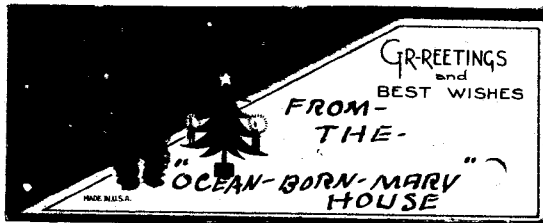




roy



P. Marsden
Christmas 1935

OCEAN-BORN-MARY

A
ROMANCE

BY

L. M. A. Roy

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AND

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OCEAN-BORN-MARY *

On the village green of a small town in northern Ireland during the first part of the eighteenth century, a group of young people were making merry. The young men were performing feats of strength, while the girls gathered around and cheered their beaux, as each in turn ran, jumped, or heaved a weight.

James Allyne, the blacksmith's son, being of massive build, did not excel in these feats of agility or swiftness, but liked to lift the weights of iron and stone. He outlifted his companions, much to the amusement of the onlookers, and while they were complimenting him on his great strength, they discovered that a stranger had approached on horseback, who stopped to see the fun.

This stranger now dismounting from his horse, challenged James to a lifting contest, the winner to have a kiss from the prettiest girl in the crowd. The blacksmith's son took up the challenge, for he being the strongest man for miles around, was confident that he would win, and the girls laughingly agreed, that one of their number would kiss the winner.

James, thinking to put the stranger in his place, took up one of the heaviest weights, and heaving it above his head, smiled at the stranger. Unimpressed by this, the stranger took up the weight as though it were a mere plaything, and with little effort pushed it up to arm's length. Then, letting it down, he quickly took another of the heavy weights, one in each hand, and with a mighty heave, pushed them above his head. Dropping them to the ground with a dull thud, he turned to James and said, "It's your turn now; do that if you can." James, realizing that he had lost the contest and ashamed that his friends should see him try and not make the lift, said that he had strained his arm and would not lift again.

The stranger turned to the girls and asked which one would pay the forfeit, but they could not decide and laughingly urged one another to give the kiss. Seeing that he would lose if he waited, he suddenly bent down and plucked several stems of grass which he broke into uneven lengths. Holding them so that the girls could not see how long they were, he told them to draw lots. Each drew a spear of grass, and as they excitedly compared them, it was found that Jane Rawson held the longest stem and she must give the kiss.

* The names used in this story are fictitious.

The stranger stepped up to her, and taking her in his arms, placed a kiss full upon her lips. James her beau, started to prevent this, but stepped back as he realized that he had agreed to the contest.

At the invitation of the stranger, they followed him across the green to the tavern for refreshments. Everyone was curious to know who this stranger might be, and he disclosed the fact that he was Henry Cunningham, son of Sir Charles, who lived in the old mansion on the hill. He had been abroad studying and had just returned.

Old Thomas, the porter, recognized Henry as he had known him since he was a little boy, and at Henry's request, fetched Hogan, the fiddler, to furnish music that they might dance. During the dancing and merrymaking Jane and Henry quickly became acquainted, and after he found that she was the village weaver's daughter, told her that he must have some weaving done and that he would see her soon. Then, bidding the merrymakers good-bye, he mounted his horse and galloped up the road to the mansion on the hill; Jane, waving her handkerchief, felt that she was about to embark upon an unknown sea of romance and adventure.

The very next day, Henry made a trip to the weavers' and there met Jane again. He brought a piece of cloth of curious weave, which his mother had left him, and wished to have it duplicated. Jane introduced him to her father, who was very glad to do the weaving for the Cunninghams.

The days that followed were busy ones for Henry, for he must go daily to the weavers', ostensibly to superintend the weaving, and incidently to see Jane. So it was not long before the village gossips began to wag their tongues, and finally word came to Sir Charles that his son was frequenting the weaver's house, and that Henry and Jane were seen walking together in the woods.

Sir Charles did not put much faith in this gossip as he was sure that his son would do nothing rash; at least not think of marrying a weaver's daughter. However, the rumors became more persistent, and at length Sir Charles summoned Henry to his study. He told Henry what the village gossips were saying and asked Henry if it were true. Henry replied that it was true, that Jane Rawson was the nicest girl he had ever known, and that he was going to marry her. Seeing that Henry was in earnest, Sir Charles became very angry that his son should even think of marrying below his station in life. And Henry, feeling that it was of no use to discuss the matter further, left his father alone.

