

***R. D. BLACKMORE***



***MARY ANERLEY:  
A YORKSHIRE  
TALE***

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# **Mary Anerley: A Yorkshire Tale**

**Enriched edition.**

*Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Olivia Whitlock*

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# Introduction

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Balanced on the edge where the cliff of law meets the tide of daily bread, Mary Anerley traces the stubborn pull between community custom and official authority, between the perils that roil offshore and the promises that flicker on land, between an instinct for loyalty and a summons to justice, as fishermen, farmers, and riders of the night navigate a coastline whose beauty conceals hazard, whose commerce courts danger, and whose winds carry whispers of love, duty, and defiance into a world where choices must be made in fog, by feel, before the sun can show what truly lies ahead.

R. D. Blackmore's *Mary Anerley: A Yorkshire Tale* is a Victorian historical romance and coastal adventure, first published in 1880, that locates its drama on the Yorkshire shore, amid farms, fisheries, and rocky promontories scoured by the North Sea. Setting its action around the turn of the nineteenth century, the novel turns from London corridors to lanes, coves, and common fields, where law meets livelihood in brisk salt air. Blackmore, celebrated for his feeling for landscape and community, builds a world in which village rumor, market day, and the sweep of the headlands are not mere background but the very engine of plot and character.

At its outset, the story follows Mary, a farmer's daughter whose clear sight and steady courage make her a natural center of gravity in a district where nighttime signals gleam

along the cliffs and unfamiliar sails may mean profit or peril. A meeting that tests her instincts binds her family's quiet routines to larger, riskier circuits of exchange and enforcement. Blackmore guides readers through this entanglement with a voice at once courtly and sly, lingering over hedgerows and breaking waves while keeping a firm hand on intrigue, and shaping a reading experience that blends pastoral stillness with sudden, bracing bursts of action.

In keeping with the author's wider oeuvre, the narration is omniscient yet intimate, marked by textured dialect, country wit, and a painterly attention to weather, light, and coastline. Pages fill with the creak of tackle, the hush of snow over furrows, and the bridle's jingle on moonlit tracks, but the prose never loses sight of human stakes. Dialogue situates readers within distinct households and trades, while digressions, carefully planted, deepen both mood and motive. The tone moves flexibly from genial to grave, and the novel achieves its effects less through shock than through accumulation, the net tightening as currents converge without warning.

Its themes spring from this littoral setting: the moral friction between statute and custom, the bonds and blind spots of kinship, the claims of honor in a world of shifting bargains, and the allure and cost of enterprise. Courtship and friendship become tests of trust across regional, professional, and temperamental lines, while the very ground—chalk, sand, clay, and cliff—presses characters to choose paths that feel fated yet remain their own. Power, too, is examined not only in courts and barracks but in

barns, kitchens, and boats, where soft influence and stubborn principle often decide more than the uniform or the warrant.

For contemporary readers, the novel's questions feel uncannily current: When livelihoods depend on irregular channels, where does wrongdoing end and resourcefulness begin, and who bears the risk when rules harden faster than realities? Blackmore's coastal economy, alert to watchtowers, patrols, signals, and rumor, mirrors modern debates about surveillance, borders, and the criminalization of necessity. The book also rewards attention to place, offering an ethics of attentiveness to landscape that resonates with present concerns about stewardship. Mary's poise—rooted not in spectacle but in judgment, patience, and care—offers a model of agency that remains compelling amid today's louder, faster modes of heroism.

As an addition to the Victorian revival of historical fiction, *Mary Anerley* stands as both companion and counterpoint to the author's more famous romance, distinguished by sea-spray realism and a humane scrutiny of motive. Readers who value immersive settings, measured suspense, and prose that trusts their attention will find themselves well guided along these headlands. Without requiring specialized knowledge, the novel enlarges the map of British fiction beyond urban plots and battlefield chronicles, reminding us that national stories are braided from local textures. To read it now is to rediscover patience rewarded, courage tested, and belonging forged against an elemental horizon.

# Synopsis

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R. D. Blackmore's *Mary Anerley: A Yorkshire Tale* unfolds on the rugged coast of northern England, where sea, weather, and local custom shape every life. At its center stands Mary, the capable daughter of a respected farming family whose fields meet the cliff edge and whose fortunes are tied to both land and shore. Blackmore introduces a community bound by kinship and wary pragmatism, attentive to changes in trade and authority. The novel's opening establishes a landscape alive with risk and resourcefulness, foreshadowing a story that tracks the pressures of the early nineteenth century as they press upon a secluded yet interdependent coastal world.

