

**WALKS ABOUT ST.  
HILARY, CHIEFLY  
AMONG THE POOR**

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Walks about St. Hilary, chiefly among the poor by Charlotte Champion Pascoe

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**CHARLOTTE CHAMPION PASCOE**

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HILARY, CHIEFLY  
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# Walks about St. Hilary,

CHIEFLY AMONG THE POOR,

BY

CHARLOTTE CHAMPION PASCOE.

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*"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor, yea, she reacheth forth her hands  
to the needy."*

*"In her tongue was the law of kindness."*

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EDITED BY

C. G. B. R. AND M. R.

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1879.

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## TO THE READER.

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**T**HE MSS. from which this volume is compiled were given to her sister, Miss Willyams, by Mrs. Pascoe, on the eve of her departure from St. Hilary, the home of fifty years.

They were addressed in the form of letters to the friend of her youth, Mrs. Benjamin Wood (*née* Michell, of Truro), and were begun in 1836, and carried on at various intervals during the ten following years.

In September, 1875, Miss Willyams thus writes of them:—"Some of these 'Walks' were transcribed and forwarded to the writer at Carnanton, and, at her death, sent for revision to our cousin, Charlote Rogers. I have undertaken the remainder with the hope of furnishing a correct transcript, from which to procure a few printed copies for gifts to the attached friends of my loved sister. To the devoted friend, Mary Rogers, who was to her almost as a daughter, I must leave the arrangement, as I fear my failing powers may be unequal to the task." This proved to be the case. The venerable sister did not live to see the work accomplished, although she reached the age of ninety-one.

It only remains to be added, with regard to the following pages, that such memorials of love and kindness need no apology or commendation from those who have now, to the best of their ability, fulfilled the pleasant labour of arranging them, and whose tender and life-long affection, both for the writer and her subject, must be their plea for presenting you with these "Walks about St. Hilary," by a beloved kinswoman and friend.

C. G. B. R. and M. R.

September, 1879.

## WALK I.

MAY 12, 1836.

*Frog Street. A Ghost! Mary Bosence and her sister Kitty.*

**I**T is not in compliment to you, dearest Maria, nor to Queen Charlotte, that I record first a walk to Frog Street, a title no one knows how bestowed, and far from graphic, unless you happen to inspect narrowly the rivulet that flows between the pathway and a richly-flowered hedge, and should spy clusters of embryo frogs which nestle among the water-cress, and it must be owned do not much whet one's desire to gather it. I may venture to say it was not indebted for its name to any native wit, for then it would have been "Quilkin" Lane (that most ingenious combination of letters signifying frog in Cornish), far less to 'Un Avis Williams, whom three years ago, everybody, and I among the rest, used to visit for the sake of the monthly rose that covered her cottage from end to end; her bright little vixen of a canary, and the surprising set-out of the chimney-piece with curiosities brought from beyond seas by her bachelor son, who then resided with her. Frog Street must have had a more sophisticated sponsor than any of these; not improbably, one of the visitors at the great house on the hill, to the proprietor of which these few cottagers have been tenants, time out of mind; aye, even beyond the time when it was occupied by Chancellor Penneck, whose ghost, residing in and about the great, walled grave, at the end of our church, is said to show his temper occasionally, by raising the wind in a terrific manner.

So much for the direction of our walk; its object was to enquire after the health of Mary Bosence. This is not her present name, indeed, but it seems to be the charter of valuable servants to retain the name which their good character has rendered honourable.

Mary was nursery maid at Tregembo for many years,—one of those domestic factotums who think and feel, as well as act; and who, when they marry, carry into their cottages the wholesome habits of gentleman's service—order, cleanliness, and reverence for their betters. I do suppose that Mary never seriously



displeased her mistress but once, and that was when she received the addresses of Robert Carter, a handsome young miner, although a widower with a child or two. But my sister Anne is a just woman, kind to Mary in her distress, whom she has heartily forgiven; I therefore do not mean to make *her* my text for a few animadversions on the unreasonableness of those mistresses who take upon themselves to resent the settling in life of a favourite servant. To such I say, they have no right to be angry at the favourite's lending an ear to the addresses of an honourable suitor, unless they are prepared to whisper in the other ear, "I mistress, take thee maid, to have and to hold, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part." Few mistresses, I suspect, would witness with the affectionate endurance of Robert (when he returns from Bal at Huel Vor, ten miles out and home) the utter helplessness of poor Mary from a spine case; fewer still would incur the burthen of maintaining one to wait upon her. Mary's handmaid is her own sister Kitty, who left her place immediately on hearing of the affliction in this family, and has ever since sustained in it the several posts of nurse, mother, and housekeeper. "She asks for nothing, ma'am, of us," said Mary, "but her living, which is poor enough; and a pair of shoes now and then—that indeed, she does not *ask* (but it is sad to see her diminishing what she had looked to against age and sickness); so, when he sees her shoes are coming poor, Robert goes and buys her a pair." Kitty must not expect any help from her late master; so indignant is he at her abruptly depriving him of the services of a valuable cook, that he has peremptorily forbidden her to enter his doors. Who can blame him when they consider that her successor may not fry his fish, or mash his turnips so much to his taste? for saith not that master of the heart, Lord Byron, "some men will set a house on fire in order to roast their chesnuts."

