

***EDWARD
EGGLESTON***

A photograph of the United States flag flying on a tall pole against a clear blue sky. In the background, a cityscape is visible under a soft, hazy light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The flag is the central focus, with its stars and stripes clearly visible.

***STORIES
OF GREAT
AMERICANS
FOR LITTLE
AMERICANS***

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Stories of Great Americans for Little Americans

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PREFACE.

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The primary aim of this book is to furnish the little learner reading matter that will excite his attention and give him pleasure, and thus make lighter the difficult task of learning to read. The ruggedness of this task has often been increased by the use of disconnected sentences, or lessons as dry and uninteresting as finger exercises on the piano. It is a sign of promise that the demand for reading matter of interest to the child has come from teachers. I have endeavored to meet this requirement in the following stories.

As far as possible the words chosen have been such as are not difficult to the little reader, either from their length or their unfamiliarity. The sentences and paragraphs are short. Learning to read is like climbing a steep hill, and it is a great relief to the panting child to find frequent breathing places.

It is one of the purposes of these stories to make the mind of the pupil familiar with some of the leading figures in the history of our country by means of personal anecdote. Some of the stories are those that every American child ought to know, because they have become a kind of national folklore. Such, for example, are "Putnam and the Wolf" and the story of "Franklin's Whistle." I have thought it important to present as great a variety of subjects as possible, so that the pupil may learn something not only of great warriors and patriots, but also of great statesmen. The exploits of discoverers, the triumphs of American inventors, and the achievements of men of letters and men of science, find place in these stories. All the narratives are historical, or at least no stories have been told for true that are deemed

fictitious. Every means which the writer's literary experience could suggest has been used to make the stories engaging, in the hope that the interest of the narrative may prove a sufficient spur to exertion on the part of the pupil, and that this little book will make green and pleasant a pathway that has so often been dry and laborious. It will surely serve to excite an early interest in our national history by giving some of the great personages of that history a place among the heroes that impress the susceptible imagination of a child. It is thus that biographical and historical incidents acquire something of the vitality of folk tales.

The illustrations that accompany the text have been planned with special reference to the awakening of the child's attention. To keep the mind alert and at its best is more than half the battle in teaching. The publishers and the author of this little book believe that in laying the foundation of a child's education the best work is none too good.

The larger words have been divided by hyphens when a separation into syllables is likely to help the learner. The use of the hyphen has been regulated entirely with a view to its utility. After a word not too difficult has been made familiar by its repeated occurrence, the hyphens are omitted.

STORIES OF GREAT AMERICANS.

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[Illustration: THE FIRST GOVERNOR IN BOSTON]

Before the white people came, there were no houses in this country but the little huts of the In-di-ans. The In-di-an houses were made of bark, or mats, or skins, spread over poles.

Some people came to one part of the country. Others started set-tle-ments in other places. When more people came, some of these set-tle-ments grew into towns. The woods were cut down. Farms were planted. Roads were made. But it took many years for the country to fill with people.

The first white people that came to live in the woods where Boston is now, settled there a long time ago. They had a gov-ern-or over them.

He was a good man, and did much for the people. His name was John Win-throp.

The first thing the people had to do was to cut down the trees. After that they could plant corn. But at first they could not raise any-thing to eat. They had brought flour and oat-meal from England. But they found that it was not enough to last till they could raise corn on their new ground.

Win-throp sent a ship to get more food for them. The ship was gone a long time. The people ate up all their food. They

were hungry. They went to the sea-shore, and found clams and mussels. They were glad to get these to eat.

At last they set a day for every-body to fast and pray for food. The gov-ern-or had a little flour left. Nearly all of this was made into bread, and put into the oven to bake. He did not know when he would get any more.

Soon after this a poor man came along. His flour was all gone. His bread had all been eaten up. His family were hungry. The gov-ern-or gave the poor man the very last flour that he had in the barrel.

Just then a ship was seen. It sailed up toward Boston. It was loaded with food for all the people.

