

THE TREASURE OF CAVE HILL.

A fair morning, such as can only be seen in our changeable Irish climate, was that which in the year of grace 1556, and the month of July, gave promise of a lovely day. The charm of the morning was matched by the beauty of the scenery encircling the spot where Lord Sussex, Her Majesty's Governor of Ireland, had pitched his camp.

Looking downwards, the eye rested on green woods stretching to the shore, save where here and there a break in the tree-tops indicated a more open glade, in which the cattle of the wandering croaghts found pasture, while betwixt the trees and the water's edge lay a belt of firm sand, against which the waters of Belfast Lough were rippling in the summer sunshine. On the other side the tree-clad hills of Down rose dark above the shore, while their rounded tops were lost to view in a filmy haze that enveloped and floated round them like a bridal veil. To the right, as keeping sentinel watch across the sparkling waters, rose the heath-covered sides of Dunne Vadegan, crowned by McArt's Fort, and on the left, the round, swelling hill of Coille, while stretching inland behind lay a broken country of swelling hills, with darker stretches of forest land between, far as the eye could reach, till the rising uplands met the sky.

Such was the morning and such the scene when the bugle sounded the "reville" to rouse the soldiers of Sussex camp for the duties of the day.

"A plague upon that bugler's wind-pipe," grumbled Oliver Passelaw, a stout man-at-arms, who like many another adventurous spirit of that time had preferred seeking his fortune in the Irish wars to adventuring for it on the Spanish Main, as many a gallant heart was then doing.

"They might very well have given us an extra hour's rest, now that we are lying in camp, after the marching we have had through this infernal country of woods and morasses," answered Jack Russell, who felt called upon to reply to his companion's grumble, although it was addressed to no one in particular.

"I was just dreaming of that story," resumed the other, "which the herdsman who brought the drove of cattle into camp yesterday told Sergeant Martell, about the Chief of Clannaboy having his treasures hid in one of the caves that are in the hill above us there, when that cursed bugle started me up."

"I'll warrant you for dreaming of broad pieces, but you never thought of telling me this story of the treasure that you heard, I suppose you would have been adventuring for it yourself had it not slipped out of you by chance. I wouldn't have kept it from you?"

"I wasn't keeping it from you," replied Passelaw, hastening to mollify his companion, "for as thou knowest I was called upon to accompany Sir Henry Sidney to Knockfergus, while thou wert lying in the sun, or diverting thyself at the dice, but if I had a wary march of it, the time was not in sooth altogether wasted, for while our good knight was engaged at the castle, I even took a stroll about the town until I discovered among the native huts a place where they sold usquebaugh, and from the resort of the soldiers they can speak our language in a sort."

"Didn't thou make any inquiries from them if the report were true?" exclaimed the now interested man-at-arms.

"That I did, after washing down my throat with the liquor, which as thou knowest is somewhat smoky, but comes not amiss in this damp climate where good ale is not to be had. I put question to the dame if she had ever heard of this treasure, and she told me that in a great cave on Dunne Vadegan, Mac-I-Neill Boy, as she called O'Neill, had deposited the wealth of the Clan."

"From whence came the treasure? There was but little sign of such wealth with any of the croaghts or their chiefs that we have met on our marches."

"According to the good wife's account, long before the Saxons entered the country, to rob and spoil the people of Erin, gold and silver was abundant, but since the land has been cursed with the stranger the source from whence these came has either been hidden or disappeared, but as a store in time of need, and also to avoid tempting those who might be disposed to plunder them, their chief has had the treasure of Clannaboy placed in one of the caves."

"Knowest thou if any guard is set on the treasure?"

"Trust Oliver Passelaw, comrade, I trow he does not carry his wits in the pocket of his jerkin. This dame is a widow, whose husband was called Rory Oge, of the sept of the Mac-Artanes. He had been a gallowglass in the service of O'Neill until he got killed in a raid on the McDonnells, leaving this woman to provide us best she can her family by selling usquebaugh."

"A truce to thy old wives' tales, and say if there be a guard on the treasure," said Russell.

"I was coming to that if you had let me. She said that two or three of the chief's most trusted followers were always ranging about that part of the mountain where the cave was situated, accompanied by several of the strongest and most fierce of the wolf dogs. She also hinted that other than earthly guards watched over the treasure itself, and that if anyone were to meddle with it, save the rightful owners of the true Irish race, they would meet an evil fate."

"And there be witchcraft in it. We'll brave their heathen sells and trust to our good swords to keep us 'gainst horn and kern."

