAVE PERFORMED SOME DEED WORTHY OF ITS REMOVAL.



**S**IR ANGEL, SIR OLIVER AND TWO SQUIRES PROCEEDED TO BORDEAUX, WHERE PRINCE EDWARD, SON OF THE ENGLISH KING, WAS HOLDING COURT...

WE ARE SENDING AN EXPEDITION INTO GAIN TO RIGHT A WRONG AND PLACE DON PEDRO BACK UPON THE SPANISH THRONE. YOUR MEN WILL FIGHT WITH HINE AND DON PEDRO'S. HOW MANY HAVE YOU?

ONE HUNDRED AND SIXTY WITH US, SIR, AND A FREE COMPANY OF THREE HUNDRED UPON THE BORDERS OF NAVARRE.

**W**HILE THE PRINCE'S COUNCIL WAS MEETING, ALLEYNE AND WALTER FORD HAD REMAINED IN THE OUTER HALL, WITH THE SQUIRES OF THE OTHER KNIGHTS. JOHN TRANTER, ONE OF THE SQUIRES, APPROACHED ALLEYNE...

I BELIEVE THIS IS A LADY'S RAGE INSTEAD OF A SQUIRE. SUCH DUNTY COLOR, EYES OF A BISHOP'S MAID AND HAIR LIKE A THREE-YEAR BABE.

YOU SEEK TO FORCE A QUARREL, SIR, BUT YOU DO IT LIKE A COUNTRY BOOR. I SERVE A MASTER WHO COULD SHOW YOU HOW SUCH THINGS SHOULD BE DONE.



HE WOULD DRAW HIS GLOVE, AND IF HE HAD CAUSE TO THINK HE HAD TO DEAL WITH A CHURL, HE WOULD THROW IT IN HIS FACE-- AS I DO NOW!

I'LL HAVE YOUR LIFE FOR THIS!

I SHOULD DRAW OUT, IF POSSIBLE, ALLEINE. THAT MAN IS A NOTED GROUND-MAN, FAR ABOVE YOUR STRENGTH.

THAT I WILL NOT DO! LET US SETTLE THIS AT ONCE!

THE TILTING-YARD IS EMPTY AND THERE ARE TWO CLEAR HOURS BEFORE THE COUNCIL BREAKS UP!



FRANTER'S STRENGTH WAS GREATER THAN ALLEINE'S. HIS SWORD HEAVIER, AND HE LOST NO TIME IN PUTTING HIS ADVANTAGE TO USE, BUT ALLEINE WAS QUICK AND LIGHT AS A FEATHER. FOR A WHILE, NEITHER SEEMED TO BE WINNING; THEN FRANTER'S HEAVY WEAPON STRUCK AT ALLEINE'S...

THROW DOWN YOUR SWORD, ALLEINE! YOUR LIFE IS IN HIS HANDS!

NEVER!

YOU MUST BE MAD!

BACK AND BACK GAVE FRANTER, EVER SEEKING TIME FOR A LAST CUT, ON AND ON CAME ALLEINE. THEN...



A FEW MOMENTS LATER...

I AM MUCH BEHOLDEN TO YOU, GIRL. I HAD NOT THOUGHT YOU HAD TAKEN MY JESTING SO AMISS, BUT I AM SORRY FOR IT.

THEN I AM SORRY TOO, AND HERE IS MY HAND.



BY HIS PUEL, ALLEWYE INCREASED HIS PRES-TIGE GREATLY; BUT A NEW MATTER NOW MADE ALL OTHER THINGS UNIMPORTANT. THE PRINCE'S COURT HAD ANNOUNCED THAT FIVE OF ENGLAND'S KNIGHTS-ERRANT WOULD HOLD THE LISTS\* AGAINST ALL COMERS. PEASANT AND NOBLE ALIKE FOR MILES AROUND SWARMED TO THE EVENT...



THE TROUPE

IT WAS A SPECTACLE TO BEHOLD AS EIGHTY THOUSAND PEOPLE FROM ALL HALFS OF LIFE GATHERED TO SEE ENGLAND DEFEND HER HONOR AGAINST THE FINEST KNIGHTS OF ALL EUROPE. THE FIVE ENGLISH KNIGHTS WERE CHOSEN WITH THE UTMOST CARE, AND ONE OF THEM WAS SIR NIGEL LORING...



EACH KNIGHT WAS TO TILT SINGLY AGAINST HIS ADVERSARY. THE TRUMPETS RANG OUT, WHILE THE CHAMPIONS FOUGHT ONE AFTER THE OTHER, AND WHEN FOUR TILTS HAD BEEN FINISHED, THE ENGLISH HAD WON TWO AND HAD LOST TWO...



**A GREAT HUSH** fell over the multitude as Sir Nigel and his adversary, the last two champions faced one another. On the outcome of this tilt would rest the balance of victory. The horsemen met like a thunderclap in front of the stands. One course went to Sir Nigel, one to the adversary. And now... **THE FINAL TEST!**

SIR NIGEL, LORING MEN FOR ENGLAND!



**B**UT EVEN BEFORE THE EXCITEMENT OF THE VICTORY HAD QUIETED, A STRANGE KNIGHT AND HIS SQUIRE RODE HARD INTO THE LIST...

GO AND ANNOUNCE ME, SQUIRE, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!



**H**AVING ANNOUNCED HIMSELF, THE SQUIRE APPROACHED PRINCE EDWARD...

I COME, SIRE, FOR MY MASTER WHO, THOUGH VOWED NOT TO REVEAL HIS IDENTITY, WOULD CONTEND WITH THESE FINE KNIGHTS, EACH TO CHOOSE SUCH WEAPONS AS SUIT HIS BEST.

YOU SPEAK... **BOLDLY,** BUT I MUST HAVE ASSURANCE OF YOUR MASTER'S NOBLE BIRTH. SPEAK HIS NAME TO SIR JOHN CHAMBER, THE MOST HONORABLE AND ELDEST KNIGHT OF ENGLAND. IF HE APPROVES, I WILL ACCEPT YOUR MASTER'S CHALLENGE.