Mary's sense of duty and curiosity draw her toward the shoreline's dangers and mysteries, where an encounter with a daring seafarer complicates her well-ordered expectations. The man's charisma and skill contrast with his ambiguous occupation, which thrives in the shadow between local necessity and national law. Gratitude and intrigue kindle a cautious bond, but the same event sharpens the gaze of officials charged with suppressing contraband. Blackmore positions Mary between gratitude and propriety, showing how personal indebtedness can conflict with social reputation when a community's survival may depend on activities that statutes condemn.

The Anerley household anchors the story's domestic rhythms, balancing pastoral labor with the perils and

opportunities of coastal trade. Blackmore lingers over seasonal tasks, neighborly obligations, and the subtle gradations of class and respectability that define who can visit, court, or command. Rumors of tightened enforcement spread through markets and churchyards, where news is weighed less by legality than by livelihood. Mary's parents, mindful of standing and security, counsel caution while the young look toward possibility. The portrait is affectionate yet unsentimental, attentive to thrift, persistence, and the quiet calculations by which families chart a safe course through unsettled times.

As patrols increase along the headlands and bays, the novel explores the code of those who run goods by night and the perspective of those sworn to stop them. Blackmore avoids caricature, granting both sides motives rooted in duty, scarcity, and pride. Chase, evasion, and carefully plotted landings provide set pieces that dramatize the collision between statute and custom. Placed between shore and homestead, Mary must weigh compassion against conscience, testing where loyalty lies when law and livelihood do not align. The coastline itself, with caves, currents, and fogs, becomes a participant in the struggle, aiding and betraying in equal measure.

The romance deepens as social circles widen. A retired naval presence and genteel acquaintances introduce standards and ambitions beyond the farm, promising advancement at the cost of simplicity. Suitors, spoken and implied, illuminate the expectations placed upon a young woman whose virtues are practical as well as graceful. Meanwhile, the seafarer's past casts a shadow: whispers of

lineage and lost connections suggest he may not be what he seems. Blackmore threads legal anxieties—documents, attestations, and claims—into the emotional plot, linking the right to a name and property with the right to love, and giving private affection a public, perilous dimension.

Tensions crest when the contest between smugglers and authorities turns violent, shaking the community's uneasy balance. A calamity at sea and reprisals ashore bring grief and scrutiny, forcing characters to reveal more of themselves than caution allows. Pursuits along the cliffs and journeys to nearby towns widen the stage, while discoveries about identity and inheritance reconfigure alliances and sharpen choices. Mary's steadfastness, tested by fear, rumor, and duty, guides the narrative through its most precarious passages. Blackmore keeps outcomes tightly held, yet makes clear that truth, once uncovered, cannot remain separate from law, love, or reputation.

Mary Anerley endures for its textured evocation of a coastal society negotiating change, its measured sympathy for competing codes, and its clear-eyed portrayal of how private virtue engages public rule. Without relying on sensational disclosure, Blackmore knots romance, adventure, and social observation into a tale about belonging and fairness. The book's resonance lies in its questions: what we owe to community versus conscience, how names and property shape destiny, and how courage finds form in daily steadfastness. As a companion to the author's broader body of historical fiction, it offers a lasting, atmospheric study of character under pressure.

# Historical Context

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Mary Anerley: A Yorkshire Tale is set on England's East Yorkshire coast during the early years of the nineteenth century, when the Napoleonic Wars dominated public life (1803-1815). The narrative landscape centres on the chalk headlands around Flamborough and the fishing and market communities near Bridlington and Scarborough. Rural farms, parish churches, and local justices of the peace structure everyday order ashore, while the Royal Navy and the customs service shape conduct at sea. Coastal agriculture, inshore fishing, and small coasting vessels connect the villages to larger ports such as Hull, situating the story within a region where land and sea economies continually intersected.

Smuggling is a defining social fact behind the novel. Wartime customs and excise duties on tea, spirits, tobacco, and textiles were high, encouraging clandestine imports from the Continent and the Channel Islands. Along the North Sea coast, gangs of "tubmen" landed kegs at night in gullies and sea-caves, aided by fast shallops and networks of carriers inland. The Crown relied on riding officers, revenue cutters, and from 1809 the Preventive Water Guard, to frustrate these landings. Contemporary records from Yorkshire attest to violent confrontations, community complicity, and the use of isolated strands near Flamborough Head and Robin Hood's Bay for secretive runs.

