

**DUFFELS**

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Duffels by Edward Eggleston

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**EDWARD EGGLESTON**

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BY

EDWARD EGGLESTON

AUTHOR OF

THE FAITH DOCTOR, THE HOOSIER SCHOOLMASTER, ROXY, ETC.



NEW YORK  
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY  
1893

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## PREFACE.

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THE once famous Mrs. Anne Grant—known in literature as Mrs. Grant of Laggan—spent part of her childhood in our New York Albany, then a town almost wholly given to traffic with the aborigines. To her we owe a description of the setting out of the young American-Dutch trader to ascend the Mohawk in a canoe, by laborious paddling and toilsome carrying round rifts and falls, in order to penetrate to the dangerous region of the tribes beyond the Six Nations. The outfit of this young "bushloper," as such a man was called in the still earlier Dutch period, consisted mainly of a sort of cloth suited to Indian wants. But there were added minor articles of use and fancy to please the youth or captivate the imagination of the women in the tribes. Combs, pocket mirrors, hatchets, knives, jew's-harps, pigments for painting the face blue, yellow, and vermilion, and other such things, were stored away in the canoe, to be spread out as temptations before

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the eyes of some group of savages rich in a winter's catch of furs. The cloths sold by the traders were called duffels, probably from the place of their origin, the town of Duffel, in the Low Countries. By degrees the word was, I suppose, transferred to the whole stock, and a trader's duffels included all the miscellany he carried with him. The romantic young bushloper, eager to accumulate money enough to marry the maiden he had selected, disappeared long ago from the water courses of northern New York. In his place an equally interesting figure—the Adirondack guide—navigates single-handed the rivers and lakes of the "North Woods." By one of those curious cases of transference that are often found in etymology, the guide still carries duffels, like his predecessor; but not for Indian trading. The word with him covers also an indefinite collection of objects of manifold use—camp utensils, guns, fishing tackle, and whatnots. The basket that sits in his light boat to hold his smaller articles is called a duffel basket, as was the basket of sundries in the trader's canoe, I fancy. If his camp grows into a house frequented by sportsmen, there will be a duffel room to contain all manner of unclassified things.

Like the trader of old New York, I here open my kit of duffels. I have selected from the shorter tales written by me since I began to deal in the fancy wares of a writer of fiction only such as seem

to have elements of permanent interest. I find their range to be wide. They cover many phases of human nature; they describe life in both the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries; they are of the East and of the West, of the North, the Middle, and the South. Group or classify them I can not; they are too various. Some were written long ago, in my younger manner, and in the tone prevailing among the story-writers of those days. Opinions and sentiments are inextricably interwoven with some of these earlier stories that do not seem to be mine to-day. But a man in his fifties ought to know how to be tolerant of the enthusiasms and beliefs of a younger man. I suspect that the sentiment I find somewhat foreign to me in the season of cooler pulses, and the situations and motives that seem rather naïve now, had something to do with the acceptability of the stories. The popularity of these early tales in their day encouraged me to go on, and a little later to set up in more permanent and wholesale business as a novelist. To certain of these stories of my apprenticeship I have appended dates to explain allusions in the text. Other stories there are here, that are of recent production, and by these I am willing to be judged. The variety in subject, manner, date, location, makes proper to them the title I have chosen—a good word with a savor of human history and an odor of the New World about it; a word yet in living use in



this region of lakes and mountains. I am not without hope that some of my duffels will please.

If formal dedications were not a little old-fashioned, I should give myself the pleasure of writing on one of these pages the name of my friend Mr. Richard Watson Gilder. I have read with delight and sincere admiration the poems that have given him fame, but they need no praise of mine. The occasion of my mentioning his name here is more personal—it was by his solicitation that I was seduced, nearly a quarter of a century ago, into writing my earliest love story. I may say, perhaps without pushing the figure too far, that on his suggestion I first embarked in the light canoe of a dealer in duffels.

E. F.

JOSHUA'S ROCK, LAKE GEORGE, 1893.

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