We had not visited Mary for a long while on account of the small-pox, fearing the infection for Kate;\* and coming in we had met three of her children, hand-in-hand, in the lane, all marked, some pitted in the face. One would think with five children lately suffering from this malignnant malady, and with a spine case herself, that regret for the loss of beauty would hardly have found place: she smiled, apologetically, I own, as she observed of a prettyish-looking boy, "*he* is the most marked of the whole, the only good-looking one, too."

\* A niece and adopted child, the writer's constant companion.

## WALK II.

MAY, 1836.

*A runaway horse. Happy old age. Little ones in charge.  
A burned child.*



AFTER a congratulatory visit to the lying-in room, at Tregembo, we called in at Mary Hodge's. Sick or well, Monday or Saturday, she is always in what is called "apple-pie order," though I could never understand the appropriateness of the phrase. This one thing is certain, it does not imply either *hastiness* or *exultiness*, as far as Mary Hodge is concerned. She had been sadly frightened by the running away of the Tregembo cart-horse, or, more properly speaking, carriage-horse, who, conceiving himself too fine to draw a cart, had taken to his "high-mettled heels" all the way down Relubus Lane. Mothers ran out, terrified to death; every one of them sure that her own youngest was under the wheels. Happily, the indignant steed was brought up by his coming in contact with the angle of a cottage-wall, which shook so that they said the "geranjas" within were upset, the pots broken, and the good woman sent to bed from fright.

On our homeward way, we dropped in to see 'Un Hannah Allen. This sweet, mild-looking old woman deserves the compliment paid to her by her children, who prefer being charged with her maintenance to seeing her abandoned to the Workhouse. These good people do not *know* it, but what a sweet lesson they are daily reading to their children, who, you can see, dearly love "Grannie;" and how surely will the benefit be paid back into their own bosoms, when they come to want the indulgence which they now accord so unostentatiously.

In such cases, however, let the daughter-in-law have her due share of praise, and that a very large proportion; for, besides suffering in common from this invasion of their slender means, all the attendance which age requires, all the forbearance which its slowness, its infirmities demand, fall to *her* share.

Shame upon us of higher condition, that it should be commonly asserted, "No two generations can continue to dwell together in unity." If this be true (as I

fear, with few exceptions, it has been proved to be,) all I can say is, "Let them pay a visit to 'Un Hannah and Betsey Allen." Next door to these worthies dwells Betsey Simmons, but she had gone to market to buy a pair of shoes apiece for six *such* tiny beings, so young and helpless. Helpless! Never judge from outward appearances. The eldest of the batch, about seven years old, was left in charge of the house; the baby, a cripple boy (no better than a baby), and two little girls of that age when they are said to be "just got out of the way," but which appears to me the precise time when they are always *in* the way—able to run about, and to catch up knives, and to dabble with the fire. On this occasion, little Kitty and the cripple were packed into the window-seat, brandishing a knife from one hand to the other, and then scuffling for its possession. The young housekeeper, meanwhile, lighted the fire with a piece of tallow, which she stuck burning into the just-opened drawer, making repeated excursions to and from the cradle, to borrow a handful of straw from the baby's loose paillasse, and leaving a train of combustibles each time. Yet, no doubt, the mother found all safe on her return; whereas, I have known the finest house in this county (Nanswhyden) burnt to the ground, though every room but one, and that from whence the fire proceeded, was avowedly provided with stone arches, to guard against such a catastrophe. Sometimes, however, such instances of reckless trust, as that which I have just recorded, prove fatal, as in the following sad story.

Left to take care of his little sister—charged against touching the fire,—Jem put on the child's bonnet, sent her out to play, and carefully secured the door. On the mother's return, he lay on the floor, it is hardly hyperbole to say, burnt to a cinder.

The predominant feeling, strange to say, in so young a breast, was remorse; for the dear child had always been remarkable for his regard to truth. "Mother, I have told a lie," he shrieked out at the sight of her, alluding to his promise of not going near the fire. "I have told a lie, and for that I am burnt." "He prayed fervently," said the poor mother, "like any full-grown Christian, for mercy, and at length became calm, remarking that all would be burnt up one day—the bed, the world itself, and there would be an end of all. Well, that don't matter, mother, do it, if all go to heaven?" He enquired if he might sing, inviting his mother to join him. "No, my child, I cannot sing," said the broken-hearted mother, who shed bitter tears at the relation of the same. He sang a verse of a hymn by himself. "I think, mother" ('twas "mother" every moment with him), I believe,