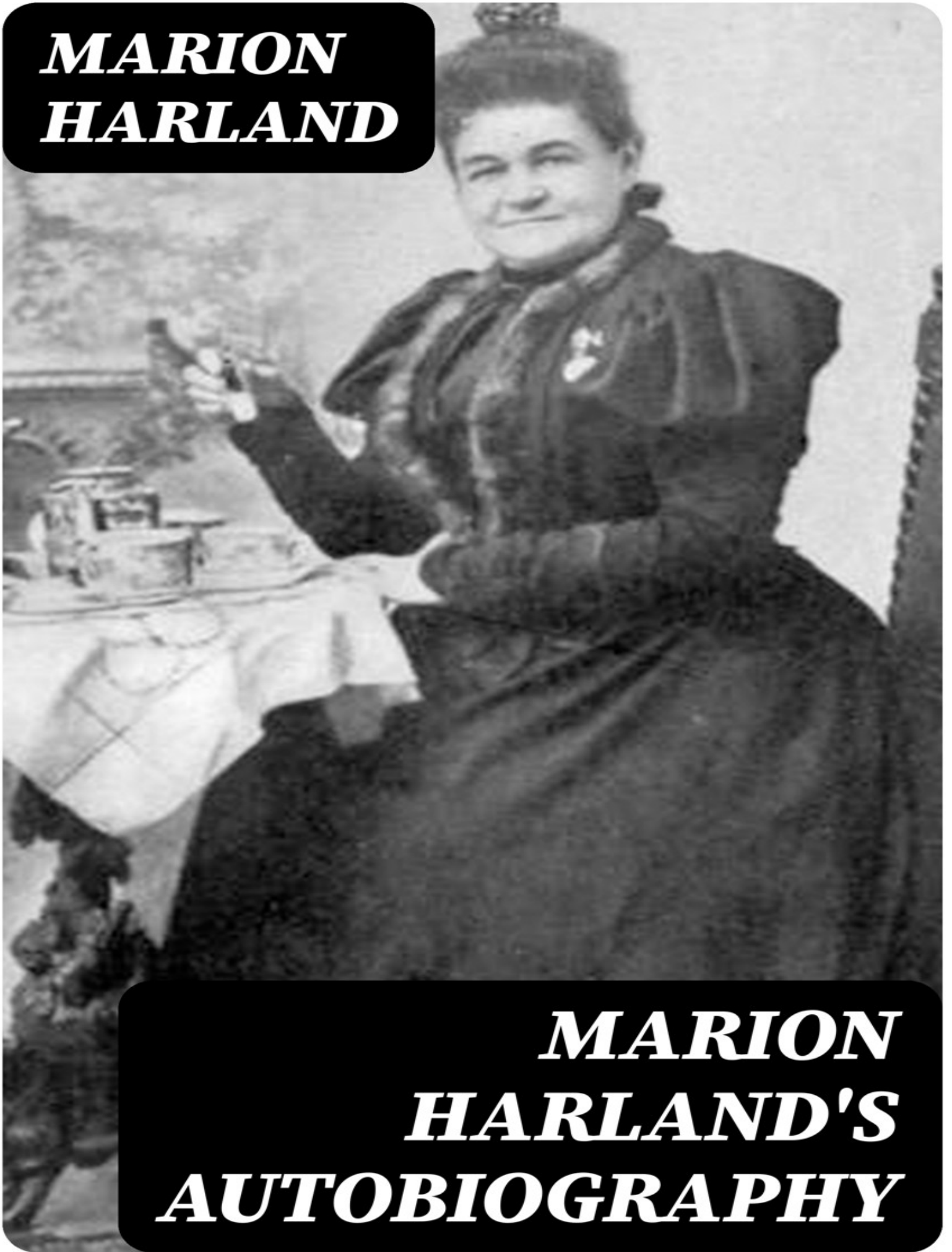


***MARION
HARLAND***



***MARION
HARLAND'S
AUTOBIOGRAPHY***

Marion Harland

Marion Harland's Autobiography

The Story of a Long Life

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THE REV. EDWARD PAYSON TERHUNE, D.D.

A GOLDEN WEDDING

FOREWORD

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FROM the time when, as a mere baby, I dreamed myself to slumber every night by “making up stories,” down to the present hour, every human life with which I have been associated, or of which I had any intimate knowledge, has been to me a living story. All interest me in some measure. Many enlist my sympathy and fascinate the imagination as no tale that is avowedly fictitious has ever bewitched me.

