

The ancestry of Washington Irving reaches back to the days of Robert Bruce, who, when a fugitive from the court of Edward I., concealed himself in the house of William De Irwin, his secretary and sword-bearer. William De Irwin followed the changing fortunes of his royal master; was with him when he was routed at Methven; shared his subsequent dangers; and was one of the seven who were hidden with him in a copse of holly when his pursuers passed by. When Bruce came to his own again he made him Master of the Rolls, and ten years after the battle of Bannockburn gave him in free barony the forest of Drum, near Aberdeen. He also permitted him to use his private badge of three holly leaves, with the motto, *Sub sole sub umbra virens*, which are still the arms of the Irving family. Our concern, however, is not with the ancestors of Irving, but with his father, William Irving, who was from Shapinsha, one of the Orkney Islands, and who, on the death of his mother, determined to follow the sea. He was born in 1731, a year before Washington, and, when his biographers find him, was a petty officer on board of an armed packet-ship in the service of his British Majesty, plying between Falmouth and New York. At the former port he met and became enamored of Sarah Sanders, a beautiful girl about two years younger than himself, the only daughter of John and Anna Sanders, and granddaughter of an English curate named Kent. They were married at Falmouth, May 18, 1761, and two years and two months later embarked for New York, leaving the body of their first child in an English graveyard. William Irving now abandoned the sea, and, entering into trade, was prospering in a small way when the Revolution broke out. His house was under the guns of the English ships of war in the harbor, so he concluded to remove to the country, and took refuge with his family in Rahway, New Jersey. He was safer, perhaps, than he would have been in New York; but business was at an end. He was pointed out as a rebel, and British troops were billeted in his best rooms, while the family was banished to the garret; so he made up