"If thou art in mood for the adventure we shall set out when free, after morning duty, and climb the hill in daylight, for we can then see what the dangers are, and I confess

that I have no stomach for 'acing their witchcraft or whatever spells they may have wrought in the darkness."

According to arrangements the comrades set out when free after their morning parade, but having deemed it wise to be prepared as well as possible for meeting the unknown dangers which might be encountered in their raid upon O'Neill's treasures, they took with them a comrade as devil-may-care and adventurous as themselves, named Harry Audley. Proceeding along a rude trail made through the bushes and more open clearings by the croaghts when changing their cattle from pasture to pasture, they reached the swelling ground which indicated their arrival at the foot of the hill, where, aided by the underwood and some hard climbing, they made their way up the ascent, cheering themselves with visions of the treasure to be won when the cave was reached.

Fortune smiled on the bold adventurers, for when about commencing the ascent, the two clansmen who were charged with the duty of keeping ward over the treasure of Clannaboy had deserted their post. While making their rounds the brace of trusty wolfhounds accompanying them had started a wolf that happened to be prowling about — off went the dogs in full pursuit, and after them followed the swift-footed clansman carried away by the ardor of the chase, forgetting the treasures, forgetting their chief, and forgetting the punishment short and sharp which Mac-I-Neill Boy dealt out to those whom he caught neglecting their duty. It was not until well on their way to Ligonell, which was the direction the chase happened to take, that Owen O'Gilmore, being thoughtful of the consequences of leaving the cave unguarded, they instantly halted and the other clansman, an O'Neill, wound his horn to recall the dogs, who returned after some time, panting and blown with their rapid chase, they then hurried back with all speed to the cave, only to find that it had been visited by one or more and rifled in their absence.

Great was their consternation on beholding the brushwood, with which the mouth of the cave had been filled, pulled out and trampled, while a glance at the interior showed that the chests containing the treasure had been broken open and rifled. Their examination which occupied much less time than it takes to write it, being over they sailed forth to track the robbers: O'Neill as they went sounding a call upon his horn, till the rocks echoed again, to give the alarm and summon to his assistance any of the clansmen who might happen to be within hearing in the neighborhood.

In the absence of the sentinels the Englishmen had without any great difficulty found the cave, and making their way in had made short work of the iron banded treasure chests by smashing them in with a large stone which they found lying convenient, they then proceeded to load themselves with the spoil which consisted principally of gold and silver ornaments of an antique make, ingots of gold and silver, together with a small quantity of coin.

The adventurers had never beheld such riches before, and were highly elated over their good fortune, as well as the immunity which had for so far attended their exploit, but nevertheless like the experienced campaigners that they were, made all possible haste to get away from so dangerous a neighborhood, to a place where they could divide their booty in safety. They had proceeded however but a short way down the hillside, when they were startled by O'Neill's horn summoning assistance, and no very long time elapsed till they were spied by the keen-eyed clansmen who urged on their wolf-dogs in pursuit, and hurried after them as speedily as possible.

Seeing this the Englishmen resolved to make the best defence of which the circumstances would admit, taking their stand upon a small shelf or ledge, having a descent in front so steep as to be unapproachable, while the hill rose equally precipitous behind them, thus their position was secured in front and rear, and they could only be attacked on either side.

The wolfhounds at the word of command, sprang down the hill and fiercely attacked the invaders, with bristling hair and bared fangs giving Russell and Passelaw for some time enough to do to keep the animals from their throats, Audley standing behind as a reserve, ready to render assistance to his comrades, or take either of their places if necessary.

The ledge on which they had taken up their position was so narrow as not to admit of more than two being abreast, without the outer man in the excitement of the fray, being in danger of going over the edge.

Matters remained in this state during the few minutes necessary for the clansmen to arrive on the spot where the wolf-dogs were gallantly waging an unequal war, when one of them making an unusually fierce spring at the throat of Russell fixed his fangs in the arm which the man had half involuntarily thrown up to protect himself, while he drove his sword into the body of the animal.

To withdraw the weapon and plunge it again more deeply into his assailant, was the work of an instant, the hound gallant to the last made another effort to seize his adversary's throat, then exhausted from the loss of blood partly slid of the sword blade as it was being withdrawn, and with a few convulsive movements on the earth covered with his blood, went rolling down the steep incline.