The Napoleonic conflict pressed local men and maritime resources. After Britain renewed war with France in 1803, fears of invasion intensified until Trafalgar (1805) secured naval supremacy, although blockade and coastal patrols continued for years. Impressment—legal recruitment by press-gangs—operated in coastal towns and harbours, provoking resistance and evasion among seafaring families. Volunteer militias and yeomanry units mobilised ashore to meet invasion scares and to police the coastline. Fishing, coastal trade, and lifesaving were carried on in the shadow of war, and the presence of uniformed authority—naval officers, army detachments, and revenue men—formed an unavoidable backdrop for daily decisions.

On land, the East Riding experienced sustained parliamentary enclosure from the late eighteenth into the early nineteenth century, reshaping open fields and commons into hedged farms. The Wolds' mixed husbandry—turnips, barley, and sheep—expanded, and improved drainage transformed low-lying carrs. Turnpike trusts enhanced roads linking farms to markets at Beverley, Driffield, and Hull. Socially, the countryside was stratified: gentry landowners and substantial yeomen presided over tenant farmers, hired labourers, and craft workers. Parish vestries oversaw poor relief and local rates, while justices of the peace regulated licensing and public order. This agrarian framework grounds the novel's farmsteads, kin networks, and obligations of work, rent, and deference.

Religious life in the region combined the Anglican establishment with vigorous evangelical dissent. John Wesley and other Methodist preachers had toured Yorkshire

repeatedly in the late eighteenth century, and by 1800 Methodist societies were well rooted in coastal and market communities. Parish churches remained centres for rites, schools, and seasonal calendars, yet chapels and itinerant preaching shaped moral debate on drink, gambling, and Sabbath observance. Such currents influenced views on smuggling: some saw it as a communal necessity amid war prices, others as sin and lawlessness. The novel's parsons, households, and village gatherings inhabit this contested moral landscape rather than a uniformly deferential one.

Coastal safety and navigation were improving but imperfect. A new lighthouse at Flamborough Head was completed in 1806, strengthening warnings on a hazardous, current-swept headland. Purpose-built lifeboats, pioneered by Henry Greathead at South Shields in the 1790s, spread along the north-east coast in the early nineteenth century, though national coordination only arrived with the RNLI in 1824. Local pilots, harbor improvements at Bridlington Quay, and shore-based lookout posts supported trade and rescue. Nevertheless, shipwrecks remained frequent, contraband landings exploited dark coves, and winter storms isolated communities, conditions that give the story realistic dangers and logistical possibilities along cliffs, beaches, and inshore waters.

R. D. Blackmore published *Mary Anerley* in 1880, writing as a late-Victorian practitioner of the historical romance. Educated at Oxford and called to the Bar before ill health led him to a teaching and horticultural career, he brought a lawyer's interest in jurisdiction, evidence, and local office to his fiction. Like his celebrated *Lorna Doone* (1869), this

novel blends regional topography with legal and communal conflict. Blackmore drew on an established literary tradition—seen in Walter Scott’s coastal tales—in which smugglers, excise officers, and gentry households test one another’s codes. His descriptive precision reflects Victorian antiquarianism and a taste for reconstructing recent, documentable pasts.

Historically anchored in the Napoleonic years, the book stages tensions between customary economies and centralising authority. It registers how war finance, maritime strategy, and enclosure reshaped Yorkshire lives, while depicting the reach of the Crown—Navy, customs, magistracy—into everyday choices. At the same time, it memorialises local knowledge, kin loyalty, and the resourcefulness of coastal workers. Without romanticising violence, the narrative weighs communal solidarities against statutory duty, echoing Victorian debates about national character, law, and mercy. In doing so, Mary Anerley refracts its period’s realities through carefully observed settings and institutions, critiquing abuses yet affirming a disciplined, humane order.

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# CHAPTER I

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## HEADSTRONG AND HEADLONG

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Far from any house or hut, in the depth of dreary moorland, a road, unfenced and almost unformed, descends to a rapid river. The crossing is called the "Seven Corpse Ford[1]," because a large party of farmers, riding homeward from Middleton, banded together and perhaps well primed through fear of a famous highwayman, came down to this place on a foggy evening, after heavy rain-fall. One of the company set before them what the power of the water was, but they laughed at him and spurred into it, and one alone spurred out of it. Whether taken with fright, or with too much courage, they laid hold of one another, and seven out of eight of them, all large farmers, and thoroughly understanding land, came never upon it alive again; and their bodies, being found upon the ridge that cast them up, gave a dismal name to a place that never was merry in the best of weather.

