

# THE CRAFTSMAN,

AND

## CANADIAN MASONIC RECORD.

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### A TALE OF THE BLACK FORREST.

TOLD ROUND A CAMP FIRE.

It is nearly twenty years ago since what I am about to relate took place—to me it seems like so many hours, and the memory of it is now as fresh and vivid to my mind as if it had happened yesterday. Often during my lonely rides through the dark, gloomy forest, or when lying by the camp fire watching the bright sparks flying upwards towards heaven, and listening to the melancholy howl of the native dog, in fancy I see the sweet, gentle face of Alice Griffiths, so soft and womanly in its every expression, with nothing to indicate her courage and resolution except a certain fire in her eyes, only seen there in her rare moments of deep and intense excitement. Then those lustrous and winning orbs in their fathomless depths, would blaze with a light almost fierce in its grandeur, as sudden in its coming as in its going, betraying an unexpected strength of character more akin to the daring determination of a bold man, quick of action and ready in emergency, than to the yielding nature of a simple girl, trusting to and dependent on others in moments of extreme danger. Rather tall, slightly and elegantly formed, very girlish in both manners and disposition, with what is so seldom seen together—dark blue eyes and fair golden hair, a clear, bright complexion, and a mouth perfectly bewitching in its loveliness—she had the beauty and grace of a Madonna, combined, as you will hear, with courage and presence of mind to an extent I never met with in any other woman, and of which any man might have been justly proud. She and her brother Arthur lived together on a station not very far from Kilmore, but in rather an unfrequented part of the country at that time. Their home-station was beautifully, almost romantically, situated. In front, a wide creek twisted and turned through a clear open flat of about half a mile in width, its course marked by the foliage of many a stately gum tree, and here and there clumps of wattle trees, dark in their winter beauty, but gay and bright when clad in their brilliant summer blossoms. At the back, within a few yards of the house, a black, dense forest of stringy bark trees frowned on the lovely scene in front, like some evil genii scowling on a lovely Peri. Alice