Brandeis Madeline

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Содержание

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PREFACE

When I began to write these stories about children of all lands I had just returned from Europe whither I journeyed with Marie and Ref. Maybe you don't know Marie and Ref. I'll introduce them: Please meet Marie, my very little daughter, and Ref, my very big reflex camera.

These two are my helpers. Marie helps by being a little girl who knows what other little girls like and by telling me; and Ref helps by snapping pictures of everything interesting that Marie and I see on our travels. I couldn't get along without them.

Several years have gone by since we started our work together and Marie is a bigger girl – but Ref hasn't changed one bit. Ref hasn't changed any more than my interest in writing these books for you. And I hope that *you* hope that I'll never change, because I want to keep on writing until we'll have no more countries to write about – unless, of course, some one discovers a new country.

Even if a new country isn't discovered, we'll find foreign children to talk about – maybe the children in Mars! Who knows? Nobody. Not even Marie – and Marie usually knows

about most things. That's the reason why, you see, though I sign myself

I am really only
Marie's Mother.

DEDICATION

To every child of every land,
Little sister, little brother,
As in this book your lives unfold,
May you learn to love each other.

CHAPTER I
THE CRAIG FAMILY

In the wee village of Aberfoyle, which is in Perthshire County, Scotland, lived Alan Craig, a shepherd.

The sheep of Scotland, like the bagpipes and bluebells, are famous, and in Aberfoyle there are many.

Dotted alongside the road are the bright bluebells, lighting up in true fairy array the darkness made by big, shady trees.

Shrieking through the stillness of a summer evening, comes the sound of the bagpipes. This music is furnished by a tattered piper marching up and down, up and down. He hopes that the people will throw pennies for the love of the tune he plays.

And the sheep, like little dots of white in the green meadows, graze. But sometimes, they, too, shriek when they are herded together, perhaps for the clipping.

When the sheep all bleat together, it sounds very much like the shrieking of the bagpipes. Maybe that is how the bagpipe was really started. Perhaps the sound was first uttered by a herd of Scotch sheep!

It was not yet clipping time on the small farm of Alan Craig. His sheep still roamed the hills. Their heavy, curly wool weighed them down and made them look as if they had on long, woollen nighties.

The babies sometimes walked right under their mothers, and then they were completely hidden.

On a hill sat Alan Craig, and by his side his faithful dog, Roy. Roy was a real sheep dog and was proud of his profession.

You know, when people are called professionals, it means that they are trained in one occupation. Of course, people make money at their professions, and this was the only difference between Roy and a professional human.

Roy was a professional sheep dog, but he did his work out of devotion to his master. Also he did it because it was in his blood to love to race the timid sheep over the hills and obey his master's commands.

"Back, Roy!" shouted Alan Craig.

Roy jumped to his feet and, barking, ran to bring back the flock, which had disappeared around a rocky mountain.

"Bowwow-wow!" The sheep heard him coming and, stupid creatures that they are, started to run the other way. "Bowwow!"

"Down, sir, down!" came the voice of Alan Craig from afar, and Roy understood.

Silently he made a dash for the leading sheep and, bounding ahead of the herd, he stood on guard. His feet were planted apart, and his tongue hung out. He was barking in his own language a short Scotch bark, which meant, "Now, will you go back?"

All but the leading sheep began to turn. That leader was, however, a mother sheep with a loved baby. She had always been very suspicious of Roy.

Perhaps he had once snapped at her baby, for he often had to do this to make the sheep behave. At any rate, the mother sheep could not forgive him. Without any fear, she now sprang toward Roy and butted her head in defiance.

Roy stood his ground and then made a plunge at her legs. Meanwhile, he let out a shrill bark as one of her sharp horns hit his leg. It was a short but hard battle.

At last Roy returned to his master, his tongue nearly sweeping the ground. But there was a triumphant expression in his eyes as he drove the crowd of panting sheep into a circle around Alan Craig and threw himself at his master's feet to await his reward.

This was not long in coming. Alan Craig appreciated his helper. In fact Roy was really the shepherd. Alan had only to speak his commands – "work his dog," as the Scotch say – and Roy did the rest.

Now he stroked his dog and said, "Good, Roy! Well done!"

Alan's language was well understood by Roy, but these words would have sounded this way to you: "Gude, Roy! Weel dune!" had Alan spoken in the Scotch dialect to Roy.

He could speak very good English, and did when he spoke to Englishmen. But you see, Roy was a Scotchman!

From the little white cottage in the hollow came the smell of dinner – fresh pancakes and meat cooking.

Alan picked up his crook – the kind that little Bopeep used – only Alan did not look like little Bopeep. Indeed, he was very different.

He was a big strong man. Although we picture a Scotch shepherd dressed in kilts and socks and perhaps a tam, Alan Craig wore none of these. Kilts and socks and tams are for the gentry, Alan would tell you, and shepherds are too poor to afford them.

So Alan wore an old suit which might have once been worn by your own father and then given away to some beggar. Alan was poor like most of the villagers, for Scotland is rather a poor country.

