

# FINLEY MARTHA

ELSIE'S VACATION AND  
AFTER EVENTS

Martha Finley

**Elsie's Vacation and After Events**

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**Finley M.**

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# Martha Finley

## Elsie's Vacation and After Events

### CHAPTER I

Captain Raymond went back to the hotel feeling somewhat lonely and heartsore over the parting from his eldest hope, but as he entered the private parlor where his young wife and most of the party were, his look and manner had all their accustomed cheeriness.

He made a pleasant remark to Violet, fondled the little ones, and talked for a few minutes in his usual agreeable way with Mr. and Mrs. Dinsmore and the others; then glancing about the room, as if in search of someone or something, asked, "Where are Lulu and Gracie?"

"Why, I thought they were here," Violet answered in some surprise, following the direction of his glance. "They seem to have slipped out of the room very quietly."

"I must hunt them up, poor dears! for it is about time we were starting for the *Dolphin*," he said, hastily leaving the room. A low sobbing sound struck upon his ear as he softly opened the door of the room where his little girls had slept the previous night, and there they were down on the carpet near a window, Gracie's head in her sister's lap, Lulu softly stroking the golden curls and saying in tender tones, "Don't, Gracie dear; oh, don't! It can't be helped, you know; and we have our dear papa and Mamma Vi, and the little ones left. Besides, Maxie will come home again to visit us one of these days."

"Oh, but he'll never live at home with us any more," sobbed Gracie; "at least I'm afraid he won't; and – and oh, I do love him so! and he's the only big brother we have."

"But we have papa, dear, dear papa, who used to be obliged to go away and leave us; but we have him all the time now," Lulu replied half chokingly. "I wish we could have them both, but we can't, and we both do love papa the best after all."

"And papa loves his two dear little girls more than tongue can tell," the captain said in tenderest tones, drawing near, bending down to take both in his arms together, and kissing first one and then the other. "Be comforted, my darlings," he went on, holding them close to his heart; "we haven't lost our Maxie by any means; and though I left him feeling a trifle homesick and forlorn, he will get over that in a day or two I know, and greatly enjoy the business of preparing himself for the life work he has freely chosen."

"But, oh, papa, how he will miss our lovely home, and you, and all of us!" sobbed Gracie, hiding her tear-stained face on her father's shoulder.

"Not as you would, my darling," he replied, holding her close and caressing her with great tenderness. "Boys are different from girls, and I think our dear Maxie will soon feel very happy there among his mates, though he will, I am sure, never cease to love his father, sisters, Mamma Vi, baby brother, and his home with them all."

"Papa, I'm thinking how he'll miss the pleasant evenings at home – the good talks with you," sobbed the little girl.

"Yes, darling, but I will tell you what we will do to partly, at least, make up that loss to our dear boy."

"What, papa?" she asked, lifting her head and looking up into his face, with her own brightening a little.

"Suppose we each keep a journal or diary, telling everything that goes on each day at home, and now and then send them to Maxie; so that he will know all that we are doing?"

"Oh, what a good thought, papa!" exclaimed Lulu, giving him a vigorous hug and kiss. "And Maxie will write us nice, interesting letters; and some day he'll come home for a visit and have ever so much to tell us."

"Yes," her father said, "and I think we will have interesting letters from him in the meantime."

"And perhaps I'll learn to like writing letters, when it's just to please Maxie and comfort him," said Grace, wiping away her tears and trying to smile.

"I hope so, darling," her father replied, bestowing another kiss upon the sweet little tear-stained face. "But now, my dears," he added, "put on your hats; it is time to go back to the *Dolphin*."

They hastened to obey, and he led them to the parlor, where they found the rest of the party ready to accompany them on board the yacht.

The sun was setting as they reached the *Dolphin's* deck and they found a luxurious repast ready for them to partake of by the time outdoor garments could be laid aside and wind-tossed hair restored to order.

The captain missed the bright face of his first-born at the table, but, exerting himself for the entertainment of the others, seemed even more than usually cheery and genial, now and then indulging in some innocent jest that made his little girls laugh in spite of themselves, and at length almost forget, for the moment, their parting from Max, and their grief over the thought that he would no longer share their lessons or their sports, and would be at home only after what, in the prospect, seemed to them a long, long time; and then but for a little while.

On leaving the table all gathered upon deck. There was no wind, but the yacht had a steam engine and used her sails only on occasions when they could be of service. Stars shone brightly in the sky overhead, but their light was not sufficient to give an extended view on land or water, and as all were weary with the excitement and sightseeing of the day, they retired early to their berths.

Poor Grace, worn out with her unusual excitement, and especially the grief of the parting with Max, was asleep the instant her head touched the pillow. Not so with Lulu; her loneliness and depression banished sleep from her eyes for the time, and presently she slipped from her berth, threw on a warm dressing-gown, and thrust her feet into felt slippers. The next moment she stole noiselessly into the saloon where her father sat alone looking over an evening paper.

He was not aware of her entrance till she stood close at his side, her hand on his shoulder, her eyes fixed, with a gaze of ardent affection, upon his face.

"Dear child!" he said, looking up from his paper, and smiling affectionately upon her; then tossing the paper aside and putting an arm about her waist, he drew her to his knee and pressed fatherly kisses upon lip and cheek and brow, asking tenderly if anything was wrong with her that she had come in search of him when he supposed her to be already in bed and sound asleep.

"I'm not sick, papa," she said in reply; "but oh, I miss Maxie so!" The words were almost a sob, and she clung about her father's neck, hiding her face on his shoulder.

"I, too, miss my boy more than words can tell," he replied, stroking her hair with gently caressing touch, and she was sure his tones trembled a little with the pain of the thought of Max left alone among strangers; "but I thank God, our Heavenly Father, that I have by no means lost my eldest son, while I still have another one and three dear daughters to add to my happiness in our sweet home."

"I do want to add to it, you dear, dear, good papa!" she said, hugging and kissing him over and over again. "Oh, I wish I was a better girl for your sake, so that my wrong-doing would never give you pain!"

"I think – and am very happy in the thought – that you are improving," he said, repeating his caresses; "and it is a great comfort to me," he continued, "that my little girls need not be sent away from home and their father to be educated."

"To me also, papa," she returned. "I am very thankful that I may live with my dear father always while we are spared to each other. I don't mean to ever go away from you, papa, but to stay with you

always, to wait on you and do everything I can to be a great help, comfort, and blessing to you; even when I'm grown up to womanhood."

"Ah!" he returned, again smoothing her hair caressingly and smiling down into her eyes; then holding her close, "I shall be very glad to keep you as long as you may prefer life with me, my own dear, dear child," he said in tender tones. "I look upon my dear eldest daughter as one of the great blessings my Heavenly Father has bestowed upon me, and which I hope he may spare to me as long as I live."

"Papa, I'm so, so glad you love me so dearly!" she exclaimed, lifting to his eyes full of love and joy; "and oh, I do love you so! I want to be a great blessing to you as long as we both live."

"I don't doubt it, my darling," he replied. "I doubt neither your desire nor purpose to be such."

"Yes, sir, I do really long to be the very greatest of comforts to you, and yet," she sighed, "I have such a bad temper you know, papa, I'm so wilful too, that – that I'm afraid – almost sure, indeed – I'll be naughty again one of these days and give you the pain of punishing me for it."

"That would grieve me very much, but would not diminish my love for you," he said; "nor yours for me, I think."

"No, indeed, papa!" she exclaimed, creeping closer into his embrace, "because I know that when you have to punish me in any way it makes you very, very sorry."

"It does indeed!" he responded.

"Papa," she sighed, "I'm always dreadfully sorry and ashamed after one of my times of being disobedient, wilful, and ill-tempered, and I am really thankful to you for taking so much pains and trouble to make a better girl of me."

"I don't doubt it, daughter," he answered; "it is a long while now since I have had any occasion to punish you, and your conduct has rarely called for even so much as a reproof."

She gave him a glad, grateful look, an embrace of ardent affection, then, laying her cheek to his, "You dear, dear papa, you have made me feel very happy," she said, "and I'm sure I am much happier than I should be if you had let me go on indulging my bad temper and wilfulness. Oh, it's so nice to be able to run to my dear father whenever I want to, and always to be so kindly received that I can't feel any doubt that he loves me dearly. Ah, how I pity poor Maxie that he can't see you for weeks or months!"

"And don't you pity papa a little that he can't see Maxie?" he asked, with a smile and a sigh.

"Oh, yes! yes indeed! I'm so sorry for you, papa, and I mean to do all I can to supply his place. What do you suppose Maxie is doing just now, papa?"