**T**HE SQUIRE TOLD THE TRUE IDENTITY OF THE STRANGER TO SIR JOHN CHAMBERLAIN ALONE, AND SIR JOHN AT ONCE APPROVED THE KNIGHT WITHOUT REVEALING HIS NAME. COMBAT BETWEEN THE STRANGER AND THE FIVE ENGLISH KNIGHTS BEGAN IMMEDIATELY.

**S**IR WILLIAM BEAUCHAMP WAS KNT BY SO FIERCE A THrust THAT HE WAS WHIRLED OUT OF HIS SADDLE...

**S**IR THOMAS PERCY MET WITH NO BETTER SUCCESS. HIS SHIELD WAS SPLIT AND HE WAS SLIGHTLY WOUNDED...



**L**ORD AUDLEY AND THE UNKNOWN STRUCK EACH OTHER FAIRLY UPON THE HELMET, BUT WHILE THE STRANGER SAT FIRM UPON HIS CHARGER, THE ENGLISHMAN WAS ALMOST UNSEATED BY THE OTHER'S BLOW.

**S**IR THOMAS WAKE WAS BEATEN TO THE GROUND WITH A BATTLE-AXE AND HAD TO BE CARRIED OFF THE FIELD...

**T**HE TWO COMBATANTS ADVANCED FROM EITHER END OF THE FIELD...

**T**HE BRID SUCCESS OF THE STRANGER BROUGHT THE CROWD TO A FEVERED PITCH OF EXCITEMENT. IT WAS NOW THE TURN OF SIR NIGEL LORING...



**P**RINCE EDWARD TURNED TO SIR JOHN CHAMBERLAIN...

BY MY SOUL, SIR JOHN, THAT STRANGER IS INDEED A MAN OF COURAGE, BUT I HAVE HEARD SIR NIGEL IS A FINE GROUNDSMAN.

THE FINEST IN YOUR ARMY, SIR. YET I DOUBT NOT THAT HE WILL USE ALL HIS SKILL THIS DAY.



AT FOUR PACES THE TWO KNIGHTS STOPPED, EYED EACH OTHER FOR A MOMENT, AND THEN IN AN INSTANT, FELL TO WORK WITH A CLATTER AND A CLANG. UP AND DOWN WENT THE LONG SHINING BLADES, WITH CUT AND THRUST, AND FLASH OF BRASS WITH EVERY PARRY.





THE CROWD BEARED WITH DELIGHT AS SIR NICOL MOULDS, BY SOME SLIGHT MOVEMENT OF HIS BODY, AVOID A TERRIBLE THRUST TO BLANCE HARMLESSLY PAST HIM. SUDDENLY, HOWEVER, HIS TIME CAME. THE STRANGER, WHIRLING UP HIS SWORD, SWUNG FOR AN INSTANT, A CHINK IN HIS

ARMOR...



IT WERE TIME TO CHECK THE FIGHT! THE CAVALIER HAS SHOWN HIS PROMISE THIS DAY, WOUND OR NO, AND MORE BLOODSHED WOULD PROVE NOTHING!



THE STRANGE KNIGHT REMOUNTED HIS WAR HORSE THEN, AND GALLOPED FORWARD TO THE ROYAL STAND...

SIR KNIGHT, WE HAVE MARVELED THIS DAY AT YOUR GREAT SKILL. I WOULD RAIN THAT YOU TARRY TILL YOUR WOUND IS HEALED. AT LEAST SUP WITH US AT OUR TABLE.

I WILL GO NEITHER. I BEAR NO LOVE FOR YOU OR YOUR RACE AND NAUGHT I WISH BUT TO SEE YOU SAIL BACK TO YOUR ISLAND!



WITH BOLDSIRY GALLITE THE KNIGHT WHEELED HIS HORSE AND GALLOPED DOWN THE LISTS...

THE INSOLENT VILLAIN!

HAY, DON PEDRO BY ST. GEORGE! HE HAS SORVED HIS MASTER THIS DAY EVEN AS I WOULD WISH LIEGE-MEN OF MINE TO GOVE ME!





**A**T NOON, THE FOLLOWERS RAN...

ARE YOU NOT TAKING YOUR COMPANY WITH THE PRINCE TO OAK, SIR NIGEL?

ALL GO WITH THE PRINCE EXCEPT YOU, SQUIRE FORD, SAM, JOHN AND I. WE GOT TO MONTAUSON, I HAVE LEARNED THE WHITE COMPANY IS PLUNDERING THERE. IT MUST BE STOPPED.



**N**EAR THE END OF THE SECOND DAY, THEY CAME TO DESOLATE BARREN COUNTRY, BURNED AND PILLAGED BY ADVENTURERS, BLEED MERCILESSLY BY FRENCH LORDS...

THERE IS AN INN AHEAD, AND I AM RIGHT GLAD, I FEARED WE MIGHT NOT THIS NIGHT FIND FOOD AND QUARTERS. ANNOUNCE US, ALLEWYE.



I HAVE CALLED MANY TIMES, SIR NIGEL, BUT THERE IS NO REPLY.

LET US GO THROUGH THAT DOOR, ALLEWYE. IT IS, I BELIEVE, THE CHEEF GUEST ROOM.



**A**S THEY ENTERED...

I HEARD YOU FRENCHMEN CAN A FRENCHMAN NOT SIT DOWN UP ON FRENCH LAND WITHOUT HAVING ENGLISH CRABLING ABOUT MAKING A MAN'S EAR WITH THEIR NOISIOUS TALK?

BY MY GONN! IT IS MY LITTLE SWORDSMAN OF BORDEAUX! IT IS BUT THREE DAYS SINCE YOU GAVE ME A SLIGHT ROUND UPON THE SHOULDER!

BERTRAND DU GUESCIN! THEN YOU ARE THE STRANGER WHO FOUGHT SO VALIANTLY! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN, FOR YOUR NAME IS GREATER IN KNIGHTHOOD THAN ANY OTHER IN ALL FRANCE!

**Next**, DU GUESCIN TURNED TO LADY TOPHANE, HIS WIFE. SHE WAS KNOWN TO BE A MYSTIC AND SIR NISSEL WAS APPREHENSIVE, UNTIL THE LADY GRACIOUSLY PUT HIM AT HIS EASE...

I PERCEIVE, SIR NISSEL, FROM THE PATCH ON YOUR EYE THAT YOU ARE UNDERWON. DOUBTLESS YOUR LADY IS PROUD OF YOU!