After much thought, Sir Charles decided that the best thing he could do would be to get Henry away from the village so he dispatched a letter to London and said nothing more to Henry.

About a fortnight later, Henry was again summoned to his father's study, and handed a document. This he read slowly and in silence. It was a commission from the King, commanding him to start on a secret mission to France, at once. Henry, realizing that there was nothing to do but obey, said that he would go, but resented that his father should have taken this means to separate him from Jane. John, the tailor's son, was delegated by Sir Charles to go with Henry as his servant.

Packing completed, Henry hastened to Jane to acquaint her of his leaving. She took the news bravely and said that she would wait for him, but that he must write often. This he promised to do, and at his departure, she gave him a keepsake, a token of her love. It was a piece of ribbon, of lovely design and beautiful color, which she had woven with her own hands. And Henry, as he kissed her good-bye, vowed that he would always wear this keepsake near to his heart.

A few minutes later, the mail coach clattered up to the tavern, and all was bustle and excitement. And shortly after, as it thundered down the street with Henry inside, he hoped that his stay in France would be brief, and that he would soon return to Jane.

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During the weeks that followed, Henry had little time to himself, but he wrote Jane as often as he could. Jane could not make out the long words, and took his letters to the village priest, a kindly old man, who with great gentleness read these love epistles to her. And he also helped her write the answers.

As the days flew by and became weeks, and the weeks months, no word came from Henry as to when he would return. Then the letters came less frequently, and at last, when none arrived, she felt that something had happened to him.

A short time after, word was received at the village presumably from Sir Charles, that Henry had been killed in a duel, in France. Someone had flung an insult at the King, and Henry had challenged this person to a duel.

Jane secluded herself and would see no one, but as time went on, her father and her friends persuaded her to go out again. But she was not the merry, carefree girl she had been. Sir Charles paid her a visit and tried to make her feel that Henry would have wished her to marry, and suggested that she marry James Allyne, as he was a stalwart man in the community. In fact he told her that if she would consent to marry James, that they would have the finest wedding that the village had ever seen, and a wedding trip, at his expense. This sounded rather queer to Jane, but she thought that perhaps, after all, he was doing only what Henry would have wished him to do.

James also had a visit from Sir Charles, and quickly

consented as he had always loved Jane, and a fine wedding would give him prestige in the community.

And so it was arranged that they would be married on a certain day at the village church and start from the tavern on their wedding trip.

Sir Charles left nothing undone to make this wedding a success, and after the ceremony at the church, all the villagers repaired to the tavern to celebrate in eating and drinking. As Jane and James started on their honeymoon in one of Sir Charles' own carriages, shoes and rice were thrown after them, and there was shouting and cheering as they disappeared down the road.

Several hours later, as the mail coach rumbled up to the tavern, the excitement had subsided, and old Thomas was gathering the shoes and sweeping up the rice. Almost before the stage came to a halt, the door was flung open and out jumped a young man. Old Thomas looked up and stared as if he had seen a ghost. As Henry saw the peculiar expression on the old man's face, he cried, "Well, Thomas, I'm home again, and this time to stay." Old Thomas could only stare and gulp, and as Henry saw the rice and shoes, he asked, "What's this, a wedding?" The old man could only nod his head. Henry, thinking that he had been drinking, paid no attention to his dumbness, but but asked, "And who were they lucky ones?" Old Thomas at last gulped out, "Jane and James." In a calm voice Henry asked, "When did this happen?" "Not two hours ago," the old man replied.

For a moment Henry seemed stunned. Then with a burst of laughter which made the chills creep up the old man's back, he cried, "Come everybody, we'll drink to the health of the bride and the groom." Henry led the way into the tavern, and calling for drinks, threw down on the bar several gold pieces.

John came in after he had seen to his masters' luggage, and seemed to sense that something was wrong. Hoping to get Henry home, he said, "Sir Charles will be expecting us."

Then Henry holding his glass of liquor high above his head, flung it to the floor with a crash crying, "To hell with Sir Charles and the King too." With that, he strode to the door, and with high pitched laughter that froze the marrow of ones' bones, disappeared into the dusk. The villagers stood like statues as they heard the sound of galloping hoofs in the distance.