"Doubtless he is in his room preparing his lessons for to-morrow. The bugle-call for evening study-hour sounds at half-past seven, and the lads must be busy with their books till half-after nine."

He drew out his watch, and glancing at its face, "Ah, it is just nine o'clock," he said. "Kiss me good-night, daughter, and go back to your berth."

## CHAPTER II

Max was in his room at the Academy, busy with his tasks, trying determinately to forget homesickness by giving his whole mind to them, and succeeding fairly well. Very desirous, very determined was the lad to acquit himself to the very best of his ability that he might please and honor both his Heavenly Father and his earthly one.

By the time the welcome sound of gun-fire and tattoo announced that the day's work was over he felt fully prepared for the morrow's recitations. But he was in no mood for play. The quiet that had reigned through the building for the last two hours was suddenly broken in upon by sounds of mirth and jollity – merry boyish voices talking, singing, some accompanying themselves with the twang of a banjo or the tinkle of a guitar; but Max, closing and putting his book aside, kept his seat, his elbow on the desk, his head on his hand, while with a far-away look in his dark eyes, he indulged in a waking dream.

He seemed to see the *Dolphin* steaming down the bay, his father, perhaps, sitting in the saloon with the other grown folks (the younger ones would be pretty sure to have retired to their state-rooms), and thinking and speaking of his absent son. Or, it might be, pacing the deck alone, his heart going up in prayer to God for his first-born – his "might and the beginning of his strength," – that he might be kept from sin and every danger and evil and enabled to prove himself a brave, true follower of Christ, never ashamed or afraid to show his colors and let it be known to all with whom he had to do that he was a disciple, a servant of the dear Lord Jesus.

"Lord, help me; help me to be brave and faithful and true," was the silent petition that went up from the boy's heart.

"Homesick, bub?" asked a boyish voice, in mocking tones. "I believe most of the fellows are just at the first, but they get over it after a bit without much doctoring."

"I'm inclined to think it is not a dangerous kind of ailment," returned Max, in a pleasant tone, lifting his head and turning toward his companion with a smile that seemed rather forced. "However, I was thinking not of home, exactly, but the homefolks who are just at present aboard my father's yacht and steaming down the bay."

It was only by a great effort he repressed a sigh with the concluding words.

"That's a handsome yacht and about the largest I ever saw," was the next remark of his roommate, a lad – Benjamin Hunt by name – of about the same age as himself, not particularly handsome but with a good, honest face.

"Yes, and a splendid sailor," returned Max, with enthusiasm. "Papa bought her this summer and we've had a jolly good time sailing or steaming (sometimes one and again the other, the *Dolphin* has both sails and engines) along the coast and a short distance out to sea."

"Had a good, safe captain?" Hunt asked, with a quizzical smile.

"My father, a retired naval officer; there could be none better," returned Max, straightening himself slightly, while the color deepened on his cheek.

"Yes; I don't wonder you are proud of him," laughed Hunt. "I happened to see him when he brought you here, and I must say I thought he had a fine military bearing and was – well, I think I might say one of the handsomest men I ever saw."

"Thank you," said Max heartily, glancing up at Hunt with a gratified smile. "I suppose being so fond of him I may not be a competent judge, but to me my father seems the best, the noblest, and the handsomest man that ever lived."

"Didn't force you to come here against your will, eh?" queried Hunt jestingly.

"No, indeed! he only let me come because I wanted to. I think he would have been glad if I had chosen the ministry, but you see I don't think I have any talent in that line, and I inherit a love

for the sea, and papa says a man can do best in the profession or business that is most to his taste, so that perhaps I may be more useful as a naval officer than I could be in the ministry."

"Especially in case of war, and if you turn out a good and capable commander," returned Hunt, tossing up a ball and catching it as it fell. "I sometimes think I'd like nothing better; a fellow would have a chance to distinguish himself, such as he could never hope for in time of peace."

"Yes; and if such a thing should happen I hope it will be when I'm ready to take part in the defence of my country," said Max, his cheek flushing and his eyes kindling, "but war is an awful thing considering all the killing and maiming, to say nothing of the destruction of property; and I hope our country will never be engaged in another. But excuse me," he added, opening his Bible, "I see we have scarcely fifteen minutes now before taps will sound."

At that Hunt moved away to his own side of the room, from whence he watched Max furtively, a mocking smile on his lips.

Max was uncomfortably conscious of it, but tried to ignore it and give his thoughts to what he was reading. Presently, closing his book he knelt and silently offered up his evening prayer, asking forgiveness of all his sins, strength to resist temptation, and never be afraid or ashamed to own himself a follower of Jesus, his loving disciple, his servant, whose greatest desire was to know and do the Master's will; and very earnestly he prayed that no evil might befall his dearly loved and honored father, his sisters or brother, Mamma Vi, or any of those he loved; that they might be taken safely through all their journeying, and he permitted to see them all again when the right time should come; and having committed both them and himself to the watchful care of his Heavenly Father, he rose from his knees and began his preparations for bed.

"Well, sonny, I hope you will sleep soundly and well after saying your prayers like the goodest of little boys," sneered Hunt.

"I shall sleep none the worse," returned Max pleasantly.

"I'll bet not a bit better than I shall without going through any such baby-like performance."

"God is very good and often takes care of those who don't ask him to," said Max; "but I don't think they have any right to expect it; also I am sure I should be shamefully ungrateful if I were to lie down for my night's rest without a word of thanks to him for his protecting care over me and mine through the day that is just past. As to its being a baby-like performance, it is one in which some of the greatest, as well as best men, have indulged. Washington was a man of prayer. So was General Daniel Morgan – that grand revolutionary officer who whipped Tarleton so completely at the battle of the Cowpens. There was Macdonough also, who gained that splendid victory over the British on Lake Champlain in the war of 1812-14. Have you forgotten that just before the fight began, after he had put springs on his cables, had the decks cleared, and everything was ready for action, with his officers and men around him, he knelt down near one of his heaviest guns and in a few words asked God to help him in the coming struggle? He might well do that, because, as you know of course, we were in the right, fighting against oppression and wrongs fit to rouse the indignation of the most patient and forbearing of mortals."

"That's a fact!" interrupted Hunt. "Americans have always been forbearing at the start; but let them get once thoroughly roused and they make things hot enough for the aggressors."

"So they do," said Max, "and so I think they always will; I hope so, anyhow; for I don't believe it's right for any nation to allow any of its people to be so dreadfully wronged and ill-treated as thousands of our poor sailors were, by the English, before the war of 1812 taught them better. I don't believe the mass of the English people approved, but they couldn't keep their aristocracy – who hated republicanism, and wanted always to continue superior in station and power to the mass of their countrymen and ours – from oppressing and abusing our poor sailors, impressing, flogging, and ill-treating them in various ways, and to such a degree that it makes one's blood boil in reading or thinking of it. And I think it's right enough for one to be angry and indignant at such wrongs to others."

"Of course it is," said Hunt; "and Americans always will resist oppression – of themselves or their weaker brethren – and I glory in the fact. What a fight that was of Macdonough's! Do you remember the incident of the gamecock?"

"No; what was it?"

"It seems that one of the shots from the British vessel *Linnet* demolished a hencoop on the deck of the *Saratoga*, releasing this gamecock, and that he flew to a gun-slide, where he alighted, then clapped his wings and crowed lustily.

"That delighted our sailors, who accepted the incident as an omen of the victory that crowned their arms before the fight was over. They cheered and felt their courage strengthened."

"Good!" said Max, "that cock was at better business than the fighting he had doubtless been brought up to."

"Yes; so say I:

"O Johnny Bull, my joe John,  
Behold on Lake Champlain,  
With more than equal force, John,  
You tried your fist again;  
But the cock saw how 'twas going.  
And cried 'Cock-a-doodle-doo,'  
And Macdonough was victorious,  
Johnny Bull, my joe!'"

"Pretty good," laughed Max. "But there are the taps; so good-night."

## CHAPTER III

Lulu woke early the next morning and was dressed and on deck before any other of the *Dolphin's* passengers. Day had dawned and the eastern sky was bright with purple, orange, and gold, heralding the near approach of the sun which, just as she set her foot on the deck, suddenly showed his face above the restless waves, making a golden pathway across them.

"Oh, how beautiful!" was her involuntary exclamation. Then catching sight of her father standing with his back toward her, and apparently absorbed in gazing upon the sunrise, she hastened to his side, caught his hand in hers, and carried it to her lips with a glad, "Good-morning, you dear papa."

"Ah! good-morning, my darling," he returned, bending down to press a kiss on the bright, upturned face.

"Such a lovely morning, papa, isn't it?" she said, standing with her hand fast clasped in his, but turning her eyes again upon sea and sky. "But where are we now? Almost at Fortress Monroe?"

