PIRATES' GLEN AND DUNGEON ROCK

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Pirates' Glen and Dungeon Rock by Nathan Ames

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NATHAN AMES

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Trieste

PIRATES' GLEN

AND

DUNGEON ROCK.

BY

NATHAN AMES.

Here up the winding stream they bore,
And buried in their dungeon glen,
The beauteous captive and the store
Of gold from murdered men;—
Till vengeance came; though late, at last it came;
Blood flowed for blood and deeds without a name!

Canto I, Stanza VIII.

BOSTON:
REDDING & COMPANY.
1853.

DEDICATED

TO THE

MEMORY OF MY MOTHER.

Fond Spirit, was it all a phantasy,
  The dear delusion of a world-sick brain,
  That once, sore-racked upon thy bed of pain,
Thou didst look up and say, all cheerfully;—
"Weep not, my son, when I am gone, for me;
  Our spirits are united by a chain
  Of kindred links Death cannot rend in twain!
And, though unseen, thy Mother still shall be
Thy guardian—near thee!"—From the world of Bliss,
  O, might thy gentle Spirit, hovering now
Above me, even in thought, vouchsafe for this,
  As for my boyhood babblings, on my brow,
With smile approving, one maternal kiss—
  It were enough!—Thou wilt; for thou art—thou!

June, 1853.

PREFACE.

For the historical foundation of the following poem, the writer is indebted to that highly entertaining and most excellent work, *The History of Lynn, including Nahant; by Alonzo Lewis,—The Lynn Bard.* The Pirates' Glen and Dungeon Rock are thus described by him:—

"This year [1658] there was a great earthquake in New England, connected with which is the following story. Some time previous, on one pleasant evening, a little after sun-set, a small vessel was seen to anchor near the mouth of Saugus river. A boat was presently lowered from her side, into which four men descended, and moved up the river a considerable distance, when they landed and proceeded directly into the woods. They had been noticed by only a few individuals; but in those early times, when the people were surrounded by danger, and easily susceptible of alarm, such an incident was well calculated to awaken suspicion, and in the course of the evening the intelligence was conveyed to many houses. In the morning, the people naturally directed their eyes toward the shore, in search of the strange vessel—but she was gone, and no trace could be found either of her or her singular crew.

"It was afterward ascertained that, on that morning, one of the men at the Iron Works, on going into the foundry, discovered a paper, on which was written, that if a quantity of shackles, handcuffs, hatchets, and other articles of iron manufacture, were made and deposited, with secrecy, in a

certain place in the woods, which was particularly designated, an amount of silver, to their full value would be found in their place. The articles were made in a few days, and placed in conformity with the directions. On the next morning they were gone, and the money was found according to the promise; but, though a watch had been kept, no vessel was seen.

"Some months afterward, the four men returned, and selected one of the most secluded and romantic spots in the woods of Sangus, for their abode. The place of their retreat was a deep, narrow valley, shut in on two sides by high hills and craggy, precipitous rocks, and shrouded on the others by thick pines, hemlocks, and cedars, between which there was only one small spot to which the rays of the sun at noon could penetrate. On climbing up the rude and almost perpendicular steps of the rock on the eastern side, the eye could command a full view of the bay on the south, and a prospect of a considerable portion of the surrounding country. The place of their retreat has ever since been called the Pirates' Glen, and they could not have selected a spot on the coast for many miles, more favorable for the purposes both of concealment and observation. Even at this day, when the neighborhood has become thickly peopled, it is still a lonely and desolate place, and probably not one in a hundred of the inhabitants has ever descended into its silent and gloomy recess. There the pirates built a small hut, made a garden, and dug a well, the appearance of which is still visible. It has been supposed that they buried money; but though people have dug there, and in several other places, none has ever been found.

"After residing there some time, their retreat became known, and one of the king's cruisers appeared on the coast

They were traced to their glen, and three of them were taken and carried to England, where it is probable they were executed. The other, whose name was Thomas Veal," [called, in the poem, Don, and supposed to be a Spaniard.] "escaped to a rock in the woods, about two miles to the north, in which was a spacious cavern, where the pirates had previously deposited some of their plunder. There the fugitive fixed his residence, and practiced the trade of a shoemaker, occasionally coming down to the village to obtain articles of sustenance. He continued his residence till the great earthquake this year, when the top of the rock was loosened, and crushed down into the mouth of the cavern, enclosing the unfortunate inmate in its unyielding prison. It has ever since been called the Pirate's Dungeon"—or Dungeon Rock. *Page* 146—48. *Second Edition.*

There is also a popular tradition that the pirates buried in the glen, at the foot of a certain hemlock tree, a beautiful female. The rotten stump of the tree may still be seen, and a hollow beside it, where people have dug in search of human bones.

The Indian name, and that applied by the first settlers to the city of Lynn, and the region round for many miles, was *Saugus*—a word signifying, in the Indian language, *great* or *extended*. Saugus river,—on whose most delightful and romantic banks flourished, for many years, the first Iron Works supplied with native ore, in America,—"has its source in Redding pond, about ten miles from the sea" . . . "It is very crooked in its course, flowing three miles in the distance of one. In several places after making a circuitous route for half a mile, it returns to within a few rods of the place whence it deviated. The harbor, into which it flows, is spacious, but shoal, and does not easily admit large vessels."

A mile, or so, from the river's mouth, across the harbor, lies Nahant.

It will be seen from this and the notes appended, that the principal events and characters of the poem, are historical. With such a highly romantic and tragical warp of truth, I have simply sought to weave but just enough of fictitious probability, to make an entertaining Fable for the solemn Moral given in the well known story of the Pirates' Glen and Dungeon Rock. If I have failed, the fault is mine and not the subject's. I have had, at least, the mental discipline and pleasure of writing; and can only hope that my humble efforts may be the source of pleasure to the reader;—if they are not—he is left at perfect liberty to use the same materials and write a story better suited to his fancy.

SAUGUS, 1850.

The principal Persons represented are as follows:—DON, a pirate, and his Companions; ROSS, a London proprietor of the Iron Works; CHRISTOPHER, the agent and adopted child to Ross, in love with Arabel; NA-NA-PAS-HE-MET, Sagamore of Lynn; YA-WA-TA, daughter to Nanapashemet; ARABEL, daughter to Ross, in love with Christopher; CLORINDA, wife to Don.