RATHER I OF HER. I SPEAK OF MY SWEET WIFE!

BUT IT GROWS LATE, AND MY OLD WAR COMPANION, SIR TROSTAN DE RECHERFORT, HAS MORE FIT QUARTERS THAN THESE AT VILLEFRANCHE.



**ON THE ROAD TO VILLEFRANCHE**, THE TRAVELERS WERE OBFUSCATED BY THE UNIVERSAL HURRY THROUGH WHICH THEY JOURNEYED. NOT ONCE DID THEY SEE A SMILING FACE, OR A THAWING ROAD-STEAD. RATHER THEY PASSED STREAKING, LEAN FIGURES, SCRAPING AND SCOOTING IN THE WHEELS FOR SPIRIT ROUTE. AS SOON AS THE PEASANTS SIGHTED THE HORSEMEN, THEY HID LIKE ANIMALS IN THE BRUSHWOOD—UNLESS THEY WERE TOO HEAVY FROM HUNGER AND DRIVING ICEBERG.

THEY ARE KNOWN AS JACKS OF NISSEL. MEN OF THE BRUSHWOOD.

THEIR'S SEEMS AN UNHAPPY LOT—WITHOUT HOPE.



WHEN SUCH MEN, WHO ARE BEYOND HOPE AND FEAR, BEGIN TO SEE THE SOURCE OF THEIR WOE, IT MAY BE AN EVIL TIME FOR THOSE WHO HAVE WRONGED THEM.

AH, YES—BUT HERE WE ARE AT THE CASTLE OF VILLEFRANCHE.



THE WHITE COMPANY



AS THEY REACHED THE CASTLE, THE HOARSE BLAST OF A HORN COULD BE HEARD FROM THE WOODLAND...

LISTEN! WHAT IS THAT SOUND?

IT IS THE HORNS OF GRINDHERDS, THOUGH WHY THEY BLOW THEM SO LATE, I CANNOT TELL.

YOU SURELY HAD A PASSPORT TO ANY CASTLE IN FRANCE, AND THOUGH THERE WAS GRIM WANT AMONG THE POOR PEOPLE, MATERIAL FOR A FEAST WAS EVER AT HAND IN THE CASTLE. YET SIR HISSOL COULD NOT FORGET THE DRAWN, MASSIVE FACES OF THE PEOPLE HE HAD PASSED...

SIR TRISTAN, THE FOLK OF THE COUNTRYSIDE SEEM LEAN AND HUNGRY.

THEY ARE STINGY, SULKY DOGS. IT IS THEIR GRUNDLING WHICH MAKES THEM THIN.



LISTEN! THAT SOUND AGAIN!

IT IS NOTHING! TRY NO NEED TO IT!



THOUGHT OF THE SHINERHEEP'S MORNS WAS BLOTTED FROM THE MINDS OF THOSE IN THE ROOM ALMOST AT ONCE. HOWEVER, AND ATTENTION WAS TURNED TO LADY TIPHANE DU GUESCLIN...

HOW IS IT WITH YOU, MY LADY?

ALL IS VERY WELL WITH ME, BERTRAND. THE BLESSED HOUR OF SIGHT HAS COME ROUND TO ME AGAIN.



WHILE THIS POWER OF SIGHT IS WITH YOU, LADY, MAY YOU SEE WHAT OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND?

BOTH SHALL CONQUER AND EACH SHALL HOLD HIS OWN. ALL OF FRANCE SHALL ONE DAY BELONG TO FRANCE, BUT AS FOR ENGLAND... I SEE HER BANNER OVER THE WORLD...



"BUT TWO WOMEN BEHELD THE CASTLE, AND ONE SHOTS AN ARROW THROUGH THE HEART OF THE LEADER AND HE DIES. A MAN OF PROPERTY, HE IS... A GOCKMAN..."



AT LADY TIPHANE'S WORDS, ALL STARTED AND DRESSED FORWARD TO HEAR...

TELL ME WHAT FORTUNE COMES UPON ME, MY SWEET.

DANGER, BERTRAND... DEADLY PRESSING DANGER... WHICH CREEPS UPON YOU AND YOU DO NOT KNOW IT! HERE... NOW... CLOSE UPON YOU.



AND OF TWYNHAM CASTLE AND BY... ASKED SIR NIGEL. LADY TIPHANE MOTIONED TO ALLEYN AND MADE HIM PLACE HIS HAND UPON HER BROW. "HE THINKS MORE OF TWYNHAM THAN YOU," SHE TOLD THE KNIGHT, THEN...

TWYNHAM IS BESIEGED BY A MULTITUDE, LED BY A CRUEL LEADER.

BESIEGED!





THE SOLDAN!  
COULD IT BE  
THAT MY  
BROTHER...HAG  
DARED...

IT COULD... AND  
IF THIS BE TRUE,  
HE WILL NOT TROUBLE  
MORE MY DEAREST CHILD.

THAT IS SO,  
FOR HIS MEN  
NOW RETREAT!



IT WAS LATE EVE ALLEWNE EDRICSON  
HEAT TO HIS CHAMBER. HE HAD JUST  
KNEELED FOR HIS EVENING PRAYER  
WHEN A TAP CAME TO HIS DOOR. IT WAS  
FORD AND HIS FACE WAS GHAETLY WHITE...

ALLEWNE, AS GOING  
MY HELP, I SAW THE  
HAND OF DEATH REACH  
ING OUT TO ME AS I  
CAME UP THE STAIRS  
THIS NIGHT! THE BONY  
FINGERS SEEMED TO  
TOUCH ME EVE THE  
VISION PASSED AWAY!

I WOULD NOT  
GIVE MUCH THOUGHT  
TO IT. OUR MINDS  
WILL PLAY US  
PRANKS AND THE  
STRANGE WORDS  
OF LADY TIPHANE  
DU GUESCUM HAVE  
SWORN US ALL!



ALLEWNE'S COMPANIONS, SAM  
RYLAND AND HORDLE JOHN,  
WERE SOON FAST ASLEEP; BUT THE  
DAY'S STRANGE HAPPENINGS  
STORRED THE YOUNG SOLDAN'S MIND  
ABSORBED IN HIS THOUGHTS, HE  
STOOD GAZING OUT THE CHAMBER  
WINDOW, THEN...