"Look and tell me what you see," was his smiling rejoinder, as, with a hand on each of her shoulders, he turned her about so that she caught the view from the other side of the vessel.

"O papa, is that it?" she exclaimed. "Why, we're almost there, aren't we?"

"Yes; we will reach our anchorage within a few minutes."

"Oh, are we going to stop to see the old fort, papa?" she asked eagerly.

"I think we are," was his smiling rejoinder. "But you don't expect to find in it a relic of the Revolution, do you?" he asked laughingly, pinching her cheek, then bending down to kiss again the rosy face upturned to his.

"Why yes, papa; I have been thinking there must have been a fight there. Wasn't that the case?"

"No, daughter; the fortress was not there at that time."

"Was it in the war of 1812-14, then, papa?"

"No," he returned, smiling down on her. "The building of Fortress Monroe was not begun until 1817. However, there was a small fort built on Point Comfort in 1630; also, shortly before the siege of Yorktown, Count De Grasse had some fortifications thrown up to protect his troops in landing to take part in that affair."

But just then the talk was interrupted by the coming on deck of one after another of their party and the exchange of morning greetings; then followed the interest and excitement of the approach to the fortress and anchoring in its vicinity.

Next came the call to breakfast. But naturally, and quite to Lulu's satisfaction, the talk at the table turned upon the building of the fort, its history and that of the adjacent country, particularly Hampton, two and a half miles distant.

The captain pointed it out to them all as they stood upon the deck shortly afterward.

"Which is Old Point Comfort, papa?" asked Grace.

"That sandy promontory on the extremity of which stands Fortress Monroe," he answered. "Yonder, on the opposite side, is Point Willoughby, the two forming the mouth of the James River; and these are the Rip Raps between the two. You see that there the ocean tides and the currents of the river meet and cause a constant ripple. There is a narrow channel of deep water through the bar, but elsewhere between the capes it is shallow.

"Beyond the Rip Raps we see the spacious harbor which is called Hampton Roads. It is so large that great navies might ride there together."

"And I think some have ridden there in our wars with England?" remarked Rosie, half inquiringly.

"You are quite right," replied the captain; "that happened in both the Revolution and the last war with England."

"In October, 1775, Lord Dunmore, the British governor of Virginia, – who had, however, abdicated some months earlier by fleeing on board a man-of-war, the *Fowey*, – driven by his fears, and his desire for revenge, to destroy the property of the patriots, sent Captain Squires, of the British navy, with six tenders, into Hampton Creek.

"He reached there before the arrival of Colonel Woodford – who, with a hundred Culpepper men, had been sent to protect the people of Hampton – and sent armed men in boats to burn the town; protecting them by a furious cannonade from the guns of the tenders.

"But they were baffled in the carrying out of their design; being driven off by Virginia riflemen, concealed in the houses. Excellent marksmen those Virginians were, and picked off so many of the advancing foe that they compelled them to take ignominious flight to their boats and return to the vessels, which then had to withdraw beyond the reach of the rifles to await reinforcements."

"What is a tender, papa?" asked Grace, as her father paused in his narrative.

"A small vessel that attends on a larger one to convey intelligence and supply stores," he replied; then went on with his account of Dunmore's repulse.

"Woodford and his men reached Hampton about daybreak of the succeeding morning. At sunrise they saw the hostile fleet approaching; it came so near as to be within rifle shot, and Woodford bade his men fire with caution, taking sure aim. They obeyed and picked off so many from every part of the vessels that the seamen were soon seized with a great terror. The cannons were silenced, – the men who worked them being shot down, – and their commander presently ordered a retreat; but that was difficult to accomplish, for any one seen at the helm, or aloft, adjusting the sails, was sure to become a target for the sharpshooters; in consequence many of the sailors retreated to the holds of the vessels, and when their commander ordered them out on the dangerous duty, refused to obey.

"The victory for the Americans was complete; before the fleet could escape, the Hampton people, with Woodford and his soldiers, had sunk five vessels."

"And such a victory!" exclaimed Rosie, in an exultant tone.

"Yes," the captain said, smiling at her enthusiasm.

"Were the houses they fired on the very ones that are there now, papa?" asked Lulu.

"Some few of them," he replied. "Nearly all were burned by Magruder in the Civil War; among them St. John's Episcopal Church, which was built probably about 1700. Before the Revolution it bore the royal arms carved upon its steeple; but soon after the Declaration of Independence – so it is said – that steeple was struck by lightning and those badges of royalty were hurled to the ground."

"Just as the country was shaking off the yoke they represented," laughed Rosie. "A good omen, wasn't it, Brother Levis?"

"So it would seem, viewed in the light of after events," he answered with a smile.

"Papa, can't we visit Hampton?" asked Lulu eagerly.

"Yes, if you would all like to do so," was the reply, in an indulgent tone and with an inquiring glance at the older members of the party.

Everyone seemed to think it would be a pleasant little excursion, especially as the *Dolphin* would carry them all the way to the town; but first they must visit the fortress. They did not, however, set out thither immediately, but remained on deck a little longer gazing about and questioning the captain in regard to the points of interest.

"Papa," asked Grace, pointing in a southerly direction, "is that another fort yonder?"

"Yes," he replied, "that is Fort Wool. It is a mile distant, and with Fortress Monroe defends Hampton Roads, the Gosport navy yard, and Norfolk."

"They both have soldiers in them?" she said inquiringly.

"Yes, daughter; both contain barracks for soldiers, and Fortress Monroe has also an arsenal, a United States school of artillery, chapel, and, besides the barracks for the soldiers, storehouses and other buildings, and covers eighty acres of ground."

"And when was it finished, papa? How long did it take to build it?"

"It is not finished yet," he answered, "and has already cost nearly three million dollars. It is an irregular hexagon – that is has six sides and six angles – surrounded by a tide-water ditch eight feet deep at high water."

"I see trees and flower gardens, papa," she remarked.

"Yes," he said, "there are a good many trees, standing singly and in groves. The flower gardens belong to the officers' quarters. Now, if you will make yourselves ready for the trip, ladies, Mr. Dinsmore, and any of you younger ones who care to go," he added, smoothing Grace's golden curls with caressing hand and smiling down into her face, "we will take a nearer view."

No one felt disposed to decline the invitation and they were soon on their way to the fortress.

It did not take very long to look at all they cared to see; then they returned to their vessel, weighed anchor, and passed through the narrow channel of the Rip Raps into the spacious harbor of Hampton Roads.

It was a lovely day and all were on deck, enjoying the breeze and the prospect on both land and water.

"Papa," said Lulu, "you haven't told us yet what happened here in the last war with England."

"No," he said. "They attacked Hampton by both land and water, a force of two thousand five hundred men under General Beckwith landing at Old Point Comfort, and marching from there against the town, while at the same time Admiral Cockburn assailed it from the water."

"The fortification at Hampton was but slight and guarded by only four hundred and fifty militiamen. Feeling themselves too weak to repel an attack by such overwhelming odds, they retired, and the town was given up to pillage."

"Didn't they do any fighting at all, papa?" asked Lulu in a tone of regret and mortification. "I know Americans often did fight when their numbers were very much smaller than those of the enemy."

"That is quite true," he said, with a gleam of patriotic pride in his eye, "and sometimes won the victory in spite of the odds against them. That thing had happened only a few days previously at Craney Island, and the British were doubtless smarting under a sense of humiliating defeat when they proceeded to the attack of Hampton."

"How many of the British were there, Captain?" asked Evelyn Leland. "I have forgotten, though I know they far outnumbered the Americans."

"Yes," he replied, "as I have said there were about four hundred and fifty of the Americans, while Beckwith had twenty-five hundred men and was assisted by the flotilla of Admiral Cockburn, consisting of armed boats and barges, which appeared suddenly off Blackbeard's Point at the mouth of Hampton Creek, at the same time that Beckwith's troops moved stealthily forward through the woods under cover of the *Mohawk's* guns."

"To draw the attention of the Americans from the land force coming against them was Cockburn's object, in which he was partly successful, his flotilla being seen first by the American patrols at Mill Creek."

"They gave the alarm, arousing the camp, and a line of battle was formed. But just then some one came in haste to tell them of the large land force coming against the town from the rear, and presently in the woods and grain fields could be seen the scarlet uniforms of the British and the green ones of the French."

"Oh, how frightened the people in the town must have been!" exclaimed Grace. "I should think they'd all have run away."

"Most of them did," replied her father; "but some sick and feeble ones had to stay behind – others also in whose care they were – and trust to the supposed humanity of the British; a vain reliance it proved, at least so far as Admiral Cockburn was concerned. He gave up the town to pillage and rapine, allowing the doing of such deeds as have consigned his name to well-merited infamy."