I hold and believe for certain that if I could draw aside the veil of conventional reserve from the daily thinking, feeling, and *living* of my most commonplace acquaintance, and read these from “Preface” to “Finis,” I should rate the wildest dream of the novelist as tame by comparison.

My children tell me, laughingly, that I “turn everything into a story.” In my heart I know that the romances are all ready-made and laid to my hand.

In the pages that follow this word of explanation I have essayed no dramatic effects or artistic “situations.” “The Story of My Long Life” tells itself as one friend might talk to another as the two sit in the confidential firelight on a winter evening. The idea of reviewing that life upon paper first came to me with the consciousness—which was almost a shock—that, of all the authors still on active professional duty in our country, I am the only one whose memory runs back to the stage of national history that preceded the Civil War by a quarter-century. I, alone, am left to tell, of my own knowledge and experience, what the Old South was in deed and in truth. Other and far abler pens than mine have

portrayed scenes of those days with skill I cannot emulate. But theirs is hearsay evidence—second-hand testimony as truly as if they wrote of Shakespeare’s haps and mishaps in the grammar-school at Stratford-on-Avon, or of Master George Herbert’s early love affairs.

True, the fathers told it to the generation following, and the generation has been faithful to the traditions committed to it. What I have to say in the aforesaid gossip over the confidential fire is of what I saw and heard and did—and *was* in that hoary Long Ago.

Throughout the telling I have kept the personal touch. The story is autobiography—not history. I began it for my children, whose importunities for tales of the olden—and now forever gone—“times” have been taken up by the least grandchild.

It was my lot to know the Old South in her prime, and to see her downfall. Mine to witness the throes that racked her during four black and bitter years. Mine to watch the dawn of a new and vigorous life and the full glory of a restored Union. I shall tell of nothing that my eyes did not see, and depict neither tragedy nor comedy in which I was not cast for a part.

Mine is a story for the table and arm-chair under the reading-lamp in the living-room, and not for the library shelves. To the family and to those who make and keep the home do I commit it.

MARION HARLAND.

NEW YORK CITY, *November, 1909.*

MARION HARLAND'S
AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I
FOREBEARS AND PATRON SAINT

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MY father, Samuel Pierce Hawes, was born in the town of Dorchester, Massachusetts, July 30, 1799.

The homestead, still standing and reckoned among the notable sites of the region, was built in 1640, by Robert Pierce, who emigrated to the New World in 1630, having sailed from Plymouth, England, in the *Mary and John*, in company with others of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. On the voyage, he married Ann Greenaway—registered as “Daughter of Goodman Greenaway,” a fellow-passenger.

The family trace their descent, by old domestic and town records, from the Northumberland Percies. Traditions, cherished by the race, affirm that Godfrey of Bouillon was a remote ancestor. It is unquestionably true that “Robert of Dorchester,” as he is put down in the genealogy of the Percies, was a blood relative of Master George Percy, John Smith’s friend, and his successor in the presidency of the Jamestown colony.

The emigrants had a temporary home in Neponset Village, prospering so far in worldly substance as to justify the erection of the substantial house upon the hill overlooking the “village,” ten years after the landing. So substantial was it, and so honest were the builders, that it

has come down in a direct line from father to son, and been inhabited by ten generations of thrifty folk who have left it stanch and weatherproof to this day.

My father's mother, a handsome, wilful girl of seventeen, ran away to be married to one whom her father—"Squire Pierce"—considered a presumptuous adventurer. He was from Maine, a stranger in the neighborhood, and reputed (justly) to be wild and unsteady. When he asked for the girl's hand he was summarily commanded to hold no further communication with her. He had served as a private in the Revolutionary War; he had winning ways and a good-looking face, and Ann had a liberal spice of her sire's unbending will. She would have him, and no other of the youths who sued for her favor.

The family genealogy records that "Squire Pierce," as he was named by his neighbors, received a captain's commission from the parent government at the outbreak of the Rebellion, and on the self-same day one from the Continental Congress appointing him as a colonel in the Massachusetts forces. As "Colonel Pierce," he fought throughout the eight bloody years to which we owe our national life.

In his home he was a despot of the true Puritan, patriarchal type.

