

**THE SMUGGLER OF
KING'S COVE OR THE
OLD CHAPEL MYSTERY**

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The smuggler of King's cove or The old chapel mystery by Sylvanus Cobb

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SYLVANUS COBB

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OR

THE OLD CHAPEL MYSTERY

BY

SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

AUTHOR OF "ORION, THE GOLD-BEATER," "THE GUNMAKER OF
MOSCOW," "THE PAINTER OF PARMA," ETC.



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THE SMUGGLER OF KING'S COVE;
OR,
The Old Chapel Mystery.

CHAPTER I.

OUR HERO MAKES TWO PROMISES.

WE doubt if there is anywhere on the sea board of England another stretch of coast so wild and rugged, and so forbidding of aspect to navigators, as is that of Headlandshire—probably so called because of its numerous bold headlands overlooking the Irish Sea.

Not far from midway of this stretch of coast is an inlet of the sea, called Raven Bay; and from this bay there is still another inlet, narrow and dubious of entrance, but deep and broad within, called King's Cove.

The story goes that once upon a time an English king, fleeing from his rebellious subjects by sea, sought shelter here and safety; and found them both.

The bay itself is no mean shelter when safely gained. About its entrance are numerous rocks, large and small—some lifting their storm-beaten

crests above the surface of the water, while many lie hidden beneath it; also, there are a number of small islands so arranged as to effectually veil the inlet from the eyes of strangers passing to and fro outside.

The man who would run even an ordinary yacht in safety into Raven Bay must be thoroughly acquainted with every fathom of the true channel.

But, though we have gained that first haven, we see nothing of King's Cove—not a sign of it. Yet it is not far off. Away in the southeast corner are two small well-wooded islands, which appear, when viewed from the bosom of the bay, to be simple lumps of the mainland; but once get in behind the outer one and we find a narrow, deep, winding channel running between the two, and finally opening into a basin of water wonderful to behold.

There it lies, an entirely land-locked off-put of the sea, oval in form, very nearly a mile long by three-quarters of a mile wide, deep enough and broad enough to float a naval squadron.

Not only was this cove land-locked, but it was so completely environed by woods—by forest monarchs—as to be as invisible from the land as from the water side.

From Raven Bay the view landward was partly wild and rugged, but altogether picturesque and romantic. On the left, to the northward, as we face inward from the seas, distant a mile and a half rose a grim towering mass of volcanic rock, known as the Witch's Crag.

Towards the bay the crag descended gradually—a continuous ragged, rocky declivity—to the water's edge.

Eastward from the bay, on a gradual verdant slope, many miles in extent, opened to view one of the most beautifully romantic scenes in England—the magnificent park, the outlying farms, the flanking forest, and the grand old castle of Allerdale; while nearer at hand, close upon the shore, nestled a pretty village, bearing the same name.

And this whole stretch of landscape was cut in twain, near its center, by a silvery, limpid stream, rising in the distant hills and flowing westward until it mingled its tide with the waters of the bay. It was called Dale River.

There is one other view that must not be overlooked. Away to the right, towards the south, half a mile from the village, but only a few rods distant from the eastern shore of Kings' Cove, in the edge of the forest, with no other human habitation near, stood a small stone cottage, the abode, when on shore, of the chief of a crew of smugglers, whose lair was in the adjacent hidden inlet.

We now approach two scenes of a different character. The first is in the cottage of the smuggler chief.

Hugh Maitland, now close upon his fortieth year, had for full half his life been a bold and successful smuggler. Never, as yet, had he been arrested.

Not only had the secret cove afforded him safe hiding from the king's cruisers, but the mass of the