"But to return to my story: Major Crutchfield, the American commander, resolved that he and his four hundred and fifty men would do what they could to defend the town. They were encamped on an estate called 'Little England,' a short distance southwest of Hampton, and had a heavy battery of seven guns, the largest an eighteen-pounder cannon.

"Major Crutchfield was convinced that the intention of the British was to make their principal attack in his rear, and that Cockburn's was only a feint to draw his attention from the other. So he sent Captain Servant out with his rifle company to ambush on the road by which Beckwith's troops were approaching, ordering him to attack and check the enemy. Then when Cockburn came round Blackbeard's Point and opened fire on the American camp he received so warm a welcome from Crutchfield's heavy battery that he was presently glad to escape for shelter behind the Point, and content himself with throwing an occasional shot or rocket into the American camp.

"Beckwith's troops had reached rising ground and halted for breakfast before the Americans discovered them. When that happened Sergeant Parker, with a field-piece and a few picked men, went to the assistance of Captain Servant and his rifle company, already lying in ambush.

"Parker had barely time to reach his position and plant his cannon when the British were seen rapidly advancing.

"At the head of the west branch of Hampton Creek, at the Celey road, there was a large cedar tree behind which Servant's advanced corps – Lieutenant Hope and two other men – had stationed themselves, and just as the British crossed the creek – the French column in front, led by the British sergeant major – they opened a deadly fire upon them. A number were killed, among them the sergeant major – a large, powerful man.

"This threw the British ranks into great confusion for the time, and the main body of our riflemen delivered their fire, killing the brave Lieutenant-Colonel Williams of the British army. But the others presently recovered from their panic and pushed forward, while our riflemen, being so few in number, were compelled to fall back.

"But Crutchfield had heard the firing, and hastened forward with nearly all his force, leaving Pryor and his artillerymen behind to defend the Little England estate from the attack of the barges. But while he was moving on along the lane that led from the plantation toward Celey's road and the great highway, he was suddenly assailed by an enfilading fire from the left.

"Instantly he ordered his men to wheel and charge upon the foe, who were now in the edge of the woods. His troops obeyed, behaving like veterans, and the enemy fell back; but presently rallied, and, showing themselves directly in front of the Americans, opened upon them in a storm of grape and canister from two six-pounders and some Congreve rockets.

"The Americans stood the storm for a few minutes, then fell back, broke ranks, and some of them fled in confusion.

"In the meantime Parker had been working his piece with good effect till his ammunition gave out. Lieutenant Jones, of the Hampton artillery, perceiving that to be the case, hurried to his assistance; but seeing an overwhelming force of the enemy approaching, they – Parker's men – fell back to the Yorktown Pike.

"Jones, who had one cannon with him, found that his match had gone out, and rushing to a house near by he snatched a burning brand from the fire, hurried back, and hid himself in a hollow near a spring.

"The British supposed they had captured all the cannon, or that if any were left they had been abandoned, and drawing near they presently filled the lane; then Jones rose and discharged his piece with terrible effect, many of the British were prostrated by the unexpected shot, and during the confusion that followed Jones made good his retreat, attaching a horse to his cannon, and bearing it off with him.

"He hastened to the assistance of Pryor, but on drawing near his camp saw that it had fallen into the possession of the foe.

"Pryor had retreated in safety, after spiking his guns. He and his command fought their way through the enemy's ranks with their guns, swam the west branch of Hampton Creek, and, making a circuit in the enemy's rear, fled without losing a man or a musket.

"Jones had seen it all, and spiking his gun followed Pryor's men to the same place.

"In the meantime Crutchfield had rallied his men, those who still remained with him, on the flank of Servant's riflemen, and was again fighting vigorously.

"But presently a powerful flank movement of the foe showed him that he was in danger of being out off from his line of retreat. He then withdrew in good order and escaped, though pursued for two miles by the enemy.

"That ended the battle, in which about thirty Americans and fifty of the British had fallen. Then presently followed the disgraceful scenes in Hampton of which I have already told you as having brought lasting infamy upon the name of Sir George Cockburn."

"I think he was worse than a savage!" exclaimed Lulu hotly.

"Certainly, far worse; and more brutal than some of the Indian chiefs – Brant, for instance," said Rosie, "or Tecumseh."

"I cannot see in what respect he was any better than a pirate," added Evelyn, in a quiet tone.

"Nor can I," said Captain Raymond; "so shameful were his atrocities that even the most violent of his British partisans were constrained to denounce them."

## CHAPTER IV

Before the sun had set the *Dolphin* was again speeding over the water, but now on the ocean, and going northward, Philadelphia being their present destination. It had grown cloudy and by bedtime a steady rain was falling, but unaccompanied by much wind, so that no one felt any apprehension of shipwreck or other marine disaster, and all slept well.

The next morning Lulu was, as usual, one of the first to leave her berth, and having made herself neat for the day she hurried upon deck.

It had ceased raining and the clouds were breaking away.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" she exclaimed, running to meet her father, who was coming toward her, holding out his hand with an affectionate smile, "so glad it is clearing off so beautifully; aren't you, papa?"

"Yes; particularly for your sake, daughter," he replied, putting an arm about her and bending down to give her a good-morning kiss. "Did you sleep well?"

"Yes, indeed, papa, thank you; but I woke early and got up because I wanted to come on deck and look about. Where are we now? I can see land on the western side."

"Yes, that is a part of the Delaware coast," he answered. "We are nearing Cape Henlopen. By the way, do you remember what occurred near there, at the village of Lewis, in the war of 1812?"

"No, sir," she said. "Won't you please tell me about it?"

"I will; it is not a very long story. It was in March of the year 1813 that the British, after destroying such small merchant craft as they could find in Chesapeake Bay, concluded to blockade Delaware bay and river and reduce to submission the Americans living along their shores. Commodore Beresford was accordingly sent on the expedition in command of the *Belvidera*, *Poictiers*, and several smaller vessels.

"On the 16th of March he appeared before Lewis in his vessel, the *Poictiers*, and pointing her guns toward the town sent a note addressed to the first magistrate demanding twenty live bullocks and a proportionate quantity of hay and of vegetables for the use of his Britannic majesty's squadron. He offered to pay for them, but threatened in the event of refusal to destroy the town."

"The insolent fellow!" cried Lulu. "I hope they didn't do it, papa?"

"No; indeed, they flatly refused compliance and told him to do his worst. The people on both sides of the bay and river had heard of his approach and armed bodies of them were gathered at points where an attack might be expected. There were still among them some of the old soldiers of the revolution, and you may be sure they were ready to do their best to repel this second invasion by their old enemy. One of these was a bent old man of the name of Jonathan M'Nult. He lived in Dover, and when, on the Sabbath day, the drums beat to arms, he, along with men of every denomination to the number of nearly five hundred, quickly responded to the call, took part in the drill, and spent the whole afternoon in making ball-cartridges.

"The people of all the towns of the vicinity showed the same spirit and turned out with spades and muskets, ready to take part in the throwing up of batteries and trenches, or to fight 'for their altars and their fires' – defending wives, children, and other helpless ones. At Wilmington they built a strong fort which they named Union.

"This spirited behavior of the Americans surprised Beresford, and for three weeks he refrained from any attempt to carry out his threat.

"During that time Governor Haslet came to Lewis and summoned the militia to its defence. On his arrival he reiterated the refusal to supply the British invaders with what had been demanded.

"Beresford repeated his threats and at length, on the 6th of April, sent Captain Byron, with the *Belvidera* and several smaller vessels, to attack the town.

"He fired several heavy round shot into it, then sent a flag of truce, again demanding the supplies Beresford had called for.

"Colonel Davis, the officer in command of the militia, repeated the refusal; then Byron sent word that he was sorry for the misery he should inflict on the women and children by a bombardment.

"To that a verbal reply was sent: 'Colonel Davis is a gallant officer, and has taken care of the ladies.'

"Then Byron presently began a cannonade and bombardment and kept it up for twenty-two hours.

"The Americans replied in a very spirited manner from a battery on an eminence. Davis's militia worked it and succeeded in disabling the most dangerous of the enemy's gunboats and silencing its cannon.

"The British failed in their effort to inflict great damage upon the town, although they hurled into it as many as eight hundred eighteen and thirty-two pound shot, besides many shells and Congreve rockets. The heavy round shot injured some of the houses but the shells did not reach the town and the rockets passed over it. No one was killed.

"Plenty of powder was sent for the American guns from Dupont's at Wilmington, and they picked up and sent back the British balls, which they found just fitted their cannon."

