

**JOSCELYN VERNON. A  
STORY OF THE DAYS OF  
KING CHARLES THE FIRST**

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Joscelyn Vernon. A Story of the Days of King Charles the First by Archibald Campbell Knowles

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**ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL KNOWLES**

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A STORY OF THE DAYS OF KING  
CHARLES THE FIRST.

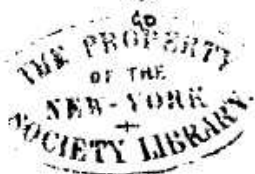
BY

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## CHAPTER I.

### HOW I CAME TO GO TO THE WAR.

**I**T is passing strange how in this fleeting life of ours, great national misfortunes so often bring to man as an individual the opportunity whereby he may attain glory and prominence. Nor need his success be the outcome of mere selfishness, but contrariwise it may be the result of pure patriotism, which, though the most noble cause may fail, may ultimately bring to those who engaged to defend it, worldly fortune and worldly honour.

Thus it was that the religious-political war that so devastated our goodly land of "Merrie England" in the days of King Charles—of most sainted memory—gave me the chance, not only to show my devotion to Church and Monarch, but also to carve out for myself a soldier's success and a soldier's renown.

I was but a stripling at the commencement

of the troubles, yet though young in years and smooth of face, for the down scarce grew upon my chin, I was tall and strong, and most skilful with the sword and rapier. Oft with my twin brother Anthony, who, with the same blue eyes, brown hair and strength of frame as myself, was like unto me as one pea to another, and not seldom taken for me, did I while away the hours, in brotherly rivalry striving to see who most excelled in feint, thrust and parry, with the result that fencing with the rapier became as natural to both of us as swimming in the neighboring brook was to the jolly knaves of the village.

We came of a goodly stock, my father boasting of a long and pure descent through many generations of Vernons, and though our family was but one of the country gentry, we were regarded with respect by many of the nobility, who, though rich in titles, often could not boast of the same pure ancestry as ours.

My great-grandsire had been knighted in the days of bluff King Hal, and oft-times had been treated with much show of friendship by

that monarch, who not seldom met my ancestor in the company of my Lord of Raglan, of whose family more hereafter. My great-grand-sire, however, soon fell out of the king's good graces, for being an honest and God-fearing man, he durst not countenance such an adulterous life, as he considered that the frequent marriages of the king showed; so presently withdrawing from the gay world, he sought his estates near the beautiful Vale of Tinterne, and passed the remainder of his life in the calm retirement of a country gentleman.

Until the last he was a firm adherent of the old Mother Church of England, and ever one of the most leal and loyal supporters of the various reforms which Cranmer and others were bringing about for the Church's purification from wrong doctrines and practices. Yet in sorrow and anger did he view the rapid demolition of the abbeys and monasteries and the confiscation of their domains and income by the rapacious king and nobles. Oft-times whilst he strove to be loyal to his king, would he bring down his hand in anger upon the