For three years after the elopement the name of his daughter's husband was never uttered in his hearing. Nor did she enter the house, until at twenty, her proud spirit bowed but not broken by sorrows she never retailed, she came back to the old roof-tree on the eve of her confinement with her first and only child. He was born there

and received the grandfather's name in full. From that hour he was adopted as a son of the house by the stern old Puritan, and brought up at his knees.

With the shrewd sense and sturdy independence characteristic of the true New-Englander, the mother was never forgetful of the fact that her boy was half-orphaned and dependent upon his grandfather's bounty, and began early to equip him for a single-handed fight with the world.

Within a decade I have studied an authentic and detailed genealogy of the Hawes stock from which my grandfather sprang. It is a fine old English family, and the American branch, in which appear the birth and death of Jesse Hawes, of Maine, numbers many men of distinction in various professions. It is a comfort to a believer in heredity to be assured that the tree was sound at heart, in spite of the warped and severed bough.

By the time my father was fourteen, he was at work in a Boston mercantile house, boarding with his employer, Mr. Baker, a personal friend of the Pierces. The growing lad walked out to Dorchester every Saturday night to spend Sunday at home and attend divine service in the "Dorchester Old Meeting-House," the same in which I first saw and heard Edward Everett Hale, over forty years later. The youth arose, in all weathers, before the sun on Monday morning in order to be at his place of business at seven o'clock. When he was sixteen, his employer removed to Richmond, Virginia, and took his favorite clerk with him. From Boston to the capital of the Old Dominion was then a fortnight's journey by the quickest mode of travel. The boy could hardly hope to see his mother even once a year.

At twenty-five he was an active member of the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, established and built up by Rev. John Holt Rice, D.D., who was also the founder of Union Theological Seminary, now situated in Richmond. The young New-Englander was, likewise, a teacher in the Sunday-school—the first of its kind in Virginia, conducted under the auspices of Doctor Rice's church—a partner in a flourishing mercantile house, and engaged to be married to Miss Judith Anna Smith, of Olney, a plantation on the Chickahominy, five miles from the city.

I have a miniature of my father, painted upon ivory a few years after his marriage. It is that of a handsome man, with deeply set gray eyes, very dark hair, and a well-cut, resolute mouth. The head is nobly shaped, the forehead full and broad. His face was singularly mobile, and deeply lined, even in youth.

In intellect he was far above the average business man. His library, at that early date, was more than respectable. Some of the most valuable early editions of the English classics that enrich my book-shelves have his book-plate upon the fly-leaves. He had, moreover, a number of standard French books, having studied the language with a tutor in the evenings. The range of his reading was wide and of a high order. Histories, biographies, books of travel, and essays had a prominent place in his store of "solid reading." That really good novels were not included in this condemnation we learn from a brief note to his betrothed, accompanying a copy of Walter Scott's *Pirate*. He apologizes for the profanity of certain characters in semi-humorous fashion, and signs himself, "Your friend, Samuel."

Doctor Rice, whose wife was my mother's first cousin, appreciated young Hawes's character and ability; the parsonage was thrown open to him at all times, and within the hospitable precincts he first met his future wife.

She was a pretty, amiable girl of eighteen, like himself an omnivorous reader, and, like him also, a zealous church-worker.

Her father, Capt. William Sterling Smith, was the master of the ancestral estate of Olney, rechristened in the latter part of the eighteenth century by an ardent admirer of William Cowper. I am under the impression that the change of name was the work of my grandmother, his second wife, Miss Judith Smith, of Montrose, and a second cousin of "Captain Sterling," as he was familiarly called.

Late in the seventeenth century, William Smith, of Devonshire, a lineal descendant of the brother and heir of Capt. John Smith of Pocahontas fame, married Ann Sterling in England, and, emigrating to America, pitched his moving tent, first in Gloucester, then in Henrico County. His cousin, bearing the same name, took up land in Powhatan, naming his homestead for the hapless Earl of Montrose. The questionable custom of the intermarriage of cousins prevailed in the clan, as among other old Virginia families.

My maternal grandmother was petite, refined in feature, bearing, and speech, and remarkable in her day for intellectual vivacity and moral graces. Her chief associates of the other sex were men of profound learning, distinguished for services done to Church and State. Among them were the founders of the Presbyterian Church in Virginia. The Smiths had seceded from the Established

Church of England before Thomas Jefferson rent it from the State.