Still, in the little village of Aberfoyle, everyone was happy. In the evenings the people from the big city of Glasgow came in big buses. They danced outside on the village green to the tune of the pipes, while they gloried in the fresh country air.

So you must not think that Alan Craig and his family suffered. Indeed, there could hardly have been a happier little family in Scotland.

That evening Alan wended his way homeward and was met by his wife and baby. If you have ever seen how an Indian mother carries her baby, then you will know how Mrs. Craig carried hers. Only instead of carrying it on her back as the Indians do, she carried it in front wrapped securely in her plaid shawl.

Her one arm was thus free, and she worked most of the day this way, while knowing and feeling her little one safe in her arms.

The family sat down to dinner in their wee kitchen, for the farmers have no such luxury as a dining room. They started their

soup, a thick broth made of barley and vegetables of all kinds. Mother Craig poured it out of the big tureen.

Just at this time, the door burst open, and a ruddy-faced boy of ten years rushed into the room.

"Ian Craig, do you know the hour?" asked Mother Craig.

The boy stood in the doorway and smiled at the family. He sniffed with delight the pleasant odor coming to him from the table.

"Ay, Mother," answered the boy. "Well do I know."

Then he prepared to take his place at the table, with a gesture of rubbing his stomach in thinking of what was to be put inside.

"What a bonny smell, Mother!" he continued. "And surely the taste is even bonnier!"

"'Tis the glib tongue you have, Ian Craig," laughed his father. "You could write poetry to the smell of a good dinner! And now, what have you to tell us to-night?"

Now, Ian was always full of stories and tales of adventure. He was one of those children to whom something exciting is always happening.

So the family were quite accustomed to having him return home with vivid tales. Some were strange, some droll and, alas, some sad and painful, told to the tune of bandages and arnica.

Still, what boy is not sometimes hurt? And Ian's accidents were few, in comparison to his other experiences. Surely, it is to be wondered how, in a small, quiet town like Aberfoyle, so many wondrous happenings could occur.

Sometimes Ian was doubted, not, however, by his parents, who knew that their son was truthful. The schoolmaster knew it, too, and was proud of Ian, whose stories and poems were the best in his class.

One day he was recounting to a group of spellbound school children his experiences of the day. He was relating what wondrous happenings had befallen him, when he was interrupted by a boy who shouted, "Ian Craig is telling lies!"

The boy was a year older than Ian, but he was never known to make sport of Ian again. Nor did Ian ever admit to his parents how it happened that he arrived home from school that day with a swollen eye.

CHAPTER II
SANDY'S FIRST VISIT

Aberfoyle is the center of the "Rob Roy country." Rob Roy MacGregor was, as every child knows, a great Scotch warrior and represented one of the oldest Highland clans.

In Aberfoyle, where Ian Craig lived, stands the old house in which Sir Walter Scott wrote his famous story "Rob Roy." Today it houses the village minister.

Near by is a tumble-down thatched cottage known as "Jean McAlpin's Inn," where Rob Roy was wont to rest.

A landmark in the village is the old "Rob Roy Brig." Here on the old brig (which means "bridge" in Scotch) Ian would sit when school was out and his chores at home were finished.

Something usually happened when he sat here, and many of his experiences had started from this bridge. Often, while he waited for adventure, Ian fished from the bridge. He brought home fine, fat morsels, for the river Forth, which flows beneath the bridge, is rich in fish.

But Ian's dearest memory was of Sandy. The Sandy adventure had taken place almost a year before, but it was as vivid in Ian's mind as though it had all occurred the day before.

It happened while Ian was fishing from the brig. He heard the sound of bagpipes – a sound that is nothing unusual to hear in

Scotland. Still it always made Ian joyous and sad at once. And now he turned to listen.

This playing was the loveliest he had ever heard. Jamie Robinson played almost every night in front of the old hotel, and Ian loved the music. But this playing was different. He had always thought Jamie's playing good, but he now wondered how he could ever have thought so.

This tune was from far away, but it carried across the meadow and along the road. And then he saw Sandy! Sandy was standing still in the middle of the road while he played.

By his side was a handcart, and Ian knew at once what it meant. Sandy was a wandering piper, a man who has no home, a gypsy. He piped for his living and camped on the road.

Many pipers passed through Aberfoyle, some with large families. In fact, Jamie was one of them, only Jamie did not travel. He lived in the woods near Aberfoyle in a tent with his wife and babies.

But no one had ever played like this before. Ian ran up the road. As he approached the newcomer, he could see that the piper was a little old man. He had a kindly, wrinkled face, and twinkling eyes which winked at Ian as the boy came closer. Then suddenly he changed his tune.

"Bonny laddie, Highland laddie," shrieked the pipes.

Ian stopped in front of the piper and thought he should cry. The music ceased.

A hand was laid on Ian's shoulder, and a voice asked, "And

why, laddie, do you stand and look with eyes so big and sad?"

Ian then realized that he had been staring as if in a trance. He brought himself back to earth, smiled, and put out his hand.

"I'm sorry, sir. I was only admiring your bonny piping!"

"Ach!" laughed the piper. "And I was only admiring the bonny laddie! What's your name?"

"Ian Craig."