"How good that was," laughed Lulu. "It reminds me of the British at Boston asking the Americans to sell them their balls which they had picked up, and the Americans answering, 'Give us powder and we'll return your balls.' But is that all of your story, papa?"

"Yes, all about the fight at Lewis, but in the afternoon of the next day the British tried to land to steal some of the live stock in the neighborhood; yet without success, as the American militia met them at the water's edge and drove them back to their ships.

"About a month later the British squadron dropped down to Newbold's ponds, seven miles below Lewis, and boats filled with their armed men were sent on shore for water; but a few of Colonel Davis's men, under the command of Major George H. Hunter, met and drove them back to their ships. So, finding he could not obtain supplies on the Delaware shore, Beresford's little squadron sailed for Bermuda."

"Good! Thank you for telling me about it, papa," said Lulu. "Are we going to stop at Lewis?"

"No, but we will pass near enough to have a distant view of the town."

"Oh, I want to see it!" she exclaimed; "and I'm sure the rest will when they hear what happened there."

"Well, daughter, there will be nothing to hinder," the captain answered pleasantly.

"How soon will we reach the point from which we can see it best, papa?" she asked.

"I think about the time we leave the breakfast table," was his reply.

"Papa, don't you miss Max?" was her next question.

"Very much," he said. "Dear boy! he is doubtless feeling quite lonely and homesick this morning. However, he will soon get over that and enjoy his studies and his sports."

"I think he'll do you credit, papa, and make us all proud of him," she said, slipping her hand into her father's and looking up lovingly into his face.

"Yes," the captain said, pressing the little hand affectionately in his, "I have no doubt he will. I think, as I am sure his sister Lulu does, that Max is a boy any father and sister might be proud of."

"Yes, indeed, papa!" she responded. "I'm glad he is my brother, and I hope to live to see him an admiral; as I'm sure you would have been if you'd stayed in the navy and we'd had a war."

"And my partial little daughter had the bestowal of such preferment and titles," he added laughingly.

Just then Rosie and Evelyn joined them, followed almost immediately by Walter and Grace, when Lulu gave them in a few hasty sentences the information her father had given her in regard to the history of Lewis, and told of their near approach to it.

Every one was interested and all hurried from the breakfast-table to the deck in time to catch a view of the place, though a rather distant one.

When it had vanished from sight, Evelyn turned to Captain Raymond, exclaiming, "O sir, will you not point out Forts Mercer and Mifflin to us when we come in sight of them?"

"With pleasure," he replied. "They are at Red Bank. Port Mercer on the New Jersey shore of the Delaware River, a few miles below Philadelphia, Fort Mifflin on the other side of the river on Great and Little Mud Islands. It was, in Revolutionary days, a strong redoubt with quite extensive outworks."

"Did our men fight the British there in the Revolutionary war, papa?" asked Grace.

"Yes; it was in the fall of 1777, soon after the battle of the Brandywine, in which, as you may remember, the Americans were defeated. They retreated to Chester that night, marched the next day toward Philadelphia, and encamped near Germantown. Howe followed and took possession of the city of Philadelphia.

"The Americans, fearing such an event, had put obstructions in the Delaware River to prevent the British ships from ascending it, and also had built these two forts with which to protect the *chevaux de frise*.

"The battle of the Brandywine, as you may remember, was fought on the 11th of September, and, as I have said, the British pushed on to Philadelphia and entered it in triumph on the 26th."

"Papa, what are *chevaux de frise*?" asked Grace.

"They are ranges of strong frames with iron-pointed wooden spikes," he answered; then went on:

"In addition to these, the Americans had erected batteries on the shores, among which was the strong redoubt called Fort Mercer, which, and also Port Mifflin on the Mud Islands, I have already mentioned. Besides all these, there were several floating batteries and armed galleys stationed in the river.

"All this troubled the British general, because he foresaw that their presence there would make it very difficult, if not impossible, to keep his army supplied with provisions; also they would be in more danger from the American forces if unsupported by their fleet.

"Earl Howe, as you will remember, was at this time in Chesapeake Bay with a number of British vessels of war. As we have just been doing, he sailed down the one bay and up into the other, but was prevented, by these fortifications of the Americans, from continuing on up the Delaware River to Philadelphia.

"Among his vessels was one called the *Roebuck*, commanded by a Captain Hammond. That officer offered to take upon himself the task of opening a passage for their vessels through the *chevaux de frise*, if Howe would send a sufficient force to reduce the fortifications at Billingsport.

"Howe was pleased with the proposition and two regiments of troops were sent from Chester to accomplish the work. They were successful, made a furious and unexpected assault upon the unfinished works, and the Americans spiked their cannon, set fire to the barracks, and fled; the English demolished the works on the river front, and Hammond, with some difficulty, made a passage way seven feet wide in the *chevaux de frise*, so that six of the British vessels passed through and anchored near Hog Island."

"Did they immediately attack Forts Mifflin and Mercer, papa?" asked Lulu.

"It took some little time to make the needed preparations," replied the captain. "It was on the 21st of October that Count Donop, with twelve hundred picked Hessians, crossed the Delaware at Cooper's Ferry, and marched to the attack of Fort Mercer. The Americans added eight miles to the extent of their march by taking up the bridge over a creek which they must cross, so compelling them to go four miles up the stream to find a ford.

"It was on the morning of the 22d that they made their appearance, fully armed for battle, on the edge of a wood within cannon shot of Fort Mercer.

"It was a great surprise to our men, for they had not heard of the approach of these troops. They were informed that there were twenty-five hundred of the Hessians, while of themselves there were but four hundred men in a feeble earth fort, with but fourteen pieces of cannon.

"But the brave fellows had no idea of surrendering without a struggle. There were two Rhode Island regiments, commanded by Colonel Christopher Greene. They at once made preparations for defence, and while they were thus engaged a Hessian officer rode up to the fort with a flag and a drummer, and insolently proclaimed, 'The King of England orders his rebellious subjects to lay down their arms; and they are warned that if they stand the battle, no quarter whatever will be given.'

"Colonel Greene answered him, 'We ask no quarter nor will we give any.'

"The Hessian and his drummer then rode hastily back to his commander and the Hessians at once fell to work building a battery within half cannon shot of the fort.

"At the same time the Americans continued their preparations for the coming conflict, making them with the greatest activity and eagerness, feeling that with them skill and bravery must now combat overwhelming numbers, fierceness, and discipline.

"Their outworks were unfinished but they placed great reliance upon the redoubt.

"At four o'clock in the afternoon the Hessians opened a brisk cannonade, and at a quarter before five a battalion advanced to the attack on the north side of the fort, near a morass which covered it.

"They found the works there abandoned but not destroyed, and thought that they had frightened the Americans away. So with a shout of victory, and the drummer beating a lively march, they rushed to the redoubt, where not a man was to be seen.

"But as they reached it, and were about to climb the ramparts to plant their flag there, a sudden and galling fire of musketry and grape-shot poured out upon them, from a half-masked battery on their left flank, formed by an angle of an old embankment.

"It took terrible effect and drove them back to their old intrenchments.

"At the same time another division, commanded by Dunot himself, attacked the fort on the south side, but they also were driven back, with great loss, by the continuous and heavy fire of the Americans.

"The fight was a short one but very severe. Donop had fallen, mortally wounded, at the first fire. Mingerode, his second in command, was wounded also, and in all the enemy left behind, in the hasty retreat which followed, some four hundred in killed and wounded.

"The American galleys and floating batteries in the river galled them considerably in their retreat.

"After the fight was over Manduit, the French engineer who had directed the artillery fire of the fort, was out with a detachment examining and restoring the palisades, when he heard a voice coming from among the killed and wounded of the enemy, saying, 'Whoever you are, draw me hence.'

"It was Count Donop, and Manduit had him carried first into the fort, afterward to a house close at hand, occupied by a family named Whitall, where he died three days afterward.

"Donop was but thirty-seven. He said to Manduit, who attended him till he died, 'It is finishing a noble career early; but I die the victim of my ambition and the avarice of my sovereign.'"

"His sovereign? That was George the Third, papa?" Grace said inquiringly.

"No, Donop was a Hessian, hired out to the British king by his sovereign," replied her father.

"And avarice means love of money?"

"Yes, daughter; and it was avarice on the part of both sovereigns that led to the hiring of the Hessians; the war was waged by the king of England because the Americans refused to be taxed by him at his pleasure and without their consent. He wanted their money.

"Whitall's house, a two-story brick, built in 1748, stood close by the river," continued the captain, "and I suppose is still there; it was, in 1851, when Lossing visited the locality.