There lies at my elbow a time-worn volume bound in unpolished calf-skin, and lettered on one side, "D. Lacy's Letters"; on the reverse, "Friendship Perpetuated." It contains one hundred and forty-two letters, copied from the original epistles and engrossed in exquisitely neat and minute characters. They represent one side of a correspondence maintained by the scribe with my grandmother before and after her marriage. The writer and copyist was the Rev. Drury Lacy, D.D., then a professor in Hampden Sidney College, and destined to become the progenitor of a long line of divines and scholars. The Hoges, Lacys, Brookeses, and Waddells were of this lineage. The epistles are Addisonian in purity of moral teaching and in grammatical structure, Johnsonian in verbosity, and interfused throughout with a pietistic priggishness all their own. We are glad to carry with us through the perusal (in instalments) of the hundred and forty-two, the tales current in that all-so-long-ago of the genial nature and liveliness of conversation that made him a star in social life. One wonders, in hearing of the "perpetuation" of the brotherly-and-sisterly intimacy, begun months before he wedded the "Nancy" of the Montrose group, who, from all I have been able to gather, was a very commonplace personage by comparison with "Judith"—one marvels, I say, that the affection never ripened into a warmer sentiment. They had themselves better in hand evidently than the "affinities" of the twentieth century.

Old people I knew, when a child, delighted in relating how, when “Mr. Lacy” held meetings in country churches in Powhatan and Prince Edward, and his sister-in-law was in the congregation, everybody listened for the voices of those two. His was strong, flexible, and sweet, and he read music as he read a printed page. While she, as an old admirer—who up to his eightieth year loved to visit my mother that he might talk of his early love—used to declare, “sang like an angel just down from heaven.”

She added all womanly accomplishments to musical skill and literary tastes. An embroidered counterpane, of which I am the proud owner, is wrought in thirteen varieties of stitch, and in patterns invented by herself and three sisters, the only brother contributing what may be classed as a “conventional design” of an altar and two turtle-doves perched upon a brace of coupled hearts—symbolical of his passion for the beauty of the county, Judith Mosby, of Fonthill, whom he married. Our Judith held on the peaceful tenor of her way, reading all the books she could lay her shapely hands upon, keeping up her end of correspondences with Lacys, Rices, Speeces, Randolphs, and Blaines, and gently rejecting one offer after another, until she married at thirty-three—an advanced stage of spinsterdom, then—honest Capt. Sterling Smith, the widower-father of three children.

Her husband was the proprietor of broad acres, a man of birth and fair education, high-minded, honorable, and devoted to his delicate wife. Nevertheless, the dainty *châteline* must, sometimes, have missed her erudite

admirers, and wished in her heart that the worthy planter were, intellectually, more in tune with herself.

My own mother's recollections of her mother were vivid, and I never wearied of hearing them. My grandmother's wedding night-gown, which I have, helps me to picture her as she moved about the modest homestead, directing and overseeing servants, key-basket on arm, keeping, as she did, a daily record of provisions "given out" from store-room and smoke-house, writing down in her hand-book bills-of-fare for the week (my mother treasured them for years), entertaining the friends attracted by her influence, her husband's hospitality, and his two daughters' charms of person and disposition.

This gown is of fine cambric, with a falling collar and a short, shirred waist. The buttons are wooden moulds, covered with cambric, and each bears a tiny embroidered sprig. Collar and sleeves are trimmed with ruffles, worked in scallops by her deft fingers. The owner and wearer was below the medium height of women, and slight to fragility. Her love of the beautiful found expression in her exquisite needlework, in copying "commonplace-books" full of poetry and the music she loved passionately, and most healthful of all, in flower-gardening. Within my memory, the white jessamine planted by her still draped the window of "the chamber" on the first floor. Few Virginia housewives would consent to have their bedrooms up-stairs. "Looking after the servants" was no idle figure of speech with them. Eternal vigilance was the price of home comfort. A hardy white-rose-tree, also planted by her, lived almost as long as the jessamine—her favorite flower.

In the shade of the bower formed by these, Mrs. Judith Smith sat with her embroidery on summer days, her little name-daughter upon a cricket beside her, reading aloud by the hour. It was rather startling to me to learn that, at thirteen, the precocious child read thus *Pamela*, *The Children of the Abbey*, and *Clarissa* to the sweet-faced, white-souled matron. Likewise *The Rambler*, *Rasselas*, Shakespeare, and *The Spectator* (unexpurgated). But Young's *Night Thoughts*, Thomson's *Seasons*, *Paradise Lost*, Pope's *Essays*, and the Book of Books qualified whatever of evil might have crept into the tender imagination from the strong meat, spiced. Cowper was a living presence to mother and girl. My mother could repeat pages of *The Tas* from memory fifty years after she recited them to her gentle teacher, and his hymns were the daily food of the twain.