However, worse things than this had happened; and the country is not chary of its living, though apt to be scared of its dead; and so the ford came into use again, with a little attempt at improvement. For those farmers being beyond recall, and their families hard to provide for, Richard Yordas, of Scargate Hall, the chief owner of the neighborhood, set a long heavy stone up on either brink, and stretched a strong chain between them, not only to mark out the course of the

shallow, whose shelf is askew to the channel, but also that any one being washed away might fetch up, and feel how to save himself. For the Tees is a violent water sometimes, and the safest way to cross it is to go on till you come to a good stone bridge.

Now forty years after that sad destruction of brave but not well-guided men, and thirty years after the chain was fixed, that their sons might not go after them, another thing happened at "Seven Corpse Ford," worse than the drowning of the farmers. Or, at any rate, it made more stir (which is of wider spread than sorrow), because of the eminence of the man, and the length and width of his property. Neither could any one at first believe in so quiet an end to so turbulent a course. Nevertheless it came to pass, as lightly as if he were a reed or a bubble of the river that belonged to him.

It was upon a gentle evening, a few days after Michaelmas<sup>[2]</sup> of 1777. No flood was in the river then, and no fog on the moor-land, only the usual course of time, keeping the silent company of stars. The young moon was down, and the hover of the sky (in doubt of various lights) was gone, and the equal spread of obscurity soothed the eyes of any reasonable man.

But the man who rode down to the river that night had little love of reason. Headstrong chief of a headlong race, no will must depart a hair's-breadth from his<sup>[1q]</sup>; and fifty years of arrogant port had stiffened a neck too stiff at birth. Even now in the dim light his large square form stood out against the sky like a cromlech<sup>[3]</sup>, and his heavy arms swung like gnarled boughs of oak, for a storm of wrath was

moving him. In his youth he had rebelled against his father; and now his own son was a rebel to him.

“Good, my boy, good!” he said, within his grizzled beard, while his eyes shone with fire, like the flints beneath his horse; “you have had your own way, have you, then? But never shall you step upon an acre of your own, and your timber shall be the gallows. Done, my boy, once and forever.”

Philip, the squire, the son of Richard, and father of Duncan Yordas, with fierce satisfaction struck the bosom of his heavy Bradford riding-coat, and the crackle of parchment replied to the blow, while with the other hand he drew rein on the brink of the Tees sliding rapidly.

The water was dark with the twinkle of the stars, and wide with the vapor of the valley, but Philip Yordas in the rage of triumph laughed and spurred his reflecting horse.

“Fool!” he cried, without an oath—no Yordas ever used an oath except in playful moments—“fool! what fear you? There hangs my respected father's chain. Ah, he was something like a man! Had I ever dared to flout him so, he would have hanged me with it.”

Wild with his wrong, he struck the rowel deep into the flank of his wading horse, and in scorn of the depth drove him up the river. The shoulders of the swimming horse broke the swirling water, as he panted and snorted against it; and if Philip Yordas had drawn back at once, he might even now have crossed safely. But the fury of his blood was up, the stronger the torrent the fiercer his will, and the fight between passion and power went on. The poor horse was

fain to swerve back at last; but he struck him on the head with a carbine[4], and shouted to the torrent:

“Drown me, if you can. My father used to say that I was never born to drown. My own water drown me! That would be a little too much insolence.”

“Too much insolence” were his last words. The strength of the horse was exhausted. The beat of his legs grew short and faint, the white of his eyes rolled piteously, and the gurgle of his breath subsided. His heavy head dropped under water, and his sodden crest rolled over, like sea-weed where a wave breaks. The stream had him all at its mercy, and showed no more than his savage master had, but swept him a wallowing lump away, and over the reef of the crossing. With both feet locked in the twisted stirrups, and right arm broken at the elbow, the rider was swung (like the mast of a wreck) and flung with his head upon his father's chain. There he was held by his great square chin—for the jar of his backbone stunned him—and the weight of the swept-away horse broke the neck which never had been known to bend. In the morning a peasant found him there, not drowned but hanged, with eyes wide open, a swaying corpse upon a creaking chain. So his father (though long in the grave) was his death, as he often had promised to be to him; while he (with the habit of his race) clutched fast with dead hand on dead bosom the instrument securing the starvation of his son.

Of the Yordas family truly was it said that the will of God was nothing to their will—as long as the latter lasted—and that every man of them scorned all Testament, old or new, except his own.