The time for the fast day came. But there was now plenty of food. The fast day was turned into a thanks-giving day.

One day a man sent a very cross letter to Gov-ern-or Winthrop. Winthrop sent it back to him. He said, "I cannot keep a letter that might make me angry." Then the man that had written the cross letter wrote to Winthrop, "By con-quer-ing yourself, you have con-quered me."

MARQUETTE IN IOWA.

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The first white men to go into the middle of our country were French-men. The French had settled in Can-a-da. They sent mis-sion-a-ries to preach to the Indians in the West. They also sent traders to buy furs from the Indians.

The French-men heard the Indians talk about a great river in the West.

But no French-man had ever gone far enough to see the Mis-sis-sip-pi.

Mar-quette was a priest. Jo-li-et was a trader. These two men were sent to find the great river that the Indians talked about.

They trav-eled in two birch canoes. They took five men to paddle the canoes. They took some smoked meat to eat on the way. They also took some Indian corn. They had trinkets to trade to the Indians. Hatchets, and beads, and bits of cloth were the money they used to pay the Indians for what they wanted.

The friendly Indians in Wis-con-sin tried to per-suade them not to go.

They told them that the Indians on the great river would kill them.

The friendly Indians also told them that there was a demon in one part of the river. They said that this demon roared so loud that he could be heard a long way off. They said that the demon would draw the trav-el-ers down into the water. Then they told about great monsters that ate up men and their canoes.

But Mar-quette and the men with him thought they would risk the journey. They would not turn back for fear of the demon or the monsters.

The two little canoes went down the Wis-con-sin River. After some days they came to the Mis-sis-sip-pi. More than a hundred years before, the Spaniards had seen the lower part of this river. But no white man had ever seen this part of the great river. Mar-quette did not know that any white man had ever seen any part of the Mis-sis-sip-pi.

The two little canoes now turned their bows down the river. Some-times they saw great herds of buf-fa-loes. Some of these came to the bank of the river to look at the men in the canoes. They had long, shaggy manes, which hung down over their eyes.

For two weeks the trav-el-ers paddled down the river. In all this time they did not see any Indians. After they had gone hundreds of miles in this way, they came to a place where they saw tracks in the mud. It was in what is now the State of I-o-wa.

Mar-quette and Jo-li-et left the men in their canoes, and followed the tracks. After walking two hours, they came to an Indian village. The Frenchmen came near enough to hear the Indians talking. The Indians did not see them.

Jo-li-et and Mar-quette did not know whether the Indians would kill them or not. They said a short prayer. Then they stood out in full view, and gave a loud shout.

The Indians came out of their tents like bees. They stared at the strangers. Then four Indians came toward them. These Indians carried a peace pipe. They held this up toward the sun. This meant that they were friendly.

The Indians now offered the peace pipe to the French-men. The French-men took it, and smoked with the Indians. This was the Indian way of saying, "We are friends."

[Illustration: Marquette and Joliet]

Mar-quette asked the Indians what tribe they belonged to. They told him that they were of the tribe called the Il-li-nois.

They took Jo-li-et and Mar-quette into their village. They came to the door of a large wig-wam. A chief stood in the door. He shaded his eyes with both hands, as if the sun were shining in his face. Then he made a little speech.

He said, "French-men, how bright the sun shines when you come to see us! We are all waiting for you. You shall now come into our houses in peace."

The Il-li-nois Indians made a feast for their new friends. First they had mush of corn meal, with fat meat in it. One of the Indians fed the Frenchmen as though they were babies. He put mush into their mouths with a large spoon.

Then came some fish. The Indian that fed the vis-it-ors picked out the bones with his fingers. Then he put the pieces of fish into their mouths. After they had some roasted dog. The French-men did not like this. Last, they were fed with buf-fa-lo meat.

The next morning six hundred Indians went to the canoes to tell the Frenchmen good-by. They gave Mar-quette a young Indian slave. And they gave him a peace pipe to carry with him.