The Olney family drove in the heavy coach over heavy roads five miles in all weathers to the First Presbyterian Church of Richmond. My grandfather had helped raise the money for the building, as his letters show, and was one of the elders ordained soon after the church was organized.

Thither they had gone on Christmas Sunday, 1811, to be met on the threshold by the news of the burning of the theatre on Saturday night. My mother, although but six years old, never forgot the scenes of that day. Doctor Rice had deviated from the rutted road of the "long prayer" constructed by ecclesiastical surveyors along the lines of Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication ("A, C, T, S")—to talk as man to man with the Ruler of the universe of the terrible judgment which had befallen the mourning city. He had even alluded to it in his sermon, and it was

discussed in awe-stricken tones by lingering groups in the aisles when service was over. Then, her little hand locked fast in that of her mother, the child was guided along the valley and up the steep hill to the smoking ruins, surrounded by a silent crowd, many of them in tears. In low, impressive accents the mother told the baby what had happened there last night, and, as the little creature began to sob, led her on up the street. A few squares farther on, my grandfather and a friend who walked with him laughed slightly at something they said or saw, and my grandmother said, sorrowfully:

“How can you laugh when sixty fellow-creatures lie dead over there—all hurried into Eternity without warning?”

I have never passed the now-old Monumental Church without recalling the incident engraved upon my childish mind by my mother’s story.

In the volume of “D. Lacy’s Letters” I found, laid carefully between the embrowned leaves for safest keeping, several letters from Capt. Sterling Smith to his “dear Judy,” and one from her to him, written while she was on a visit to Montrose, her birthplace, with her only son. We have such a pretty, pathetic expression of her love for husband and child, and touches, few but graphic, that outline for us so clearly her personality and environment, that I insert it here:

“MONTROSE, *September 5th, 1817.*

“(Ten o’clock at night.)

“MY DEAR MR. SMITH,—I am sitting by my dear Josiah, who continues ill. His fever rises about dark. The chills are less severe, and the fever does not last as long as

it did a week ago. Still, he suffers much, and is very weak. He has taken a great deal of medicine with very little benefit. His gums are sore. The doctor thinks they are touched by the calomel. He was here this morning, and advised some oil and then the bark.

“We have been looking for you ever since yesterday. Poor fellow! He longs to see you—and so do I! I was up last night, and I have been to-night very often—indeed, almost constantly—at the door and the window, listening for the sound of your horse’s feet. I have written by post, by John Morton, and by Mr. Mosby. I think if you had received either of the notes I should see you to-night, unless something serious is the matter. I am so much afraid that you are ill as to be quite unhappy.

“My love to my dear girls and all the family. My dear! my heart is sore! Pray that God may support me. I am too easily depressed—particularly when you are not with me. I *long* to see you! I hope I shall before you receive this. God bless you!

“Your very affectionate—your own
JUDY.

“(Saturday morning.)

“We are both better. Josiah’s fever is off, but he is very weak.”

That the wife should begin the love-full epistle, “My dear Mr. Smith,” and sign it, “your own Judy,” seems the queerer to modern readers when it is considered that her husband

was also her cousin, and had married her niece as his first wife. Few wives called their lords by their Christian names a hundred years back, and the custom is not yet fully established in the Southern States.

The few letters written by my grandfather that have been preserved until now show him to have been a man of sincere piety, sterling sense, and affectionate disposition. One herewith given betrays what a wealth of tenderness was poured out upon his fairy-like wife. It likewise offers a fair sketch of the life of a well-to-do Virginia planter of that date.

His wife was visiting her Montrose relatives.

“OLNEY, March 30th, 1814.

“With inexpressible pleasure I received yours by Mr. Mosby. I rejoice that the expected event with our dear sister has turned out favorably, and that you, my dear, are enjoying better health.

“I hope that you will not be uneasy about my lonely situation. Every one must know that it cannot be agreeable, but when I consider that you may be benefited by it, and even that your health may be restored (which we have reason to hope for), what would I not forego to secure so great a blessing!