# CHAPTER II

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## SCARGATE HALL

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Nearly twenty-four years had passed since Philip Yordas was carried to his last (as well as his first) repose, and Scargate Hall had enjoyed some rest from the turbulence of owners. For as soon as Duncan (Philip's son, whose marriage had maddened his father) was clearly apprised by the late squire's lawyer of his disinheritance, he collected his own little money and his wife's, and set sail for India. His mother, a Scotchwoman of good birth but evil fortunes, had left him something; and his bride (the daughter of his father's greatest foe) was not altogether empty-handed. His sisters were forbidden by the will to help him with a single penny; and Philippa, the elder, declaring and believing that Duncan had killed her father, strictly obeyed the injunction. But Eliza, being of a softer kind, and herself then in love with Captain Carnaby, would gladly have aided her only brother, but for his stern refusal. In such a case, a more gentle nature than ever endowed a Yordas might have grown hardened and bitter; and Duncan, being of true Yordas fibre (thickened and toughened with slower Scotch sap), was not of the sort to be ousted lightly and grow at the feet of his supplanters.

Therefore he cast himself on the winds, in search of fairer soil, and was not heard of in his native land; and Scargate Hall and estates were held by the sisters in joint tenancy,

with remainder to the first son born of whichever it might be of them. And this was so worded through the hurry of their father to get some one established in the place of his own son.

But from paltry passions, turn away a little while to the things which excite, but are not excited by them.

Scargate Hall stands, high and old, in the wildest and most rugged part of the wild and rough North Riding. Many are the tales about it, in the few and humble cots, scattered in the modest distance, mainly to look up at it. In spring and summer, of the years that have any, the height and the air are not only fine, but even fair and pleasant. So do the shadows and the sunshine wander, elbowing into one another on the moor, and so does the glance of smiling foliage soothe the austerity of crag and scaur. At such time, also, the restless torrent (whose fury has driven content away through many a short day and long night) is not in such desperate hurry to bury its troubles in the breast of Tees, but spreads them in language that sparkles to the sun, or even makes leisure to turn into corners of deep browns tudy about the people on its banks—especially, perhaps, the miller.

But never had this impetuous water more reason to stop and reflect upon people of greater importance, who called it their own, than now when it was at the lowest of itself, in August of the year 1801.

From time beyond date the race of Yordas had owned and inhabited this old place. From them the river, and the river's valley, and the mountain of its birth, took name, or else, perhaps, gave name to them; for the history of the giant

Yordas still remains to be written, and the materials are scanty. His present descendants did not care an old song for his memory, even if he ever had existence to produce it. Piety (whether in the Latin sense or English) never had marked them for her own; their days were long in the land, through a long inactivity of the Decalogue.

And yet in some manner this lawless race had been as a law to itself throughout. From age to age came certain gifts and certain ways of management, which saved the family life from falling out of rank and land and lot. From deadly feuds, exhausting suits, and ruinous profusion, when all appeared lost, there had always arisen a man of direct lineal stock to retrieve the estates and reprove the name. And what is still more conducive to the longevity of families, no member had appeared as yet of a power too large and an aim too lofty, whose eminence must be cut short with axe, outlawry, and attainder. Therefore there ever had been a Yordas, good or bad (and by his own showing more often of the latter kind), to stand before heaven, and hold the land, and harass them that dwelt thereon. But now at last the world seemed to be threatened with the extinction of a fine old name.

When Squire Philip died in the river, as above recorded, his death, from one point of view, was dry, since nobody shed a tear for him, unless it was his child Eliza. Still, he was missed and lamented in speech, and even in eloquent speeches, having been a very strong Justice of the Peace, as well as the foremost of riotous gentlemen keeping the order of the county. He stood above them in his firm resolve to have his own way always, and his way was so crooked that

**75** A Northern English dialect term meaning steep rocky slopes or cliffs (scarps), often used for coastal or moorland escarpments.

**76** An archaic adjective meaning ragged, dilapidated, or shabby; here used figuratively to describe the harsh, ragged wind.

**77** An old common-law legal action for breach of a promise or contract; by the 18th–19th centuries it was standard terminology in English civil law for claims based on undertakings.

**78** Refers to Isaac Watts (1674–1748), an English hymn-writer and devotional poet whose 'Divine Songs' and hymns were widely read and recommended in the 18th and 19th centuries.

**79** The chapter title and nickname for Mr. Bert; 'gill' (also spelled 'ghyll') is a northern English dialect word for a narrow ravine or stream, so the phrase identifies him as the man of the gill or ravine cottage.