"The Whitalls were Quakers and took no part in the war. When the fort was attacked Mrs. Whitall was urged to flee to some place of safety, but declined to do so, saying, 'God's arm is strong, and will protect me; I may do good by staying.'

"She was left alone in the house, and, while the battle was raging, sat in a room in the second story busily at work at her spinning-wheel, while the shot came dashing like hail against the walls. At length one, a twelve-pound ball from a British vessel in the river, just grazed the walnut tree at the fort, which the Americans used as a flag-staff, and crashed into her house through the heavy brick wall on the north gable, then through a partition at the head of the stairs, crossed a recess, and lodged in another partition near where she was sitting.

"At that she gathered up her work and went down to the cellar.

"At the close of the battle the wounded and dying were brought into her house and she left her work to wait upon them and do all in her power to relieve their sufferings.

"She attended to all, friend and foe, with equal kindness, but scolded the Hessians for coming to America to butcher the people."

"I am sure she must have been a good woman," remarked Grace; "but, oh, I don't know how she could dare to stay in the house while those dreadful balls were flying about it."

"No doubt she felt that she was in the way of her duty," replied the captain, "and the path of duty is the safe one. She seems to have been a good Christian woman."

"Yes, indeed!" said Evelyn. "Captain, did not the British attack Fort Mifflin at the same time that the fight was in progress at Fort Mercer?"

"Yes; the firing of the first gun from the Hessian battery was the signal for the British vessels in the river to begin the assault upon the other fort on its opposite side.

"The *Augusta* and several smaller vessels had made their way through the passage in the *chevaux de frise* which Hammond had opened, and were now anchored above it, waiting for flood tide.

"The *Augusta* was a sixty-four gun ship; besides there were the *Merlin*, of eighteen guns; the *Roebuck*, of forty-four; two frigates, and a galley. All these came up with the purpose to attack the fort, but were kept at bay by the American galleys and floating batteries, which also did good service by flanking the enemy in their attack upon Fort Mercer.

"The British deferred their attack upon Fort Mifflin until the next morning, when, the Hessians having been driven off from Fort Mercer, the American flotilla was able to turn its attention entirely upon the British fleet, which now opened a heavy cannonade upon Fort Mifflin, attempting also to get floating batteries into the channel back of the island.

"But Lieutenant-Colonel Smith, a gallant officer in command of the fort, very vigilant and brave, thwarted all their efforts and greatly assisted the flotilla in repulsing them.

"The fire of the Americans was so fierce and incessant that the British vessels presently tried to fall down the stream to get beyond its reach. But a hot shot struck the *Augusta* and set her on fire. She also got aground on a mud bank near the Jersey shore and at noon blew up.

"The fight between the other British and the American vessels went on until three o'clock in the afternoon, when the *Merlin* took fire and blew up near the mouth of Mud Creek.

"The *Roebuck* then dropped down the river below the *chevaux de frise*, and for a short time the Americans were left in undisturbed possession of their forts.

"Howe was, however, very anxious to dislodge them, because the river was the only avenue by which provisions could be brought to his army in Philadelphia.

"On the 1st of November he took possession of Province Island, lying between Fort Mifflin and the mainland, and began throwing up works to strengthen himself and annoy the defenders of the fort.

"But they showed themselves wonderfully brave and patient. Lieutenant-Colonel Smith was as fine an officer as one could desire to see.

"The principal fortification of Fort Mifflin was in front, that being the side from which vessels coming up the river must be repelled; but on the side toward Province Island it was defended by only

a wet ditch. There was a block house at each of its angles, but they were not strong, and when the Americans saw the British take possession of Province Island and begin building batteries there, they felt that unless assistance should be sent to dislodge the enemy, the fort would soon be demolished or fall into his possession."

"But couldn't Washington help them, and didn't he try to?" asked Grace.

"Washington was most desirous to do so and made every effort in his power," replied her father; "and if Gates had done his duty the fort might probably have been saved. Burgoyne's army had been defeated and captured some time before this, and there was then no other formidable enemy in that quarter; but Gates was jealous of Washington and, rather than have him successful, preferred to sacrifice the cause which he had engaged to defend.

"He had ample stores and a formidable force, and had he come promptly to the rescue might have rendered such assistance as to enable Washington to drive the British from Philadelphia and save the forts upon the Delaware.

"But, actuated by the meanest jealousy, he delayed, and would not even return Morgan's corps, which Washington had been but ill able to spare to him.

"Hamilton, sent by Washington to hasten Gates's movements in the matter, grew very indignant at the slow and reluctant compliance of Gates, and by plainly expressing his opinion induced him to send a stronger reinforcement than he had intended.

"Putnam also made trouble by detaining some of the troops forwarded by Gates to assist him in carrying out a plan of his own for attacking New York.

"Governor Clinton then advised Hamilton to issue a peremptory order to Putnam to set those troops in motion for Whitemarsh where Washington was encamped. Hamilton did so, and the troops were sent."

"Dear, dear!" sighed Lulu, "what a time poor Washington did have with Congress being so slow, and officers under him so perverse, wanting their own way instead of doing their best to help him to carry out his good and wise plans."

"Yes," her father said, with a slight twinkle of fun in his eye, "but doesn't my eldest daughter feel something like sympathy with them in their wish to carry out their own plans without much regard for those of other people?"

"I – I suppose perhaps I ought to, papa," she replied, blushing and hanging her head rather shamefacedly; "and yet," she added, lifting it again and smiling up into his eyes, "I do think if you had been the commander over me I'd have tried to follow your directions, believing you knew better than I."

She moved nearer to his side and leaned up lovingly against him as she spoke.

"Yes, dear child, I feel quite sure of it," he returned, laying his hand tenderly on her head, then smoothing her hair caressingly as he spoke.

"But you haven't finished about the second attack upon Fort Mifflin, have you, brother Levis?" queried Walter.

"No, not quite," the captain answered; then went on with his narrative:

"All through the war Washington showed himself wonderfully patient and hopeful, but it was with intense anxiety he now watched the progress of the enemy in his designs upon Fort Mifflin, unable as he himself was to succor its threatened garrison."

"But why couldn't he go and help them with his soldiers, papa?" asked Grace.

"Because, daughter, if he broke up his camp at Whitemarsh, and moved his army to the other side of the Schuylkill, he must leave stores and hospitals for the sick, within reach of the enemy; leave the British troops in possession of the fords of the river; make it difficult, if not impossible, for the troops he was expecting from the North to join him, and perhaps bring on a battle while he was too weak to hope for victory over such odds as Howe could bring against him.

"So the poor fellows in the fort had to fight it out themselves with no assistance from outside."

"Couldn't they have slipped out in the night and gone away quietly without fighting, papa?" asked Grace.

"Perhaps so," he said, with a slight smile; "but such doings as that would never have helped our country to free herself from the British yoke; and these men were too brave and patriotic to try it; they were freemen and never could be slaves; to them death was preferable to slavery. We may well be proud of the skill and courage with which Lieutenant-Colonel Smith defended his fort against the foe.

"On the 10th of November the British opened their batteries on land and water. They had five on Province Island, within five hundred yards of the fort; a large floating battery with twenty-two twenty-four pounders, which they brought up within forty yards of an angle of the fort; also six ships, two of them with forty guns each, the others with sixty-four each, all within less than nine hundred yards of the fort."

"More than three hundred guns all firing on that one little fort!" exclaimed Rosie. "It is really wonderful how our poor men could stand it."

"Yes, for six consecutive days a perfect storm of bombs and round shot poured upon them," said the captain, "and it must have required no small amount of courage to stand such a tempest."

"I hope they fired back and killed some of those wicked fellows!" exclaimed Walter, his eyes flashing.

"You may be sure they did their best to defend themselves and their fort," replied the captain. "And the British loss was great, though the exact number has never been known.

"Nearly two hundred and fifty of our men were killed or wounded. Lieutenant Treat, commanding the artillery, was killed on the first day by the bursting of a bomb. The next day quite a number of the garrison were killed or wounded, and Colonel Smith himself had a narrow escape.

"A ball passed through a chimney in the barracks, – whither he had gone intending to write a letter, – scattered the bricks, and one of them striking him on the head knocked him senseless.

"He was carried across the river to Red Bank, and Major Thayer of the Rhode Island line took command in his place.

"The first day a battery of two guns was destroyed, a block house and the laboratory were blown up, and the garrison were compelled to keep within the fort. All that night the British threw shells and the scene was a terrible one indeed, especially for the poor fellows inside the fort.