“I have kept close at home, except when I went to meeting on Sabbath, and to town to-day to hear from you. During the day I have been busy, and at night have enjoyed the company of good books until ten or eleven o’clock, then gone to bed and slept tolerably well. I eat at the usual times, and have as good health

as usual. Thus situated, I will try to be as comfortable as I can until God shall be pleased to bring us together again.

“Some of our black people are still sick. Amy is much better, and speaks plainly. Rose is but poorly, yet no worse. Nanny is in appearance no better. Becky has been really sick, but seems comfortable this evening. The doctor has ordered medicine which will, I hope, restore her to health. Oba was a little while in the garden on Monday, but has been closely housed ever since. His cough is very bad, and I suppose him unable to labor.

“I wish to come for you as soon as possible, and I would, if I could, rejoin you to-morrow. The election would not keep me, but I have business I wish to attend to this week, and also to attend the meeting of the Bible Society at the Capitol on Tuesday. I hope to see you on Wednesday. I wish you to be prepared to come home with me soon after that. With regard to Betsy, I don't expect she will be ready to come home with us, and, if she could, I dread riding an ill-gaited horse thirty miles. Mr. Mosby's carriage is to go to Lynchburg in a few days, and he talks of returning home by way of Prince Edward, and bringing the two Betsies home. The carriage will be empty. I shall persuade him to be in earnest about it.

“Now, my dear, I must conclude with committing you to the care of our Heavenly Father. May He keep you from every evil! Give my love to the dear family you are with. May you be a comfort to them, and an

instrument in the hands of God to do them good! Kiss my little ones for me, and tell them I love them!

“Your own affectionate,

“W^M. S. SMITH.”

The matter-of-fact manner in which the writer hints at the ride of thirty miles upon the ill-gaited horse he would have to bestride if the women, babies, and maid filled the family chariot, and his intention of making Mr. Mosby “earnest” in the scheme of despatching his empty carriage to Lynchburg—a distance of one hundred and forty miles—returning by way of Prince Edward, eighty miles from Olney—to fetch “the two Betsies” home, was a perfectly natural proceeding in the eyes of him who wrote and of her who read. There was not so much as a stage-coach route between the two towns. Heavy as were the carriages that swung and creaked through the red mud-holes and corduroy roads that did duty for thoroughfares all over the State, they were on the go continually, except when the mud-holes became bottomless and the red clay as sticky as putty. Then men and women went on horseback, unless the women were too old for the saddle. The men never were.

It was, likewise, an everyday matter with our planter that five of his “black people” should be down “sick” at one time. The race had then, as they have to our day, a penchant for disease. Every plantation had a hospital ward that was never empty.

A letter penned three years earlier than that we have just read:

“We are going on bravely with our subscription for building a meeting-house. Yesterday was the first of my turning out with subscription-paper. I got 162 dollars subscribed, with a promise of more. We have now about 1800 dollars on our subscription-list, which sum increases at least 100 dollars a day. I hope, with a little help that we have reason to expect from New York, we shall soon be able to begin the work, which may the Lord prosper in our hands!”

The “meeting-house,” when constructed, was popularly known as the “Pineapple Church,” from the conical ornament topping the steeple. As Richmond grew westward and climbed up Shockoe Hill, the First Presbyterian Church was swept up with the congregation to another site. The deserted building was bought by the Episcopalians, and christened “Christ Church.” As long as it stood it was known by the “old-timers” as the “Old Pineapple.”

The daughters of Captain Sterling’s first wife were Mary and Elizabeth (the “Betsy” of his letters). She married Rev. Thomas Lumpkin, whom she met on one of her visits to Prince Edward County, where her aunt, Mrs. James Morton, lived in the vicinity of Hampden Sidney College. Her husband lived but seven months from the wedding-day, and she returned to Olney and the fostering care of her father and the second mother, who was ever her fast and tender friend. There, in the house where she was born, she laid in her stepmother’s arms a baby-girl, born four months later. The posthumous child became the beloved “Cousin Mary” of these memoirs. She had been the petted darling of the homestead five years when her mother married again, and

another clergyman, whom I shall call "Mr. Carus." He was a Connecticut man who had been a tutor in the Olney household before he took orders. For reasons which will appear by-and-by, I prefer to disguise his name. Others in his native New England bear it, although he left no descendants.

From my mother I had the particulars of the death-scene in that first-floor "chamber" in the homestead, when, on a sultry August day (1820), "the longest, saddest day I have ever known"—said the daughter—the dainty, delicate creature who was soul and heart to the home passed away from earth.