The Irishmen on coming up at this juncture, were doubly enraged by the slaughter of the hound, in addition to the loss of the treasure and O'Gilmore shouting his war cry, with battleaxe uplifted, made a desperate onset upon Russell who was about to turn to the help of his comrade against the remaining animal, but the fierce charge made by this new adversary obliged him to devote all his energies to self-defence. A tremendous blow of the heavy axe, aimed at his head by the furious clansman, he avoided by springing back barely in time, while the swing of the weapon missing its mark caused O'Gilmore to lose his footing on the ground, rendered slippery by the blood of the dog, and he also rolled off the narrow ledge with a half strangled cry, which was cut short by the rapidity of his descent down the declivity. Russell by good luck victorious twice, lost no time in turning to his comrade's assistance, upon which O'Neill seeing no prospect of continuing the attack with any hope of success, called off the remaining wolf-dog and proceeded rapidly towards the bottom of the hill.

The adventurers wasted no time in gathering up their plunder and making for the camp, their progress being accelerated by hearing a horn amidst the woods sounding a call to guide those who might be hastening to the assistance of the guardians of the treasure.

The descent was safely accomplished, with the exception of a few bruises caused by falls and blows from branches, which their haste did not permit them taking time to avoid in their anxiety to get away from such a dangerous neighborhood. Upon arriving at the foot of the Hill of Caves, they paused for a moment to regain their breath and reconnoitre if any of the natives were in sight. All appearing quiet they resumed their journey, laden with spoil wherewith to dazzle their less adventurous comrades upon their return.

Meanwhile Hugh MacPhelim (O'Neill) had not been idle while the plundering Sassenaghs were bearing away the treasures of the clan. The fall of his comrade having rendered immediate success out of the question, he hastened for succour with a speed to which the dread of Mac-I-Neill Boy's wrath lent wings, and which would of a surety be poured out on his unlucky head. Mingled with this was his feeling of wounded personal pride together with the honor of his clan to be retrieved, and the horn which the Englishman had heard with his signal. Two gallowglass, with their attendants, who had heard the first call while hunting in the woods below, and hastened to respond, now came up.

"Welcome to you, Phelim Duff and you Shane Oge, your help was never more needed, for the Sassenagh sons of thieves have stolen the treasure from Ban Iudra, and are now carrying off that which has come down to our chiefs for a thousand years."

"Evil be their death, and a short life to them, may the spears in battle draw the red blood from them, and the wolves feast upon their corpses," exclaimed he whom O'Neill had addressed Phelim Duff.

"May the blessed saints never interfere for us if we make not a meal for the carrion crows of the robber bodaghs," said Shane Oge.

A third gallowglass now arrived on the scene, who was at once despatched for further assistance to some croaghts whose cattle were pasturing near by, while the others hurried on to get in advance and ambush the adventurous Sassenaghs who had robbed them.

Being unnumbered and thoroughly knowing the ground enabled them soon to get ahead unperceived and place themselves in an advantageous position. The spot chosen was admirably suited to their purpose, being a bit of rising ground not too thickly studded with oak trees, having an undergrowth of bushes and fern which afforded a favorable cover; it was this way that the track ran by which they had come, and along the same path they were now returning. The arrangements for the ambush had scarce been completed when the enemy was heard approaching. The hunters were armed with their spears and bows and arrows, while O'Neill had his battleaxe, one of the most formidable of native Irish weapons.

The soldiers advanced in single file along the narrow way with as much speed and as little noise as possible, any converse carried on being in guarded tones hardly above a whisper, when suddenly without warning they were saluted by the twang of a bowstring on either side of the path. The buffcoat worn by Passelaw afforded him sufficient protection against the shaft sent by a weak native bow, but the archer on the other side was more successful, and gave Audley a slight wound on the muscular part of the arm, while O'Neill with his hot Celtic blood burning for revenge, hurled a spear, which he had borrowed from one of the hunters, with such force as drove it clean through Russell who was leading, he threw up his arms, and falling forward the butt of the weapon struck the ground, causing him to fall over on his side with the spear point projecting behind.

Audley and Passelaw not knowing the strength of the attacking force, and unable to advance or retreat, placed themselves back to back resolved to die fighting. O'Neill shouting his war-cry sprang forward and attacked Passelaw with the utmost fury, but paying more attention to his adversary than to his footing, stumbled over the spear shaft projecting from the body of Russell and fell. This fall would assuredly have been his last, had it not been that as the soldier was stepping forward to despatch him, his brave hound sprang at the enemy in his master's defence. This momentary diversion enabled the athletic clansman to spring to his feet, and while the other was hampered by the onset of the dog he clove him to the chin.

The events narrated happened so rapidly that Audley was unable to help his comrade: the other gallowglasses in the meantime had thrown aside the bows, and snatching spears

from their followers transfixed the unlucky remaining adventurer.