"And mine's Sandy. You may call me Sandy, though my name's really Evert Robert MacKeith MacGregor, and my great-grandfather was a cousin to the great Rob Roy."

With these words, Sandy MacGregor put his pipes into his cart. Then, slinging the rope over his shoulders, he started to pull his load along, while Ian kept step with him.

"And a fine village this is – the scene of my ancestor's home! Do you live here, my lad?"

"Ay, Sandy, and not far from old Rob Roy Brig."

"Well, well," sighed Sandy. "And could we bide a wee on the old brig of my ancestor while Sandy rests?"

"Ay, could we," said Ian with great delight, "and I can pull your cart for you, Sandy, until we get there."

Gratefully the old man allowed the boy to pull his load, while he stretched his tired arms. He breathed in the sweet-smelling air of the village of his ancestor.

When they came to the bridge, Ian put down the cart. He invited Sandy to sit beside him on the wall, his usual perch. The old man jumped up to the boy's side, as spry as the boy himself,

and looked around.

"Well, well," he said, "and to think 'tis Sandy's first visit to the home of his ancestor – Sandy who has been nigh all over the land!"

At these words Ian's heart gave a bound, and he said, "Have you seen nigh all of bonny Scotland, Sandy?"

"Ay, that have I, lad, and traveled on my own two feet through it all."

"Sandy," said Ian wistfully, "would you be telling me about it?"

"Ach, ay, laddie," smiled the old wanderer. "That would I, for 'tis many a fine sight these old eyes have seen."

Sandy talked, and the boy listened. The sun grew lower and lower in the heavens. Ian Craig thought that never before had he known an afternoon to slip by so quickly.

Sandy told Ian about the time he had visited Edinburgh, Scotland's capital, and one of the most attractive cities in the world.

He told of Princes Street, with its sunken gardens on one side, and its wonderful view of historic Edinburgh Castle, its pretty shops and stately monuments. It is considered by many to be the most beautiful street in all the world.

On the top of a winding hill is Edinburgh Castle. Here, in the courtyard of the old castle is Half-Moon Battery, where is kept the one-o'clock gun.

This gun fires every day at the hour of one. It is attached by

electric wire to the time ball on the top of Nelson's Monument on Carlton Hill opposite. This ball falls, in turn, at a signal from Greenwich Observatory, near London, where is set the time for the whole world.

In another part of the castle grounds can be found a pathetic little plot of ground known as "The Dogs' Cemetery." Here are buried the pets of the soldiers who fought in the World War.

Many of these little beasts were gallant heroes and were buried with great reverence. Lovely flowers decorate their graves, and inscriptions tell of each one's valor.

But to one little dog in particular was a fountain erected. It stands in one of the streets of Edinburgh. This fountain represents "Greyfriars' Bobby," as the little dog was called.

He was given this name because it was to the old Greyfriars Churchyard that he went, day after day, to seek his master, who was buried there. The caretakers of the cemetery tried to keep him out.

Still day after day he came. He always lay upon the grave of his master and grieved, until one day they found him dead. And now the fountain is there to remind the people of this faithful little creature.

CHAPTER III
PIPERS

"Do you think my dog would grieve if I should die?" asked Ian, as he brushed away a tear with his sleeve and tried to distract Sandy's attention from his action.

"Ay, if you treat him kindly, lad," answered the old man. "Beasties are faithful to us when they know we love them."

"Ay," said Ian. "Roy is faithful, and a smart sheep dog, too."

"Do you like fine to herd the sheep, laddie?" asked Sandy.

Ian hung his head.

"No, Sandy. I like finer to go about and have adventures and make up that I am – " He hesitated.

"What, lad? Speak. Do not be afraid of Sandy for he knows the hearts of laddies well."

"If I could play the pipes, Sandy, I would go away and be a piper in the band some day," confessed Ian.

This was, indeed, a dream so near to his heart that he had never before spoken it aloud. After the admission, Ian turned his head away and did not look at Sandy. But the old man's voice was very soft and his tone caressing, as he said, "And a fine dream it is, Ian lad, for to be a piper is a great and honored calling."

"Ay," answered Ian huskily, "but 'tis not for me, Sandy."

Sandy turned the boy around then and looked him squarely

in the eye.

"Ian, lad, do not speak so, for nothing is too hard to get when you want it."

Ian's eyes lighted up for a moment. Then the same forlorn look came into them as he let his head droop.

"No, Sandy. The pipes are too dear, and it takes many months to learn to play."

"And you study hard at school, lad?" asked the piper.

"Ay, do I," spoke the boy.

"Then some day, you'll be liking to hear of the fine military school I saw."

"Ach, Sandy, tell me about it. Have you really seen it?" Ian was at once alert.

"Ay, that have I, and only three weeks ago when I was passing by Dunblane."

As the poor little village lad drank in his words, Sandy talked on about the wonderful school in Dunblane. This school is called the Queen Victoria School. Here lads between the ages of nine and fifteen are trained as soldiers.

They are sons of military men, some of whom fell in the World War. These boys are reared and taught free of charge. It is a great and good school for a boy to attend.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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