My mother has told me how the scent of white jessamine flowed into the room where grief was hushed to hearken for the failing breath.

Dr. Rice's niece leaned over the pillow in which the girl of fourteen smothered her sobs in clinging to the small hand so strangely cold.

"She does not breathe!" the weeper heard the friend whisper. And in a moment more, "Her heart does not beat!"

I have dwelt at length upon the character and life of my maternal grandmother because of my solemn conviction that I inherit what humble talent is mine from her. I cannot recall the time when everything connected with her did not possess for me a sweet and weird charm; when the fancy that this *petite* woman, with a heart and soul too great for her physique, was my guardian angel, did not stay my soul and renew my courage in all good enterprises.

Her profiled portrait hangs before me as I write. The features are finely chiselled and high-bred; the expression is

sweet. She wears a close cap with a lace border (she was but fifty-three at death!), and a crimped frill stands up about a slender neck.

My fantasy may be a figment of the imagination. I cherish it with a tenacity that tells me it is more. That my mother shared it was proved by her legacy to me of all the books and other relics of her mother she possessed at the time of her own decease, and the richer legacy of tales of that mother's life and words, her deeds of mercy and love, which cannot but make me a better woman.

The mortal remains of my patron saint lie in the old family burying-ground. War, in its rudest shape, swept over the ancestral acres for two years. Trees, centuries old, were cut down; ruffian soldiery camped upon and tramped over desolated fields; outbuildings were destroyed, and the cosey home stripped of porches and wings, leaving it a pitiful shell. Captain Sterling had fought at Germantown and Monmouth, leading his Henrico troopers in the train of Washington and Gates. And Northern cannon and Southern musketry jarred his bones after their rest of half a century in the country graveyard!

Yet—and this I like to think of—the periwinkle that opens its blue eyes in the early springtime, and the long-stemmed narcissus, waving its golden censers above the tangled grasses, spring from the roots *her* dear hands buried there one hundred years ago.

II

LAFAYETTE—REVOLUTIONARY TALES—PARENTS'

MARRIAGE

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My father's wooing, carried on, now at Dr. Rice's house in town, now at Olney, progressed propitiously. During the engagement, Lafayette visited Richmond. My father was a member of the once-famous volunteer company, the Richmond Blues, and marched with it when it was detailed as a body-guard for the illustrious guest of the nation. My mother walked at the head of her class of Sunday-school children in the procession of women and girls mustered here to do him honor, as was done in Trenton and other towns. She kept among her treasured relics the blue-satin badge, with Lafayette's likeness stamped on it in silver, which she wore upon her left shoulder. The Blues were arrayed in Continental uniform, with powdered hair. So completely was my father metamorphosed by the costume that, when, at the close of the parade, he presented himself in Dr. Rice's drawing-room to pay his devoirs to his fiancée, she did not recognize him until he spoke.

I have heard the particulars of that day's pageant and of Lafayette's behavior at the public reception awarded him by a grateful people, so often that I seem to have been part of the scene in a former incarnation. So vivid were my reminiscences that, when a bride and a guest at Redhill, the former home of Patrick Henry, I exchanged incidents and sayings with the great orator's son, Mr. John Henry, who had been on the Committee of Reception in 1824. In the enthusiasm of his own recollections of the fête he inquired, naïvely:

“Do you, then, remember Lafayette’s visit to America so well?”

The general burst of merriment that went around the table, and Wirt Henry’s respectful, half-distressed—“Why, father! she wasn’t born!” brought both of us back to the actual and present time and place.

A large platform erected upon the Capitol Square was filled with distinguished guests and officials. From this Lafayette reviewed the regiments of soldiers, and here he stood when the schools of the city sent up as their representative a pretty little girl, eight or ten years of age, to “speak a piece” written for the occasion by a local bard. The midget went through the task bravely, but with filling eyes and trembling limbs. Her store of factitious courage exhaled with the last line reeled off from the red lips, and, with a scared, piteous look into the benign face brought upon a level with hers by the table upon which she had been set, like an animated puppet, she cast herself upon the great man’s decorated breast and wept sore. He kissed and cuddled and soothed her as he might pet his own grandchild, and not until she could return his smile, and he had dried her tears upon his laced handkerchief, did he transfer her to other arms.

