

GERALD DE LACEY'S DAUGHTER

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE OF COLONIAL DAYS

BY ANNA T. SADLER

CHAPTER VI

THOMAS GREATCH, SMUGGLER AND PIRATE

On the streets of the town, during those closing years of the seventeenth century, a certain type of men was to be seen, easily distinguishable from all others.

During the régime immediately preceding that of Lord Bellomont, the smugglers had grown bold, being under the patronage, it was said, of those in authority.

This announcement of his was the chief subject of conversation at every dinner table in the town, and in the taverns where men of all shades of opinion met for the discussion of public, and sometimes private, affairs.

The member of this calling, who appeared under the tree of Der Halle tavern that day, was a broad, thick-set man, with a coarse and strongly marked countenance, upon which smallpox had set its seal.

would have lost no time in possessing himself of such a gem, and with scant ceremony to its owner.

His companion's eyes followed the direction of the pipe-stem to where fleecy masses of cumuli, like the unshorn wool of many lambs, were crowding together in masses upon the azure expanses of sky.

Greatbatch, however, continued to chuckle and mutter to himself, as he watched those placid oarswomen, with their caps tied under their chins and no other head-covering to protect them from the sun.

Greatbatch laughed a scornful laugh. "Parlous," he echoed, "since ever I was a lad in my teens, I have lived in the teeth of pe-ill; and if you mean by that danger to the body, I snap my fingers thereat."

Greatbatch laughed a deep hoarse laugh, for well he knew that the euphemism was but a paltry way to describe those daring deeds of his, some of which might be called crimes, but in which, in so far as it was safe, he gloried.

Governor wants to enforce navigation laws and to confiscate ships and cargoes for the customs dues.

And he laughed long and loud at the dismay which was visible on the countenance of Mynheer, that means bad weather, and a signal to Captain Greatch to make sail before it comes.

Mynheer had noticed with consternation that, even as the man spoke, a gentleman strode out from the tavern and occupied a place not far removed from them on the other side of the tree.

After an instant of astonishment, a look of humorous intelligence crossed Ferrers' face. The man and his costume proclaimed his profession, which was henceforward forbidden.

"He is a man of books, and takes little part in the affairs of these colonies. A most agreeable fellow to meet, but he goes not at all into society. He lies low now. For he came out at first to these parts with Dongan."

interested in a debatable point, that they procure those cargoes of costly merchandise, which, as I have heard tell, often include jewels of price, gold and the finest of stuffs?"

As Mynheer did not at once reply, since he knew that that question cut into the very heart of the subject, Ferrers lightly closed the discussion.

"I pray your forgiveness," he said, "for entering upon a topic which to be sure, and at least in so far as I am concerned, is purely local."

"What a very extraordinary figure those market-women cut, and how skilfully, if placidly, they use the oars!"

Following his lead, Mynheer discovered upon that topic, presently pointing out, however, that the great clouds presaging high winds were banked up to the west, behind the pile of great rocks.

GATE OF HEAVEN

Joseph Carey in Boston Pilot

We had been climbing all day, slowly but steadily, and it was just about sundown when we reached the Half Way House. It was a rude but comfortable shack, one of the many established by the Alpine Society for the accommodation of mountain climbers who must camp for a night on a climb of some of the higher mountains.

While the other four members of the party were comparatively fresh—they being accustomed to this sort of travel—I was thoroughly exhausted. My only consolation was that I had had sense enough to refuse from the beginning to attempt the summit of the mountain, but had only agreed after much urging, to go to the Half Way House.

The path thus far had been fairly easy and always safe, but the path on the following day's journey to the summit would afford some serious difficulties to the novice. In fact, the Gross Glockner is one of the highest mountains in the Lower Alps, and its snows give rise to one of the largest glaciers in the world.

My companions, as I said, were in the best of spirits, while I was inclined to be grouchy, owing to the excessive and unusual fatigue which I had experienced.

"That's a good name for this place. It is really a step from this place to the pearly gates. See, the clouds are away down in the valley below us!"

"I hope it will be better than the stuff we have been drinking all day," I answered. I had reference to a concoction which he had used in his mountains. A flask was filled with cold water and a generous portion of tea leaves was placed therein.

I don't know why I had been induced to take that dangerous trip by nature I am a conservative and hate to risk my life. I have always considered mountain climbing in the same category as ballooning and aviation and racing in automobiles.

TO BE CONTINUED

you fellows to try it with your experience in mountain climbing—but for me—it would be out of the question."

"Not at all," spoke up Carlton, "we will all be roped together."

"Then Ben's care to risk your valuable neck on the glacier, and perhaps it is just as well not to attempt it without experience, come with us at least to the Half Way Hut. You can remain there for the night and the following morning we can go up to the summit, while you wait for us at the hut. The experience will be a pleasant one for you. The climb is not hard, and the views are superb. By all means join us."

"I am surprised," I went on severely, "that your bishops allow you to run wild like this."

"So in a rash moment I consented to go to the Half Way House, which as a matter of fact proved to be about a three quarter way house. It was a steady climb of more than twelve hours, allowing time for lunch by the way. The views were, as they said, superb. Great snow-capped mountains towered over us, while in the valleys below the fertile fields were green as the hollows of waves, especially in contrast with the snowy crests of the peaks above.

The quarter laughed at this. They had their steel-tipped Alpine stocks in their hands, and a stout rope with which each would be tied to his fellow. They had their heavy hobnailed mountain shoes and all the other apparatus necessary to the successful attainment of the heights.

The caretaker of the hut advanced to greet us with the customary phrase of the Tyrolean on his lips. "Gross Gott," he said, "Praise God."

He was a man of about middle age, but he did not seem to have the robust frame of the mountaineer. In fact the first impression I received, was that he was possibly a man who had come to the mountains for his health, and had accepted the light duties of caretaker as a means of eking out his existence. I noticed that his hand, as he extended it in greeting, was soft and white, more like the hand of a clerk or a professional man than the rough and calloused hand of the ordinary mountaineer. His German, too, even to my unpracticed ear, was distinctly different from the Tyrolean dialect—a fact which my more experienced friends noticed at once.

"This fellow," remarked one of them in an undertone, "is not a Tyrolean. He talks as if he came from Vienna."

He stood before us silently awaiting our orders, and Carlton, who was much as I did when in German, ordered as a joke, a very fancy meal, which he knew could not be found in the mountains. Our host smiled, as he saw the humor of the situation, and then said: "Gentlemen, for meat we have only bacon and canned beef. Which will you have?"

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