"The next morning, about sunrise, they saw thirty armed boats coming against them, and that night the heavy floating battery was brought to bear upon the fort. The next morning it opened with terrible effect, yet they endured it, and made the enemy suffer so much from their fire that they began to think seriously of giving up the contest, when one of the men in the fort deserted to them, and his tale of the weakness of the garrison inspiring the British with renewed hope of conquest they prepared for a more general and vigorous assault.

"At daylight on the 15th two men-of-war, the *Iris* and the *Somerset*, passed up the channel in front of the fort on Mud Island. Two others – the *Vigilant* and a hulk with three twenty-four pounders – passed through the narrow channel on the west side and were placed in a position to act in concert with the batteries of Province Island in enfilading the American works.

"At ten o'clock all was silent, and doubtless our men were awaiting the coming onslaught with intense anxiety, when a signal bugle sounded and instantly all the ships and batteries poured a storm of shot and shell from the mouths of their many guns upon the devoted little garrison."

"Oh, how dreadful!" sighed Grace. "Could they stand it, papa?"

"They endured it with astonishing courage," replied the captain, "while all day long, and far into the evening, it was kept up without cessation. The yards of the British ships hung nearly over the American battery; and there were musketeers stationed in their tops who immediately shot down every man who showed himself on the platform of the fort. Our men displayed, as I have said, wonderful bravery and endurance; there seems to have been no thought of surrender; but long before night palisades, block houses, parapet, embrasures – all were ruined.

"Early in the evening Major Thayer sent all but forty of his men to Red Bank. He and the remaining forty stayed on in the fort until midnight, then, setting fire to the remains of the barracks, they also escaped in safety to Red Bank.

"Lossing tells us that in the course of that last day more than a thousand discharges of cannon, from twelve to thirty-two pounders, were made against the works on Mud Island, and that it was one of the most gallant and obstinate defences of the war.

"Major Thayer received great credit for his share in it, and was presented with a sword by the Rhode Island Assembly as a token of their appreciation of his services there."

"Did not Captain – afterward Commodore – Talbot do himself great credit there?" asked Evelyn.

"Yes; he fought for hours with his wrist shattered by a musket ball; then was wounded in the hip and was sent to Red Bank. He was a very brave man and did much good service during the war, principally on the water, taking vessel after vessel. In the fight with one of them – the *Dragon*– his speaking trumpet was pierced by bullets and the skirts of his coat were shot away."

"How brave he must have been!" exclaimed Lulu with enthusiasm. "Don't you think so, papa?"

"Indeed, I do," replied the captain. "He was one of the many men of that period of whom their countrymen may be justly proud."

## CHAPTER V

Little Ned, who was not very well, began fretting and reaching out his arms to be taken by his father. The captain lifted him tenderly, saying something in a soothing tone, and carried him away to another part of the deck.

Then the young people, gathering about Grandma Elsie, who had been an almost silent listener to Captain Raymond's account of the attacks upon the forts, and the gallant conduct of their defenders, begged her to tell them something more of the stirring events of those revolutionary days.

"You have visited the places near here where there was fighting in those days, haven't you, mamma?" asked Walter.

"Yes, some years ago," she replied. "Ah, how many years ago it was!" she added musingly; then continued, "When I was quite a little girl, my father took me to Philadelphia, and a number of other places, where occurred notable events in the war of the Revolution."

"And you will tell us about them, won't you, mamma?" Walter asked, in coaxing tones.

"Certainly, if you and the rest all wish it," she returned, smiling lovingly into the eager young face, while the others joined in the request.

"Please tell about Philadelphia first, mamma," Walter went on. "You went to Independence Hall, of course, and we've all been there, I believe; but there must be some other points of interest in and about the city, I should think, that will be rather new to us."

"Yes, there are others," she replied, "though I suppose that to every American Independence Hall is the most interesting of all, since it was there the Continental Congress held its meetings, and its bell that proclaimed the glad tidings that that grand Declaration of Independence had been signed and the colonies of Great Britain had become free and independent States – though there was long and desperate fighting to go through before England would acknowledge it."

"Mamma, don't you hate old England for it?" cried Walter impulsively, his eyes flashing.

"No, indeed!" she replied, laughing softly, and patting his rosy cheek with her still pretty white hand. "It was not the England of to-day, you must remember, my son, nor indeed the England of that day, but her half crazy king and his ministers, who thought to raise money for him by unjust taxation of the people of this land. 'Taxation without representation is tyranny.' So they felt and said, and as such resisted it."

"And I'm proud of them for doing so!" he exclaimed, his eyes sparkling. "Now, what other revolutionary places are to be seen in Philadelphia, mamma?"

"There is Christ Church, where Washington, Franklin, members of Congress, and officers of the Continental army used to worship, with its graveyard where Franklin and his wife Deborah lie buried. Major-General Lee too was laid there; also General Mercer, killed at the battle of Princeton, but his body was afterward removed to Laurel Hill Cemetery."

"We will visit Christ Church, I hope," said Rosie. "Carpenter's Hall too, where the first Continental Congress met, and Loxley House, where Lydia Darrah lived in Revolutionary times. You saw that, I suppose, mamma?"

"Yes," replied her mother, "but I do not know whether it is, or is not, still standing."

"That's a nice story about Lydia Darrah," remarked Walter, with satisfaction. "I think she showed herself a grand woman; don't you, mamma?"

"I do, indeed," replied his mother. "She was a true patriot."

"There were many grand men and women in our country in those times," remarked Evelyn Leland. "The members of that first Congress that met in Carpenter's Hall on Monday, the 5th of September, 1774, were such. Do you not think so, Grandma Elsie?"

"Yes, I quite agree with you," replied Mrs. Travilla; "and it was John Adams – himself by no means one of the least – who said, 'There is in the Congress a collection of the greatest men upon the continent in point of abilities, virtues, and fortunes.'"

"Washington was one of them, wasn't he, Grandma Elsie?" asked Lulu.

"Yes, one of the members from Virginia. The others from that State were Richard Henry Lee, Peyton Randolph, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Pendleton, and Patrick Henry. Peyton Randolph was chosen president, and Charles Thomson, of Pennsylvania, secretary."

"And then, I suppose, they set to work on their preparations for fighting their oppressor, George the Third," remarked Lulu, half inquiringly.

"Lossing tells us," replied Mrs. Travilla, "that the delegates from the different colonies then presented their credentials, and after that there was silence, while deep anxiety was depicted on every countenance. It seemed difficult to know how to begin upon the work for which they had been called together. But at length a grave-looking member, in a plain suit of gray, and wearing an unpowdered wig, arose. So plain was his appearance that Bishop White, who was present, afterward telling of the circumstances, said he 'felt a regret that a seeming country parson should so far have mistaken his talents and the theatre for their display.' However, he soon changed his mind as the plain-looking man began to speak; his words were so eloquent, his sentiments so logical, his voice was so musical, that the whole House was electrified, while from lip to lip ran the question, 'Who is he? who is he?' and the few who knew the stranger, answered, 'It is Patrick Henry of Virginia.'"

"O mamma, was it before that that he had said, 'Give me liberty or give me death?'" queried Walter, his eyes sparkling with enthusiasm.

"No, he said that a few months afterward; but about nine years before, he had startled his hearers in the Virginia House of Burgesses by his cry, 'Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First his Cromwell, and George the Third may profit by their example!'"

"And now he was starting the Congress at its work!"

"You are right; there was no more hesitation; they arranged their business, adopted rules for the regulation of their sessions, and then – at the beginning of the third day, and when about to enter upon the business that had called them together – Mr. Cushing moved that the sessions should be opened with prayer for Divine guidance and aid.

"Mr. John Adams, in a letter to his wife, written the next day, said that Mr. Cushing's motion was opposed by a member from New York, and one from South Carolina, because the assembly was composed of men of so many different denominations – Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Quakers, Anabaptists, and Episcopalians, – that they could not join in the same act of worship.

"Then Mr. Samuel Adams arose, and said that he was no bigot and could hear a prayer from any gentleman of piety and virtue who was at the same time a friend to his country. He was a stranger in Philadelphia, but had heard that Mr. Duché deserved that character; so he moved that he – Mr. Duché, an Episcopal clergyman – be desired to read prayers before Congress the next morning.

"Mr. Duché consented, and the next morning read the prayers and the Psalter for the 7th of September; a part of it was the thirty-fifth psalm, which seemed wonderfully appropriate. Do you remember how it begins? 'Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.'"

"It does seem wonderfully appropriate," said Evelyn. "Oh, I'm sure that God was on the side of the patriots, and helped them greatly in their hard struggle with their powerful foe!"

"Yes, only by His all-powerful aid could our liberties have been won, and to Him be all the glory and the praise," said Grandma Elsie, gratitude and joy shining in her beautiful eyes.

"But that wasn't the Congress that signed the Declaration?" Walter remarked, half inquiringly, half in assertion.