Major James Morton, of “Willington,” Prince Edward County, who married my grandmother’s sister Mary, of Montrose, had served under Lafayette and came down to Richmond to do honor to his former chief. The Major’s *sobriquet* in the army was “Solid Column,” in reference to his “stocky” build. Although he had been on Washington’s staff, he did not expect to be recognized, after the lapse of

thirty years and more, by the renowned Frenchman, who had passed since their parting through a bloodier revolution than that which won freedom for America.

General Lafayette was standing at the head of the ball-room (which was, I think, in the Eagle Hotel), where he received the crowds of citizens and military flocking to pay their respects, when he espied his whilom comrade on the outskirts of the throng. Instantly stepping outside of the cordon of aids and attendants, the Marquis held out both hands with:

“Vy, old *Soleed Coluume!* I am 'appy to see you!”

A marvellous memory and a more marvellous facile tongue and quick wit had the distinguished leader of freedom-lovers! There lived in Richmond, until the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, a stately gentlewoman of the very old school whom we, of two younger generations, regarded with prideful veneration, and with reason. For Lafayette, who had seen her dance at the aforesaid ball, had pronounced her, audibly, “the handsomest woman he had seen in America.” Time had handled her disrespectfully by the time I heard the tale. But I never questioned the truth of it until I found in three other cities as many antique belles upon whom he had set a seal of the self-same pattern.

We were generously fed with authentic stories of Revolutionary days in my far-off childhood. I have sat at Major Morton's feet and learned of the veteran much that nobody else wots of in our rushing times. I recall his emphatic denial of the assertion made by a Fourth-of-July orator to the effect that so grievous was the weight of public cares upon the Commander-in-Chief, he was never seen to

smile during those eventful eight years of struggle and suspense.

“Not a word of truth in it, sir!” Thus old Solid Column to the man who reported the speech to him. “I was with him at Valley Forge, sir, and nobody there tried harder to keep up the spirits of the men. I recollect, particularly, one bitter cold day, when a dozen or so of the officers were amusing themselves and trying to get warm by jumping up and down, leaping high up in the air and trying to clap their heels together twice before they struck the ground in coming down. General Greene was sure he could do it, but he was fleshy and never light on his feet, besides being naturally sober. He was a Quaker, you know, and was turned out of meeting for joining the army. Well, on this particular day he took his turn with the others in jumping. And a poor hand he was at it! He couldn’t clap his heels together once on the way down, let alone twice. By-and-by he made a tremendous effort and pitched over, head down and heels up—flat on the snow. General Washington was watching them from where he stood in his tent door, and when General Greene went down—how the General laughed! He fairly held his sides!

“‘Ah, Greene!’ he called out. ‘You were always a lubberly fellow!’

“I am not saying he wasn’t one of the gravest men I ever saw, as a rule, but he often smiled, and he did laugh sometimes.”

My grandfather’s uncle and godfather, Sterling Smith, was one of our family Revolutionary heroes. My mother, who had a fair talent for mimicry, had an anecdote of the old

war-horse's defence of Washington against the oft-repeated charge of profanity upon the field of Monmouth:

“‘He did not swear!’ the veteran would thunder when irreverent youngsters retailed the slander in his hearing—and with malice prepense. ‘I was close behind him—and I can tell you, sir, we rode *fast*—when what should we meet, running away, licketty-split, from the field of battle, with the British almost on their heels, but Gen’ral Lee and his men?’

“‘Then, with that, says Gen’ral Washington, speaking out loud and sharp—says he, “Gen’ral Lee! in God’s name, sir, what is the meaning of this ill-timed prudence?”

“‘Now, you see, Gen’ral Lee, he was mighty high-sperited always, and all of us could hear what was going on. So he speaks up as haughty as the Gen’ral had done, and says he:

“‘“I know of no one who has more of that most damnable virtue than your Excellency!”

“‘So, you see, young man, it was Gen’ral Lee that swore, and not Gen’ral Washington! Don’t you ever let me hear that lie again!’”

A Revolutionary reminiscence of my mother’s (or mine) is always renewed by the sight of an Old Virginia plantation-gate, swinging gratingly on ponderous hinges and kept shut by the fall of a wooden latch, two yards long, into a wooden hook set in the gate-post. This latch is usually nearly half-way down the gate, and a horseman approaching it from the outside must dismount to lift the heavy bar, or be practised in the trick of throwing himself well over the top-rail to reach the latch and hold it, while he guides his horse through the narrow opening.