SAM! JOHN!  
COME HERE!



WHAT DO  
YOU THINK OF  
IT, SAM?

I THINK  
NOTHING  
OF IT



THE FRENCH MARSHES ARE FULL OF  
OUTCASTS, SPILERS, DRAW-LATCHES--OF WHOM  
I JUDGE THAT THESE ARE GONE. I MARVEL, THOUGH,  
THAT THEY SHOULD DARE COME SO NIGH THE CASTLE.  
BACK TO REST, MY FRIEND.

NONETH-  
LESS I  
THINK IT  
WELL TO  
BOLT OUR  
DOOR!



IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN THREE O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING WHEN ALLEYNIE WAS AROUSED FROM A TROUBLED SLEEP BY A LOY CRY. A MOMENT LATER HIS EYES FELL UPON THAT WHICH SENT THE BLOOD COLD TO HIS HEART...

MY GOD!  
SAY, JOHN!



IT IS HALTER FORD! WHAT HAS COME UPON US? WHAT DEVL'S DEED IS THIS?

BY MY HILT, MON GARE! IT IS TIME THAT WE WERE STIRRED!

BY MY TEN FINGER BONES! THERE LIE SIR TRISTAN AND HIS LADY!

AND THE ROAR OF MAD MEN COMES FROM THE GREAT HALL!



IN EVERY ROOM WERE BRAWNBOOD MEN, DESTROYING, FLUNDERING...



AS SIR GAW, JOHN AND ALLEYNIE REACHED THE GREAT HALL, THEY FOUND SIR HISSLE AND GUESLIN HARD PRESSED BY AVENGING JACKS...

BY MY HILT! THIS WILL BE A FIGHT!



THE WHISTLE OF LONG ENGLISH ARROWS TURNED THE TIDE OF THE COMBAT. THE ASSAULTS FELL BACK, THE KNIGHTS RUSHED FORWARD, AND IN A FEW MOMENTS, THE HALL WAS CLEARED.

DO NOT FOLLOW THEM! WE ARE LOST IF WE SCATTER! IT IS BEST IF WE HEAD FOR THE KEEP\* BUT FIRST, I WILL GO FOR MY LADY.

I AM HERE, MY DEAR HUSBAND, AND QUITE SAFE. I WILL FOLLOW WHERE YOU GO.

MOMENTARILY, THE INSURGENTS TURNED THEIR ATTENTION FROM MURDER TO PLUNDER. IN THOSE FEW MOMENTS, SIR NIBEL AND THE OTHERS REACHED THE KEEP, BUT...

THIS ROOM IS KEY ENOUGH FOR ME!

GOOD HEAVENS! THE DOOR IS LOCKED AND WE HAVE NO KEY!

THE POSITION OF THE SMALL PARTY WAS DESPERATE, FOR THEY STOOD AGAINST SIX THOUSAND WILLY-STARVED MEN IN AND AROUND THE CASTLE—MEN WHO HAD LOST ALL FEAR OF DANGER AND DEATH...

THEY ARE BRINGING WOOD TO BURN US OUT! SHOOT STRAIGHT AND HARD, ARCHERS, FOR OUR GOD'S SWORDS WILL BE OF LITTLE USE TO US.





**E**VEN AS SIR BERTRAND SPOKE, A DOZEN MEN RUSHED FORWARD EACH SCREENING HIMSELF BY A HUGE BUNDLE OF BRUSHWOOD, HURLING THEIR BURNING TORCHES AT THE WALL WHICH HAD BEEN SOAKED IN OIL...

I HAVE ONLY THIRTEEN ARROWS LEFT! BUT I SHALL MAKE EACH ONE FLY TO ITS MARK!

HERE IS A STAIRWAY TO THE TOWER, SIR BERTRAND! FROM IT WE MAY FIND ADVANTAGE.

**A**S THE DEFENDERS REACHED THE TOWER ROOF, THEY HEARD THE MURDEROUS CRIES OF BRUSHWOOD MEN FOLLOWING THEM UP THE TOWER STAIRS...



MY FAIR LORD! THAT IRON TUBE WITH HEAVY BALLS - COULD IT BE ONE OF THOSE BOMBARDS OF WHICH I HAVE HEARD?

BOMBARDS THEY ARE! WE MAY SHOOT DOWN UPON THEM.



HOW IS A MAN TO TAKE AIM WITH THESE FOOLS' TONGS? AND HOW CAN WE HOPE TO DO SCATH' WITH THEM!

I WILL SHOW YOU, HERE IS THE BOX OF POWDER, RAISE IT JOHN, THROW BACK THE LID AND DROP THE BOX IN - TO THE FIRE!

**A** DEAFENING  
ROAR, A FLUFF OF  
BLUSH LIGHT AND THE  
GREAT SQUARE TOWER  
ROCKED AND TREMBLED  
FROM ITS VERY  
FOUNDATION....



WE ARE TRULY LOST  
MEN, NOW. THE WALL  
HAS FALLEN IN, THE  
STAIRWAY IS BLOCKED

**P**ENT IN, A HUNDRED FEET FROM  
THE EARTH, WITH A FURNACE  
RAGING UNDER THEM AND A RAVEN-  
ING MULTITUDE THIRSTING FOR THEIR  
BLOOD AROUND THEM, THE BRAVE  
DEFENDERS OF THE CASTLE WAITED  
FOR THE END...

BERTRAND  
LISTEN! I HEAR  
VOICES OF MEN  
SINGING IN A  
STRANGE TONGUE.

IT CANNOT BE, MY  
LADY! WHAT MEN IN  
FRANCE WOULD BE  
SINGING IN A  
STRANGE TONGUE?





WE'LL ALL DRINK TOGETHER TO THE GRAY GOOSE FEATHER AND THE LAND WHERE THE GRAY GOOSE FLEW.

BY MY HILT! IT IS THE DEAR OLD BOW SONG OF THE WHITE COMPANY!

IT IS IN MY MIND THEY COME TOO LATE, FOR I CANNOT SEE HOW WE CAN GET DOWN FROM THIS TOWER.



THE LADY TIRMAINE WAS THE FIRST TO BE LOWERED; THE REST GLAD SWIFTLY DOWN AMID THE CHEERS OF THEIR RESCUERS, FOR IT WAS A REUNION OF OLD FRIENDS...



