

**HISTORIC
FREDERICKSBURG: THE
STORY OF AN OLD TOWN**

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Historic Fredericksburg: The Story of an Old Town by John T. Goolrick

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JOHN T. GOOLRICK

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ON THE WILDERNESS BATTLEFIELD
President Harding, John T. Coolidge and Gen. Snoddy D. Butler

HISTORIC FREDERICKSBURG

The Story of an Old Town

By
JOHN T. GOOLRICK
AUTHOR OF
"The Life of General Hugh Mercer"
"Irishmen in the Civil War"
Etc.

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FREDERICKSBURG

A Preface



FREDERICKSBURG SPRAWLS at the foot of the hills where the scented summer winds sweep over it out of the valley of brawling waters above. The grass grows lush in the meadows and tangles in the hills that almost surround it. In spring the flowers streak the lowlands, climb on the slopes, and along the ridges; and Autumn makes fair colors in the trees, shading them in blood crimson, weathered bronze, and the yellow of sunsets.

Over its shadowed streets hangs the haze of history. It is not rich nor proud, because it has not sought; it is quiet and content, because it has sacrificed. It gave its energy to the Revolution. It gave its heart to the Confederacy; and, once when it was thundered at by guns, and red flames twisted in its crumbling homes, it gave its soul and all it possessed to the South. It never abated its loyalty nor cried out its sorrows.

In Fredericksburg, and on the battlefields near it, almost thirty thousand men lay on the last couch in the shadowy forests and—we think—heard Her voice calling and comforting them. To the wounded, the Old Town gave its best, not visioning the color of their uniforms, nursing them back to life: And, broken and twisted and in poverty, it began to rebuild itself and gather up the shattered ideals of its dead past.

Out of its heart has grown simple kindness; out of its soul simple faith.

As I look out over the streets, (I knew them well when Lee and Jackson and Stuart, Lincoln and Grant and Hancock

knew them too), they shimmer in the Autumn sun. Over them, as has ever seemed to me, hangs an old and haunting beauty. There may not be as great men here as long ago, but here are their descendants and the descendants of others like them. And he who comes among them will find loyal hearts and warm hand-clasps.

Ah, I know the old town. My bare feet ran along its unpaved walks and passed the cabins many a time in slavery days. I knew it in the Civil War and reconstruction days, and on and on till now: And it has not failed its duty.

Fredericksburg's history brims with achievement and adventure. It has not been tried in this volume to tell all of these. I have tried to tell a simple story, with the flame of achievement burning on the shrines and the echoes of old days sweeping through it, like low winds in the pine woods; to make men and women more vivid than dates and numbers. I have tried to be accurate and complete and to vision the past, but above all, I have loved the things of which I have written.

There is no possibility of expressing the gratitude the author feels for the aid given him by others, but he must say, briefly, that without the assistance of Miss Dora Jett, Mrs. Franklin Stearns, Mrs. John T. Goolrick, and Dr. J. N. Barney, Mr. Chester B. Goolrick and Mr. John T. Goolrick, Jr., the book could not have been made as readable as we hope the public will find it. We owe just as deep thanks to Miss Sally Gravatt of the Wallace Library.

JNO. T. GOOLRICK.

Fredericksburg, Va.,
October 25, 1921.

INTRODUCTION

REV. ROBERT CAMPBELL GILMORE.



AS A PUBLIC SPEAKER of wide reputation, especially on Southern themes, Hon. John T. Goolrick, Judge of the Corporation Court of Fredericksburg, Va., needs no introduction. It is my privilege to introduce him as a writer of history to an ever widening circle of readers. Other men can gather facts and put them in logical order, but few can give the history of the old town of Fredericksburg such filial sympathy and interest, such beauty of local color, as can this loyal son.

The father, Peter Goolrick, a man of fine education, came from Ireland and made his home in Fredericksburg, and was mayor of the town.

The son has always lived here. The war between the States came in his boyhood. His first connection with the Confederacy was as a messenger at the Medical Department headquarters of General Lee. Growing old enough and tiring of protected service he enlisted in Braxton's Battery of Fredericksburg Artillery. He was wounded at Fort Harrison, but recovering, returned to his command and served to the end of the war as "a distinguished private soldier," and surrendered with "The last eight thousand" at Appomattox. Since the war he has been prominently connected with Confederate affairs. At one time he was Commander of the local Camp of Veterans and is now on the staff of the Commander of all the Veterans of the South and Virginia.

After the war young Goolrick studied law, was elected Judge of the Corporation Court of Fredericksburg, and of the County Court of Spotsylvania, served for a time as Commonwealth's Attorney of Fredericksburg, and later was re-elected