**80** Harpocrates is the Hellenistic (Greek) name given to the Egyptian child-god Horus and in classical usage is associated with silence or secrecy; the reference means a prophet's proper mantle is one of silence or reticence.

**81** A simple street or tavern pastime common in the 18th–19th centuries in which players pitched a coin into a hole or target to win stakes; it was a casual gambling or pastime often associated with sailors and working people.

**82** A curved handheld cutting tool traditionally used in Britain for hedging, pruning and agricultural work; carried and used by rural labourers and farmers for cutting brambles and small branches.

**83** Refers to the River Tees in north-east England, which historically forms part of the boundary of County Durham; 'brink of Tees' means the riverbank or edge of that river.

**84** A type of French brandy produced in the Cognac region; in 19th-century Britain it signified an imported, often higher-quality spirit.

**85** Basic household lights made from the pith of rushes dipped in animal fat or tallow, used before cheap candles were widespread; they burned quickly and produced dim, sooty light.

**86** A coarse kitchen or hand towel used in inns and households for drying and wiping; a common utilitarian textile in 19th-century domestic contexts.

**87** The local inn/hotel near Flamborough mentioned repeatedly in the chapter (also called the Thornwick Hotel in the text); a fictional public house serving as a meeting-place and lodging in the novel.

**88** An ironic or informal designation for the chief organiser or dominant leader of coastal smuggling operations, not an official naval rank; used here to indicate someone's prominent role in illicit trade.

**89** A corrupted rendering of the phrase 'I'se young Sahib' (i.e. 'I'm a young sahib'), where 'sahib' is a South Asian term of respect used during the British colonial period; the form in the text reflects how the child's speech mangled the original term.

**90** A guinea was a British gold coin and unit of account worth 21 shillings (1 pound and 1 shilling) widely used for professional fees in the 18th and 19th centuries; its modern purchasing-power equivalent varies by calculation but often

appears as on the order of hundreds of contemporary pounds.

**91** A brimstone match refers to a small burning sulfur (brimstone) match or taper used in the era before percussion caps to ignite a gun's priming powder; here it denotes testing or igniting the musket at the touch-hole.

**92** Golconda was historically a fortified region in India famed for its diamond mines; 19th-century writers also used the name for ships or treasures, so the phrase 'Golconda's fate' here refers to the discovered end or fate of something called Golconda (likely a vessel or valuable cargo).

**93** Pertinax was a Roman emperor who reigned briefly in 193 CE; the novel's reference invokes an ancient Roman-era ruler to lend classical weight to a fictitious family pedigree.

**94** An older coastal or dialect term for a seabird shot for food (often written sea-pie or sea-pye), used in 18th-19th-century Britain to denote certain edible shore or sea birds.

**95** An estate servant responsible for the dogs and often other out-of-doors duties (a kennelman or huntsman/hand); the exact range of duties could vary by household and region.

**96** A small box, traditionally made from polished animal horn, used to hold comfits (sugar-coated sweets) or small articles such as snuff; here it denotes a portable container of Irish snuff.

**97** A historical English legal term for the court or process by which civil cases were tried locally before judges and juries (trial at first instance); by the 19th century it was common professional shorthand among lawyers.

**98** A legal instrument executed by one party (a single-party deed), used historically for matters such as name changes or specific conveyances; in this passage it refers to an entailing or settlement document dated 15 November 1751.

**99** A Latin legal phrase meaning 'place of standing' or legal standing — the right or capacity of a party to bring an action or appear before a court; used here in the sense of having no standing or legal claim.

**100** A nose-bag is a portable feeding bag hung on a horse's head to allow it to eat grain or oats while on the road; it was commonly used by grooms and drovers in the 18th–19th centuries.

**101** A beaver hat is a felt hat made from beaver fur, fashionable and valued in the 18th and 19th centuries for its durability and sheen; the term indicates a high-quality, often costly, gentleman's hat of the period.

**102** In this context, 'frail' names a flat basket or shallow hamper (often woven from reeds or 'flags') used for carrying goods; the sense is archaic or dialectal and typical of rural British usage.

**103** A rowel is the small revolving star-shaped wheel with points on the end of some riding spurs used to urge a horse; saying a spur had 'no rowel' indicates a spur without that rotating wheel.

**104** Leadenhall Street is a thoroughfare in the City of London long associated with mercantile, insurance and financial offices; in 19th-century fiction it commonly stands for London commercial or colonial administrative interests.