The fight was hardly over and the victors commenced to collect their spoil, when the messenger sent for reinforcements arrived followed by a number of herdsman armed with staff and midge, who if too late for the battle were in time to assist in stripping the soldiers of such of their apparel as was worth taking, not forgetting their weapons. This being accomplished, the warriors loaded the treasure on the shoulders of the herdsman, and proceeded back with it to the place from whence it had been taken.

On the way up one of the bearers who from his disposition was known as Phelim managed to conceal a number of valuables in the folds of the shaggy brown garment which served him as clothing. This theft passed unnoticed, so excited were they with their recent contest and victory, and they continued their ascent until coming near the ledge where their first skirmish had taken place, when they saw a man who to their great surprise turned out to be none other than O'Gilmore, who had been left for dead on the mountain side, while the pursuit of the robbers was being followed up.

"I must have him as dead for some time," said he, in answer to their questions, "but life again stirred my heart, I opened my eyes and looked around to find that all had gone, and then I lay for some time to gather strength before trying to make my way down, when I saw you coming up—have you killed the sons of thieves?"

After making the injured man as comfortable as the circumstances admitted, they proceeded to the cave where O'Neill saw as he thought, the mass of ancient ornaments consisting of torques, brooches, frontlets, arm rings, gold and silver ingots, restored to their former receptacles which he made fast as well as he could, then proceeded to close the mouth of the cave and obliterate any traces of footstep about it as well as possible.

While he was doing this the herdsman had stolen away with the booty he had managed to secure, and with characteristic cunning resolved to deposit it in McArt's Fort as the safest hiding place. The fort being a haunt of the fairies, whose well-known jealousy of mortals trespassing upon the particular spots which they frequented, ensured its security, and freedom from interference by any of the natives.

The stolen valuables remained deposited in this spot for a considerable time, when on proceeding to remove them a curious thing happened, and to anyone acquainted with the Sidh (fairy) race what might be expected; whether the gentle folk were desirous of retaining the treasure, or incensed at the desertion of their elfin ring cannot be told; it was enough for Phelim that he had no sooner commenced to remove the treasure, than he heard such awful sounds as caused him to quake: he hurriedly attempted to gather it up, when there came past him a blast of wind, and an unseen hand dealt him a blow on the side of the head that almost knocked him over. With a yell he fled down the mountain side, never looking behind him until he reached his hut. What became of the plunder which he held fast through all his terror is not known; perhaps the fairies had it turned into a handful of withered leaves, when he went to look at it again, as they have been known to do, or it may have met the fate usually ascribed to ill-gotten gains, but a portion of the treasure in the form of an ingot of silver and part of a richly-carved

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silver bracelet, which his sudden alarm had caused him to leave behind, remained on the spot until accidentally dug up about fifty years ago.

Having departed from the main (read of the narrative to relate the adventure of the herdsman, who was so unlucky as to provoke the fairy power, we leave to the imagination of the reader to decide whether O'Neill and O'Gilmore were punished by the Chief for their carelessness in deserting their post, or whether he rewarded O'Neill for the bravery and generosity displayed by him in recovering the treasures of Clannaboy after they had been stolen from the Hill of Caves.—Irish Weekly.

THE LYRIC SAINT.
By Brother Justin.

As age on age its course doth take
Adown the ceaseless flow of time,
Thy name and fame are kept awake,
O minstrel maid, in every clime.

Upon thine arm doth rest the lyre,
Whence gusheth the sily'ry liquid
That led thy soul, with ardent fire,
On wings of love to God's own fame.

With Christ's pure love thy soul did thrill,
That waked the chords to mellow strain—
No fierce love might from them rob
The faintest breathing of refrain.

With scintillating nimbus crowned,
Forth'ward thou'lt chant the subtle plaint,
Hailed by encircling seraphs round—
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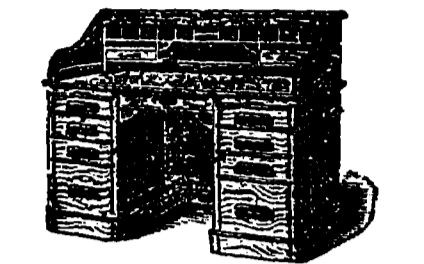
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SUPERIOR COURT.

Dame Wilhelmine Anne Marie Jean Charles, of the City and District of Montreal, wife dotele et commune en biens quant aux acquets, of Marie Clement Pierre Celestin Mathieu Raymond Beullac, manager, of the same place, duly authorized to ester en justice, has, this day, instituted an action in separation as to property, against her said husband.

(Signed)
A. McNAUGHTON STEWART,
Attorney for Plaintiff,
Montreal, April 17th, 1900.
41-5