ROY IN THE MOUNTAINS

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Roy in the mountains by William S. Claiborne

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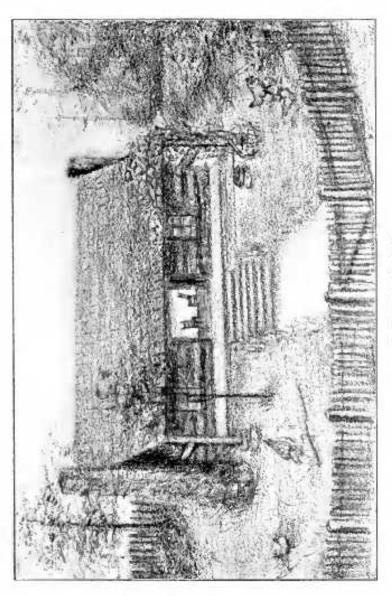
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WILLIAM S. CLAIBORNE

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BY

WILLIAM S. CLAIBORNE

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ROY'S BOYHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

Roy spent his boyhood among the red hills and gulleys of a Virginia plantation. The country had not yet begun to rally from the effects of the Civil War; houses were abandoned, farms were neglected and grown up in blackberry bushes and sassafras, and provisions were scarce. Naturally, his father and mother talked often of the good old times before the war, but their conversation had little interest for the hungry growing boy.

Bad as their condition was, however, it was made even worse by an unexpected calamity that fell upon them. A man highly regarded by all the people of

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ROY IN THE MOUNTAINS

the community and trusted by Roy's parents, defrauded the county out of thousands of dollars and escaped to Mexico. Roy's father and grandfather had to pay the bills. It took everything they had. Even the kitchen utensils and household furniture were put up at public auction and sold. But the bills were paid, though there was little left to the family, save honor.

Just across the road from Roy's home stood a deserted house, which with its plantation was owned by a Northern man, but had been abandoned during those years of strife and bloodshed. Again and again this dilapidated house and those neglected fields had been the topic of conversation in Roy's home. The excitement and curiosity in the fam-

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AFTER THE WAR