WHERE IS SIR CLAUDE LATOUR? IS HE HERE?

NAH, SIR NIGEL... HE IS IN CAMP BUT TWO HOURS' MARCH AWAY.

THE WHITE COMPANY, HAVING BEEN DRAWN TO THE SCENE BY THE FLAMES AND THE EXPLOSION, SOON ROUTED THE BRUSHWOODMEN, DISHEARTENED BY THEIR OWN LOSSES AND THE ARRIVAL OF DISCIPLINED ARCHERS...

THERE GOES A STRING TO THE TOWER ROOF! TO IT WE WILL TIE A ROPE AND BY THE ROPE THEY CAN ESCAPE FROM THE TOWER!



FOR TWO HOURS THE COMPANY MARCHED THROUGH FOREST AND MARCH LAND UNTIL AT LAST THEY REACHED GARR...

SIR NIGEL, LOOKING AT LAST, YOU RECEIVED MY LETTER, BUT YET I WOND'ER YOU WOULD BRING A HUNDRED MEN WITH YOU.

THEY ARE ALREADY AT BRX, WHERE WE SHALL JOIN THEM.



SIR CLAUDE INVITED SIR NIGEL AND ALLEYNE INTO HIS HUT TO DINE. THE FRENCHMAN'S BROW CLOUDED AS THE MEAL PROCEEDED...

YOU SPEAK OF DRINK. SURELY YOU DO NOT EXPECT TO FIGHT A WAR, WHEN THERE IS SO MUCH PLUNDER THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY?

I WILL NOT GO TO DRINK, AND I DOUBT THAT THE MEN WILL FOLLOW YOU THERE, EITHER.

THEN I PRAY YOU GATHER THEM TOGETHER AND I WILL SAY WHAT IS ON MY MIND. IF I AM THEIR LEADER, THEY MUST GO TO DRINK. IF I AM NOT THEIR LEADER, I DO NOT KNOW WHAT I AM DOING HERE.

SIR NIGEL FACED THE MEN. "THEY TELL ME," HE SAID, "THAT YOU HAVE GROWN SO REAP OF PLUNDER THAT YOU WILL NOT FOLLOW THE BANNER OF LORING, WHERE NO RICHES, BUT RATHER HONOR, WILL BE GAINED. WHAT SAY YOU?" ONLY THIRTEEN MEN WERE BACK WITH SHEEPISH FACES, THE REST OF THE WHITE COMPANY PACKED THEIR POSSESSIONS AND SET OFF BEHIND SIR NIGEL LORING...

OVER THE ARID PLAINS OF GASCONY TO DRINK TRAVELED THE THREE HUNDRED STRONG BROTHERS OF SIR NIGEL. THEN, WITH THE VAST ARMY OF PRINCE EDWARD, THEY CROSSED THE FRENCH PASSAGE OF THE PYRENEES--AND INTO SPAIN. AND NOW THE WHITE COMPANY WAS ONCE MORE ON THE TRAIL OF HONOR...

THE COMPANY WILL COPY UPON THE ENEMY--LEARN THEIR WEAKNESSES--FOR IT IS SAID THE SPAINARDS HAVE EIGHTY THOUSAND MEN TO THE PRINCE'S SEVEN AND TWENTY.



**T**HERE WAS A PERIOD OF SILENCE BEFORE SIR NIGEL SPOKE AGAIN...

ALLEN, I WAS THINKING OF THE LADY TIPHANE-- OF HOW SHE SAID YOU THOUGHT MORE OF TYNHAM THAN I...

I THINK CONSTANTLY OF IT, MY LORD, FOR I LOVE THE LADY MAIDE. IT IS BUT A HOPE.

I HAVE NOT HER PROMISE, MY LORD, BUT IF IT BE TRUE THAT THE GOOMAN IS DEAD, I OWN MUCH LAND...

I HAD NOT GIVEN THOUGHT TO THIS, BUT IF IT BE TRUE LOVE, I ONLY ASK THAT FIRST YOU EARN FULL KNIGHTHOOD!



**T**HE NEXT DAY THEY RESTED AT LOSROND AND ON THE FOLLOWING CAPTURED A PEASANT WHOM THEY FORCED TO LEAD THEM TO THE SPANISH CAMP...

THERE THEY ARE, SIR NIGEL, AND IT IS TRUE OF THEIR NUMBERS. I THINK WE HAVE DONE WHAT WE HAVE COME FOR.

WE HAVE COME THIS FAR AND WE WILL NOT RETURN WITHOUT STRIKING A BLOW.



**T**HE COMPANY'S CAMP WAS HIGH ON A PLATEAU IN THE MOUNTAINS. THE NEXT MORNING ALLENE WALKED ALONE IN THE WOODS-- THINKING OF LADY MAIDE. SUDDENLY HE HEARD A SOUND THAT SENT HIM RUNNING BACK TO CAMP...

SIR NIGEL! THERE ARE HORSES GALLOPING THIS WAY!

YES! I HEAR THEM! THE PEASANT WHO LED US HERE MUST HAVE REVEALED OUR POSITION!



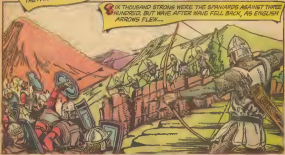
UNLOOSE THE HORSES! WE HAVE NO ROOM FOR THEM! NOW UP ON THIS HILL! HERE WE SHALL MEET THE ENEMY AND STAND OR FALL!



SIR NIGEL RETAINED HIS OWN HORSE IN ORDER TO DIRECT THE FIGHT. A MASSIVE OF ENEMY SOLDIERS ROLLED TOWARD THEM, AND SIR NIGEL SPURRED HIS CHARGER AHEAD. HE PICKED OUT ONE SPANISH KNIGHT TO FIGHT SINGLE. HE UNLASHED HIS GALLANT FEE AFTER A FURIOUS BATTLE AND REMOVED THE PATCH FROM HIS EYE...



SIX THOUSAND STRONG WERE THE SPANARDS AGAINST THREE HUNDRED, BUT WERE AFTER BANG FELL BACK, AS ENGLISH ARROWS FLEW...



