

# **THE TALE OF A PLAIN MAN**

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The Tale of a Plain Man by William A. Stone

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**WILLIAM A. STONE**

**THE TALE OF  
A PLAIN MAN**



THE TALE  
*OF A*  
PLAIN MAN

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*William A. Stone*

1917

COMPLIMENTS OF THE AUTHOR



## THE TALE OF A PLAIN MAN.

In writing these memoirs at the request of my children and grandchildren I am not influenced by the thought that they will ever be read except from a sense of filial duty, but having the time I am simply going to try to relate what happened to me in a long life. There is no adventure nor romance in my life. It has been simply an ordinary life like most lives.

WILLIAM A. STONE.





## CHAPTER I.

### Childhood.

I have no recollection of being born, but from what has been told me, and other evidence I am convinced that I was born on the 18th day of April, 1846, in Delmar Township, Tioga County, Pennsylvania. My father was a widower when he married my mother by which circumstance I had a half sister and three half brothers. He was a small farmer on a fifty-acre farm and his best crop was children—not in quality perhaps, but quantity, at least the neighbors thought there was enough of us. We were not bad children, but somewhat shiftless, and indifferent to the opinion of the neighbors. My earliest recollection was being hustled out of bed early in the morning by my half brothers to see Santa Claus as he galloped over the brow of the hill in his sleigh behind his reindeers in a scud of blinding, flying snow. I thought I could see him and hear the bells on the reindeers. The others said they could see him and hear the bells jingling. They pointed him out to me and I saw or was persuaded to see him. Afterwards I had some doubt whether I did see him. We often see things through the influence and insistence of others that we cannot see when they are not with us. Santa did not bring me much that Christmas morning, two round bullseye candies and some doughnuts in the shape of elephants and horses. But that was as much as the others got, and it was enough. We were as happy and proud of Santa's gifts as any children could be, and had no doubt of the existence of Santa Claus. The doughnuts looked somewhat like a horse, and we had

never seen an elephant. The next thing that I recall is a slight punishment for Sabbath breaking. My father and mother were very pious God-fearing people and worshipped at the Schoolhouse Meetings, regardless of the denomination of the preacher. My birthday came on Sunday and it was thought by the other boys that something should be done to celebrate it, so I was provided with pole, line, hook, and bait, and caught a fine trout out of the brook running through the farm. When I took it home in great glee to show what I had done I was brought face to face, for the first time, with the enormity of Sabbath desecration. It was a very serious matter, and my father and mother held consultation over it. Finally, I was sentenced to remain in the house all the balance of the day. It made a great impression on me, which I have never outgrown. I am a fisherman. I love the sport and have fished all of my life, more or less, but I have never fished on Sunday since my birthday fishing and its punishment. I have done a great many worse things than to fish on Sunday, I have no doubt, but I have not done them on Sunday. I could never bring myself to play cards nor any other game on Sunday. While I am not prepared to say that it is wrong when not done in public, yet my father and mother believed it to be wrong, and they were honest God-fearing people who not only had my love and veneration, but my respect. Things began to happen then that I recall very vividly. I shall not relate them all, but only those that impressed me most profoundly. Some two hundred feet from the house was a well of water without any curb or cover over it. My mother, a gentle, quiet, sympathetic soul, with more tears than temper, long suffering and kind, had a hard time with those overgrown, unruly half brothers of mine. There were three of them, with about two years difference in their ages, the youngest