"No; this was in 1774, and the Declaration was not signed until July, 1776," replied his mother.

"It seems to me," remarked Lulu, "that the Americans were very slow in getting ready to say they would be free from England – free from British tyranny."

"But you know you're always in a great hurry to do things, Lu," put in Grace softly, with an affectionate, admiring smile up into her sister's face.

"Yes, I believe you're right, Gracie," returned Lulu, with a pleased laugh and giving Grace's hand a loving squeeze.

"Yes," assented Grandma Elsie, "our people were slow to break with the mother country – as they used to call old England, the land of their ancestors; they bore long and patiently with her, but at last were convinced that in that case patience had ceased to be a virtue, and liberty for themselves and their children must be secured at all costs."

"How soon were they convinced of it, mamma?" asked Walter.

"The conviction came slowly to all, and to some more slowly than to others," she replied. "Dr. Franklin, Samuel Adams, and Patrick Henry were among the first to see the necessity of becoming, politically, entirely free and independent.

"It is stated on good authority that Patrick Henry in speaking of Great Britain, as early as 1773, said, 'She *will* drive us to extremities; no accommodation *will* take place; hostilities *will soon* commence, and a desperate and bloody touch it will be.'

"Some one, present when the remark was made, asked Mr. Henry if he thought the colonies strong enough to resist successfully the fleets and armies of Great Britain, and he answered that he doubted whether they would be able to do so alone, 'but that France, Spain, and Holland were the natural enemies of Great Britain.'

"Where will they be all this while?' he asked. 'Do you suppose they will stand by, idle and indifferent spectators to the contest? Will Louis XVI. be asleep all this time? Believe me, no! When Louis XVI. shall be satisfied, by our serious opposition and our *Declaration of Independence*, that all prospect of a reconciliation is gone, then, and not till then, will he furnish us with arms, ammunition, and clothing: and not with them only, but he will send his fleets and armies to fight our battles for us; he will form a treaty with us, offensive and defensive, against our unnatural mother. Spain and Holland will join the confederation! Our independence will be established! and we shall take our stand among the nations of the earth!'"

"And it all happened so; didn't it, mamma?" exclaimed Rosie exultantly; "just as Patrick Henry predicted."

"Yes," replied her mother, with a proud and happy smile, "and we have certainly taken our place – by God's blessing upon the efforts of those brave and gallant heroes of the revolution – as one of the greatest nations of the earth.

"Yet not all the credit should be awarded them, but some of it given to their successors in the nation's counsels and on the fields of battle. The foundations were well and strongly laid by our revolutionary fathers, and the work well carried on by their successors."

"Grandma Elsie, what was the story about Lydia Darrah?" asked Gracie. "I don't remember to have heard it."

"She lived in Philadelphia when the British were in possession there during the winter after the battle of the Brandywine," replied Mrs. Travilla. "She belonged to the Society of Friends, most of whom, as you doubtless remember, took no active part in the war; at least, did none of the fighting, though many helped in other ways; but some were Tories, who gave aid and comfort to the enemy in other ways than by the use of arms."

"What a shame!" cried Walter. "You will tell us about the doings of some of those when you are done with the story of Lydia Darrah, won't you, mamma?"

"If you all wish it," she answered; then went on with her narrative:

"Judging from her conduct at that time, Lydia must have been an ardent patriot; but patriots and Tories alike had British officers quartered upon them. The adjutant-general took up his quarters

in Loxley House, the home of the Darrahs, and, as it was a secluded place, the superior officers frequently held meetings there for private conference on matters connected with the movements of the British troops."

"One day the adjutant-general told Mrs. Darrah that such a meeting was to be held that evening, and that he wanted the upper back room made ready for himself and the friends who would be present. He added that they would be likely to stay late and she must be sure to see that all her family were early in their beds.

"His tone and manner led Mrs. Darrah to think something of importance was going forward, and though she did not dare disobey his order, she resolved to try to find out what was their object in holding this private night meeting, probably hoping to be able to do something to prevent the carrying out of their plans against the liberties of her country.

"She sent her family to bed, according to directions, before the officers came, and after admitting them retired to her own couch, but not to sleep, for her thoughts were busy with conjectures in regard to the mischief they – the unwelcome intruders into her house – might be plotting against her country.

"She had lain down without undressing and after a little she rose and stole softly, in her stocking feet, to the door of the room where they were assembled.

"All was quiet at the moment when she reached it. She put her ear to the keyhole and – doubtless, with a fast beating heart – waited there, listening intently for the sound of the officers' voices.

"For a few moments all was silence; then it was broken by a single voice reading aloud an order from Sir William Howe for the troops to march out of the city the next night and make an attack upon Washington's camp at Whitemarsh.

"Lydia waited to hear no more, for that was sufficient, and it would have been dangerous indeed for her to be caught there.

"She hastened back to her own room and again threw herself on the bed; but not to sleep, as you may well imagine.

"Presently the opening and shutting of doors told her that the visitors of the adjutant-general were taking their departure; then there was a rap on her door. But she did not answer it. It was repeated, but still she did not move or speak; but at the third knock she rose, went to the door, and found the adjutant-general there.

"He informed her that his friends had gone and she might now close her house for the night.

"She did so, then lay down again, but not to sleep. She lay thinking of the momentous secret she had just learned, considering how she might help to avert the threatened danger to the patriot army, and asking help and guidance from her heavenly Father.

"Her prayer was heard; she laid her plans, then at early dawn arose. Waking her husband she told him flour was wanted for the family and she must go immediately to the mill at Frankford for it. Then taking a bag to carry it in, she started at once on foot.

"At General Howe's headquarters she obtained a passport to leave the city.

"She had a five miles' walk to Frankford, where she left her bag at the mill, and hurried on toward the American camp to deliver her tidings.

"It was still quite early, but before reaching the camp she met an American officer, Lieutenant Craig, whom Washington had sent out to seek information in regard to the doings of the enemy.

"Lydia quickly told him her story, then hastened back to the mill for her bag of flour and hurried home with it."

"Mamma," exclaimed Walter, "how could she carry anything so big and heavy?"

"Perhaps it was but a small bag," returned his mother, with a smile. "I never saw or read any statement as to its size, and perhaps the joy and thankfulness she felt in having been permitted and enabled to do such service to the cause of her country may have helped to strengthen her to bear the burden."

"What a day it must have been to her!" exclaimed Evelyn, "hope and fear alternating in her breast; and how her heart must have gone up constantly in prayer to God for his blessing upon her bleeding country."

"And how it must have throbbed with alternating hope and fear as she stood at the window that cold, starry night and watched the departure of the British troops to make the intended attack upon Washington and his little army," said Rosie. "And again when the distant roll of a drum told that they were returning."

"Yes," said Lulu; "and when the adjutant-general came back to the house, summoned Lydia to his room, and when he got her in there shut and locked the door."

"Oh," cried Grace, "did he know it was she that had told of his plans?"

"No," said Mrs. Travilla; "from the accounts I have read he does not seem to have even suspected her. He invited her to be seated, then asked, 'Were any of your family up, Lydia, on the night when I received company in this house?' 'No,' she replied; 'they all retired at eight o'clock.' 'It is very strange,' he returned. 'You I know were asleep, for I knocked at your door three times before you heard me, yet it is certain we were betrayed. I am altogether at a loss to conceive who could have given information to Washington of our intended attack. On arriving near his camp, we found his cannon mounted, his troops under arms, and so prepared at every point to receive us, that we have been compelled to march back like a parcel of fools, without injuring our enemy!'"

"I hope the British did not find out, before they left Philadelphia, who had given the information to the Americans, and take vengeance on her?" said Walter.

"No," replied his mother, "fearing that, she had begged Lieutenant Craig to keep her secret; which he did; and so it has happened that her good deed finds no mention in the histories of that time and is recorded only by well authenticated tradition."

"So all the Quakers were not Tories?" remarked Walter in a satisfied yet half inquiring tone.

"Oh, no indeed!" replied his mother, "there were ardent patriots among them, as among people of other denominations. Nathaniel Green – after Washington one of our best and greatest generals – was of Quaker family, and I have heard that when his mother found he was not to be persuaded to refrain from taking an active part in the struggle for freedom, she said to him, 'Well, Nathaniel, if thee must fight, let me never hear of thee having a wound in thy back!'"

"Ah, she must have been brave and patriotic," laughed Walter. "I doubt if she was so very sorry that her son was determined to fight for the freedom of his country."

"No," said Rosie, "I don't believe she was, and I don't see how she could help feeling proud of him – so bright, brave, talented, and patriotic as he showed himself to be all through the war."

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

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