THE WHITE COMPANY

TO THE BATTLE  
RAGED UNTIL  
THE ARROWS  
WERE GONE.  
THEN THE FIGHT-  
ING CONTINUED  
HAND TO HAND.

THE PRINCE MUST HEAR HOW  
THINGS ARE WITH US, ALLEYNE.  
IF YOU COULD REACH A HORSE.

IF WE HAD A ROPE  
I COULD BE LOWERED DOWN  
THE CLIFF BEHIND US!

ROPE WAS  
FOUND AND  
AND ALLEYNE  
WAS LOWERED  
AND A STORM  
OF STONES,  
ONE OF WHICH  
BROKE  
SEVERAL OF  
ALLEYNE'S  
RIBS...

ANOTHER ROCK HIT HIM ON THE HEAD, KNOCKING HIM  
SENSELESS. AS HE LAY THERE, A SPRINGER  
RUSHED AT HIM, SWORD DRAWN...

WISLIE JOHN, ATOP THE CLIFF  
CHANCED TO LOOK DOWN, SEEING  
ALLEYNE'S DANGER. JOHN LIFTED A  
HUGE ROCK  
AND...

... HURLED IT DOWN ON THE SPRINGER,  
CRUSHING HIM WITH ITS WEIGHT...

THE DYING GRANARD'S SCREAMS BROUGHT ALLENE BACK TO HIS SENSES. WITH A MIGHTY EFFORT, HE REACHED A HORSE... JUST AS AN ARROW FOUND ITS MARK...



HE WAS DIZZY, SICK, FAINT... AND BUT HALF-CONSCIOUS... RUSHING GRIFFLY DOWN THE RAIN, OVER BOULDERS, ALONG BLACK ABYSSSES...

I MUST NOT DIE, FOR MY LIFE MAY MEAN MANY LIVES!

LOOK, SIR HUGH! IT IS AN ENGLISH MAN AND HE WEARS THE BLAZON OF SIR NIGEL, LORDS!



IT WAS A FORAGING PARTY LED BY SIR HUGH CALVERLEY THAT ALLENE MET. ALLENE GASPED OUT HIS STORY...

YOU ARE BADLY WOUNDED, SIR!

I... I CAN GO ON. I WILL LEAD YOU TO SIR NIGEL, LORDS, WHO MUST HAVE HELP!



SIR HUGH'S PARTY WASTED HUNDREDS OF STRONG, BUT...

I FEAR WE HAVE ARRIVED TOO LATE.

THERE IS NOBLE JOHN...



JOHN, WHERE ARE SIR NIGEL AND AYLMARD?

DEAD, I FEAR. I SAW THEM RIDE INTO THE FRAY AND THEY DID NOT COME BACK. THE GRANARDS MISSED US, OR WE TOO, WOULD HAVE BEEN LIKE THE REST OF THE WHITE COMPANY... THERE!



BUT I FEAR THE SPANARDS WOULD HAVE HUNTED US DOWN, HAD YOU NOT RETURNED. WHY? WHAT IS THE MATTER, ALLEINE? YOUR FACE IS GHASTLY PALE!



FOR TWO MONTHS, ALLEINE HAVED BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, BUT THE STORY OF HIS COMPANY'S HEROISM AND HIS COURAGEOUS RIDE FOR AID SPREAD FAR AND WIDE. PRINCE EDWARD HIMSELF VISITED ALLEINE'S BEDSIDE...



I HEREWITH GIVE THEE KNIGHT, SIR ALLEINE EDRICKSON.

IT WAS IN JULY, FOUR MONTHS AFTER THE BATTLE, THAT LADY MAUDIE LONGS WENT TO TAKE THE VOWS OF THE CHURCH, FOR SHE HAD LOST BOTH HER FATHER AND HER LOVER IN THE BATTLE...



SUDDENLY THE SOLEMNITY OF THE OCCASION WAS SHATTERED.



MAUDIE MAUDIE!

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?



ALLEINE!

I JUST LEARNED IN TOWN THAT YOU WERE TO TAKE THE VOWS!



VERY QUIET WAS THE WEDDING IN THE OLD FRIARY CHURCH IN CHRISTCHURCH, WHERE FATHER CHRISTOPHER READ THE SERVICE, AND THERE WERE FEW TO SEE SAVE LADY LORING AND JOHN, AND A DOZEN BOWMEN FROM THE CASTLE...



AS THEY APPROACHED A WOODSIDE INN...

AH, MY OWNET, I SWEAR BY MY TEN FINGER BONES, I WOULD NOT HURT A HAIR OF YOUR PRETTY HEAD!

SAW! SAW AYLWARD!



AYLWARD IS THAT SOME KNIGHT? PERHAPS HE DESIRES TO EXALT HIS LADY BY SOME SMALL FEED OF ARMS?

SIR NIBEL! SIR NIBEL!



IN AN INSTANT, THE FOUR MEN WERE CLUNG TO ONE ANOTHER IN GREAT JOY. SIR NIBEL AND SAM TOLD HOW THEY HAD BEEN CAPTURED AND NOW, HAVING ESCAPED, WERE ON THEIR WAY HOME...

SOME TIME AFTER THE WEDDING, ALLEINE RODE OUT WITH HORTLE JOHN, HIS SQUIRE, TO LEARN, IF HE COULD, THE FATE OF SIR NIBEL LORING...

WE WILL GOIL TO FRANCE AND START OUR SEARCH THERE.



BY MY BELLY ALLEINE JOHN!



SIR NIBEL LORING RODE NO MORE TO THE BARR, BUT ALLEINE FOUGHT TWICE IN FRANCE AND GATHERED MANY HONORS. SAM AYLWARD MARRIED DAVID ELIZA AND WITH HER KEPT THE "FRED MERLIN," WHERE HORTLE JOHN OFTEN WENT TO DRINK GOOD ALE AND RETELL THE MARVELOUS ADVENTURES OF THE WHITE COMPANY.

NOW THAT YOU HAVE READ THE CLASSIC'S ILLUSTRATED EDITION, DON'T MISS THE ADDED ENJOYMENT OF READING THE ORIGINAL, OBTAINABLE AT YOUR SCHOOL OR PUBLIC LIBRARY.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE  
(1859-1930)

THE most famed of all detective fiction writers was born May 22, 1859 in Picardy Place, Edinburgh, Scotland. His father, Charles Doyle, was an artist but earned his livelihood through government employment. He was given the name "Conan" in honor of his uncle and godfather, Michael Conan, who had married into the Doyle family.

