

WITHIN THE CAPES

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Within the Capes by Howard Pyle

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HOWARD PYLE

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By
HOWARD PYLE



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TO HIS FRIEND
ALFRED LEIGHTON HOWE
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED
BY
THE AUTHOR

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WITHIN THE CAPES.

CHAPTER I.

CERTAIN members of Captain Tom Granger's family have asked him, time and time again, why he did not sit down and write an account of those things which happened to him during a certain period of his life.

These happenings, all agree, are of a nature such as rarely fall to the lot of any man, crowding, as they did, one upon the heels of another, so that in two years' time more happened to Tom Granger than happens to most men in a lifetime.

But Captain Granger has always shaken his head, and has answered that he was no writer and that a pen never did fit nicely betwixt his stiff fingers, as Mrs. Granger can tell them if they will ask her.

Beside this, he has hitherto had his affairs to look after, so that he may be able to leave behind him enough of the world's goods to help his chil-

dren and his children's children easily along the road that he himself found not over smooth.

Now, however, he has given up much of his business to the care of his sons, who are mostly men well on in years, with families of their own, and who are discreet in the management of things. Therefore, having much more leisure time upon his hands than he has ever had in his life before, he will undertake to do as he has been asked, and to write a plain, straightforward story of his adventures. This he does with much diffidence, for, as I have said, he is no very good hand with the pen and the ink-horn. The story may be told in a rough way; nevertheless, I believe that many of those that read it will think well of it, having a certain tenderness for the writer thereof.

I am furthermore inclined to thus take upon myself the transcribing of the history of these things, because that Captain Tom Granger is coming fast to the ending of his life; and, though his latter days may be warm and sunny, like a late Indian summer, there are those yet to come in a few years who will not have the chance to hear of these things from his own lips. Therefore, as there has been much gossip about certain adventures that befell him, I would rather that they should learn of them under mine own hand than from hearsay. Truly, things get monstrously twisted in passing from mouth to mouth, and by the time that the story of these doings has passed down through three or four generations, the old gentle-

man might be turned into a pirate and a murderer, for all that I know, which would be a pretty state of affairs.

I do not know how it was that Tom Granger got the title of captain, for the highest grade that he ever reached was that of second mate of the Privateersman *Nancy Haslewood*. However, as no one in Eastcaster ever had held so high a grade of the like nature up to that time, I suppose that the wonder really is that he was not called commodore, or even admiral.

Any one in Eastcaster can tell you where he lives; it is the large white house, with the porch in front, that stands well back from the road under the shadow of three broad maple trees. It is just across the way from the Hicksite Meeting-house. You can easily tell it as you go along the street, because there is a ship in full sail chiseled in relief on the stone gate-post, which is very well done indeed, and was carved by William Johnson, the stone-cutter, under mine own direction and supervision.

I will say here, that Captain Granger will be always glad to see you if, at any time, you should chance to come to Eastcaster. If he is not at home, you will be likely to find him playing chequers or backgammon at the Black Horse Tavern, just around the corner of Market street, and nearly opposite to the court-house.

However, that is neither here nor there, and I find that I am wandering from the point. But you must