From his earliest childhood, Doyle's parents wished for him to enter the medical profession; and it was with this goal in mind that young Arthur entered Stonyhurst Academy. Upon leaving Stonyhurst, he spent one year at Feld Kirch in Austria and then entered Edinburgh University in 1873. One of his professors at Edinburgh was the man who later became the prototype for Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Joseph Bell.

Upon graduation, he opened his practice in Southsea in England but didn't do well at first. Therefore, he supplemented his meager income by writing short stories.

In the first year of his short lived medical career, he wrote his first full-length novel, entitled "The Firm of Girdleston." The reception of this work by the publishers is best described by the author himself. In speaking of the manuscript, he said, "It returned with the precision of a homing pigeon."

In 1885, he married and in due time became the father of two children, a girl and a boy. The boy, Kingsley, was later wounded in World War I and died soon after the Armistice was signed.

The first Sherlock Holmes work, "A Study in Scarlet," appeared in 1886 but met with no particular success. It did not serve its main purpose of bringing financial gain to Doyle, but it did help to introduce Holmes and his foil, Dr. Watson, to the reading



public before the monthly deluge of Sherlock Holmes stories began in the Strand Magazine in 1891. Here, they met great success and the monthly stories continued to appear until 1896 when Doyle tired of writing detective fiction and turned historian and lecturer.

In 1892, the Doyle family had to move to Switzerland because of the ill health of Mrs. Doyle. While in Switzerland, Doyle introduced the sport of skiing to the land of the Alps.

In 1894, he made a lecture tour of the United States. This was the first of many trips he made to this country. Upon his return to Europe in 1895, he again moved his family. This time to Egypt. Here, he had his first turn at being a war correspondent, a post he was also to hold in the first World War.

During the Boer War, he remained at home in England, to which he had finally returned because of his duties to his ill wife. After the war, when England was assailed by her opponents for waging war against the Boers, Doyle wrote a pamphlet defending England's conduct. For outstanding service to his country, he was knighted by the King of England in 1902. Soon afterwards, in 1906, his wife died of tuberculosis.

Although Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is most noted for his work dealing with Sherlock Holmes, he has many more accomplishments to his credit. In the literary field, he was novelist, historian, short story writer, and poet. Whatever one may say about him, one thing is certain: he was versatile. Not only was he a writer and doctor, but he was also a world traveler, war correspondent, sportsman, lecturer, and a spiritualist.

On July 7, 1930, at the age of 71, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle died after an illness of nine months.



## HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED?



ONE fine day many years ago, an elder sister visited her younger sister in a small village in Russia. The elder sister was married to a tradesman in a big city, the younger to a peasant farmer in the village. As the sisters sat and sipped tea, the elder began to boast of the advantages of town life, what fine clothes her children wore, what good things they ate and drank, and how she went to the theater.

The younger sister became jealous and made nasty remarks about the life of a tradesman and upheld the peasant. "I would not change my way of life for yours," she said. "We may live simply, but we are free from worry. You live better than we do, but you may lose all you have. You know the proverb, 'Loss and gain are brothers twins.' It often happens that people who are wealthy one day are beggars the next."

The elder sister replied sneeringly. "You like to share with pigs and calves! What do you know of good manners? However much your husband may slave, you and your children will live and die never knowing anything better."

"Well, what of it?" said the younger. "Though the work is rough and coarse, the living is sure and we need not bow to anyone. But you are surrounded by temptations, and your husband may be tempted by cards, wine or women and all will go to ruin."

Pahom, the master of the house, was lying on top of the stove listening to the women's chatter. "It is true," said he, "we peasants have no time to let nonsense settle in our heads. Our only trouble is that we haven't land enough. If I had plenty of land, I wouldn't fear the devil himself!"

The women finished their tea, cleared away the tea things and lay down to sleep. But the devil had been sitting behind the stove, listening to all that was said. He was pleased that the peasant's wife had led her husband into boasting and that he had said that if he had plenty of land he would not fear the devil himself.

"All right," thought the devil. "We will have a tussle. I'll give you land enough; and by means of that land I will get you into my power."

Pahom soon became dissatisfied with his lot and decided to buy some land from a neighbor who had decided to sell her land. So he spoke to his wife. They put their heads together and considered how they could manage to buy the land. They had only one hundred rubles. They sold a calf and one half of their bees, hired out one of their sons as a laborer, and borrowed some money from a brother-in-law. Having done this, Pahom went to the lady to bargain for her forty acres. They came to an agreement and he paid for half the land and undertook to pay for the remainder within two years.

Now Pahom had land of his own. He borrowed seed and sowed his land. The harvest was a good one and within a year, he paid off all his debts. He was now a landowner, and when he beheld his growing corn and grass-meadow, his heart filled with joy. He became very wealthy... but the desire for more land soon overcame him and he became discontented.

One day, Pahom was sitting at home when a peasant, passing through the village, happened to sail on him. He was allowed to stay the night and supper was given him. Pahom had a talk with the peasant and asked him where he came from. The stranger answered that he had come from beyond the Volga River, where he had been working. The man said that many people were settling in those parts. He told how some people from his village had settled there, had joined the Commune, and had twenty-five acres per person granted them. The land was so good that the rye sown on it grew as high as a horse. "One peasant," he said, "had brought nothing with him but his bare hands, and now he has six horses and two cows of his own."

Pahom's heart hummed with desire. He thought, "Why should I live in this narrow hole if I can live better elsewhere? There are my wife, three sons, and myself. That means I could get one hundred and twenty-five acres of land. I will sell my head and my homestead here and with the money, will start over again there and get everything new. I must go first and find out all about it myself."

Toward summer, he started. He went down the Volga on a steamer to Samara,



then walked another three hundred miles on foot, and at last reached the place. It was just as the stranger had said. Having found out all, he wished to know. Pabom returned home and sold all his belongings. He waited until spring and then started with his family for the new settlement. He got his land and for three years sowed wheat. The crops were good and he began to save money.

A passing dealer happened to stop at Pabom's one day to get food for his horses. The dealer said he was just returning from the land of the Bashkirs, far away, where he had bought thirteen thousand acres of land for only one thousand rubles. Pabom questioned him further and the tradesman said, "All you need to do is make friends with the chiefs, and give them gifts."

Pabom inquired how to get to the place and he prepared to go there himself. He left his wife to look after the homestead and started on his journey. On the seventh day, he came to the place where the Bashkirs were camped. An interpreter was found and Pabom told them he had come about the land. The Bashkirs seemed very glad, led him into one of the best tents and made him sit on some soft pillows while they sat around him. Pabom took gifts from his cart and distributed them among the Bashkirs; they were delighted. They told him that in return for his presents, they would gladly sell him as much land as he wanted. The chief told him that the land cost one thousand rubles a day. They explained that as much land as he could walk around in one day would be his.

"But in a day a man can get around a large tract of land," said Pabom.

The chief laughed. "It will be yours," he said. "But there is one condition. If you don't return on the same day to the spot from where you started, your money is lost."

Pabom was delighted. It was decided that he would start at sunrise the next morning. Pabom could not sleep that night he was so excited. At last, he would have enough land.

The next morning, the chief took off his fox-fur cap, placed it on the ground and said, "This will be the mark. Start from here and return here before sunset."

Pabom took out his money and placed it on the cap. He took off his outer coat, put a little bag of bread in his pocket and a flask of water on his belt. He started off toward the rising sun, walking neither slowly nor hurriedly. After having gone a thousand yards, he stopped and dug a hole for a

marker. He went on until it was noon; he sat down to eat his bread and drink some water. "I will go another three miles," he thought, "and then turn to the left. This spot is so fine, it would be a pity to lose it."

He rose and went on and on, until he noticed that the sun was half way to the horizon. He was ten miles from the goal, and had not yet finished his square of land. He decided he had better hurry back in a straight line even though his land would be angled rather than square. Pabom hurriedly dug a hole and turned straight toward the hillock where the Bashkirs waited for him.

But now he walked with difficulty; he was done in with the heat, his bare feet were cut and bruised, and his legs began to fail. He longed to rest, but it was impossible to get back before the sun set. The sun waits for no man, and it was sinking lower and lower.

He looked toward the hillock and at the sun. He was still far from his goal, and the sun was already near the rim. It was very hard walking but he went faster and faster. He began running, and threw away his coat, his flask and his cap. He kept only the spade which he used as a support for his fast-failing legs. His soaking shirt and trousers stuck to him and his mouth was parched. His breast was working like a blacksmith's bellows, and his heart was beating like a hammer. Pabom was seized with terror lest he should die of the strain. Though afraid of death, he could not stop. He ran on and on. He heard the Bashkirs yelling and shouting to him, and their cries inflamed his heart still more. The sun looked as red as blood to him. He took a long breath and ran up the hillock; it was still light there. He saw the chief laughing fiendishly. At that moment, with the sun at his back, the chief looked like the very devil himself.

Pabom's legs gave way beneath him; he fell forward and reached the cap with his hands.

"Ah, that's a fine fellow!" exclaimed the chief. "You have gained much land!"

One of the men ran forward and tried to raise Pabom, but he saw that blood was flowing from his mouth. Pabom was dead. The Bashkirs licked their tongues to show their pity. They picked up the spade and dug a grave long enough for Pabom to lie in.

Six feet from his head to his heels was all the land he needed.



## NATHAN HALE

**T**HE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMY had been badly beaten by the British in the disastrous Battle of Long Island. The Americans escaped across the East River to Manhattan Island, but their position remained dangerously weak. The men were demoralized; they needed clothing, more rations, more tents, and pay. Whole companies and regiments deserted... every fourth man was on the sick list... only 14,000 men were fit for duty and these were in detachments scattered the length of the island.

Opposing them were 25,000 British troops, many of them veterans flushed with victory, well-supplied, and camped on Long Island. In addition, the British were supported by powerful naval units.

General George Washington decided to abandon New York and pull back his main forces to Harlem Heights, on the north end of Manhattan Island. Four thousand troops under General Putnam were left to guard the city, with orders to pull back if necessary.

American scouts reported that the British were active everywhere. But what were their plans? When, how, where would they attack? The fate of the American army, and the nation, depended on knowing the enemy's next move.

Early in September, 1776, Washington called his officers together and called for a volunteer, someone skilled in military knowledge, with a quick eye and a cool head, who would go into the British camps as a spy.

For a moment, nobody answered. Then a young officer stepped forward; tall, fair-haired, with the build of an athlete. He was twenty-one year old Captain Nathan Hale.

That same afternoon, Hale met with General Washington and received his instructions. At dusk, he left Harlem Heights and traveled up Long Island Sound as far as Norwalk, Connecticut.

At Norwalk, Captain Hale changed from his uniform into civilian clothes. By sloop,

he was taken across the sound to Huntington Bay. Once on Long Island, he assumed the disguise of a Dutch schoolmaster. In a brown suit and wearing a wide-brimmed hat, he visited all the British camps on Long Island. Enemy soldiers received him cordially, as a good fellow, and he openly wandered about making mental notes of everything of military value. At night, he would draw up plans of fortifications, routes of travel, etc. These he hid between the soles of his shoes.

The British later captured lower Manhattan and Hale crossed to New York and gathered more information. It was soon time to report back to Washington.

Hale worked his way north toward Harlem Heights. Under cover of darkness, he tried to sneak through the British lines. As he neared an outpost, several British guards spotted and surrounded him, muskets raised. There was no escape.

Hale was stripped and searched. In his shoes, they found the evidence. Taken before General Howe, Hale frankly admitted that he was a spy. The general was amazed by the accuracy of Hale's drawings and data. Without even the formality of a trial, Howe condemned the young American to death.

On a bright Sunday morning, September 22, 1776, a file of

British soldiers marched their captive to his place of execution. While preparations were made for his death, Hale sat in a tent writing letters to his family and fiancée.

When the British Provost-Marshal called Hale from the tent, he took the letters and tore them to bits before Hale's eyes.

Many men and women were on hand to witness the execution. With mixed emotions, they watched the brave captain stand calmly and with dignity beside the tree-trunk gallows. Then Hale was asked if he had anything to say. In a calm voice, he replied to his executioner with words that will live as long as America herself: "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country." Thus died one of America's heroes.



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