* * * * *

For several moments, John stood as though paralyzed; then he came to life. Where Henry went, he must go. He rushed out the door with the others following, but the horseman had disappeared. As quickly as he could, he secured a horse and followed in the general direction taken by Henry.

After riding several miles he stopped at a farm house and inquired if a horseman has passed some time before.

The farmer replied that a drunken man had galloped by, laughing at the top of his voice. John, knowing that he was on the right road followed, and from time to time inquired, receiving the same answers. After hours of riding and in the middle of the night, he arrived at his destination, the nearest sea-port. Although he knew not where to look, the waterfront seemed the logical place, and there he went.

All the taverns were closed except one, and from this issued songs and ribald laughter.

John dismounted, left his weary horse and peered in at one of the windows. There he saw Henry in the midst of a crowd of drunken sailors, singing at the top of his voice.

As he entered, Henry spied him and told him he must have another drink, and introduced him to the sailors as his man. Henry seemed somewhat dazed, and John felt that he must somehow persuade Henry to return home.

Before John arrived, Henry had been performing feats of strength, and the sailors in their admiration, began to call him Captain. By now, the crowd was pretty well under the influence of liquor, and when Henry suggested that a sea voyage might cool them off, they all agreed with drunken leers, and cried, that if the Captain would lead them they would follow him anywhere.

So he started for the door with the rabble at his heels, bawling and shouting. John pulled Henry aside, and tried to persuade him not to go with the rest, but Henry replied that he was going on a voyage with his friends, and nothing would stop him.

Reaching the shore, they found row boats, and taking these out into the harbor where several vessels lay at anchor.

Henry commanded them to stop singing. Silently, they approached one of the black hulls, and swarmed over the rail. Someone stepped on a sleeping sailor, who awoke with an oath. This commotion brought out the Captain and the crew.

He demanded of them what they were doing on his ship. Henry replied that he and his friends desired a sea voyage, and as they liked the looks of his vessel they came on board to take possession. The Captain, smelling liquor, ordered them off of his ship and told them if they did not go he would put them off. As Henry and his companions laughed, the Captain with an oath, started toward Henry. As he came close, Henry grabbed him, and with a mighty laugh heaved him over his head into the sea. In the general melee that followed, all of the crew were either thrown into the sea or beaten into submission.

Henry ordered sails hoisted, and as there was a slight breeze, the ship sailed silently out of the harbor, its destination unknown.

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The next morning, Henry summoned everyone on deck, and told them that they were pirates now, and soon a price would

be put on their heads. He said that if they would follow him he would make them all rich men, but if anyone did not wish to go on, he would be set ashore. However they cheered and swore that they would follow him to hell. John could not understand this new Henry, such a change had taken place in a day, but he must stay near him, and if opportunity offered, persuade him to return home.

He decided that as long as Henry followed this nefarious trade, he must do something to hide his identity, and began to think of a disguise. At first Henry refused, but at John's insistence decided that he would take another name, as why should he dishonor the Cunninghams.

John, who had read of pirates, suggested the name Pedro as a good one, and Henry fell in with the idea. So he told his followers that from now on he would be Captain Pedro.

As Henry's light complexion did not go well with the name Pedro, John knew that it must be darkened. He remembered that the juice of the walnut produced a dark stain which was difficult to remove, and at the first opportunity procured enough to keep the Captain disguised until the sun and wind should do their work.

John then proceeded to make Captain Pedro a picturesque outfit, and being a tailor's son, and handy with the shears and needle, it was not long before Captain Pedro looked as well as acted the part.

Tall, rugged, dark complexioned now, his dark beard parted in the center and braided, each tied with a bit of red ribbon, gold earrings in his ears and a red sash around his waist, John knew that no one would take this ferocious looking pirate for Henry Cunningham. He generally wore two flintlock pistols in a sling, and later an enormous cutlass which he alone could wield with great destruction.

The Captain commanded John to fashion an appropriate flag, one of black with white skull and bones, and a Crimson H below. It was not long before this emblem became known as the "Bloody H" by those who followed the sea. As his ship must have an appropriate name, he decided on the name, "Revenge", and this was painted in large white letters on the stern.

The days that followed were a nightmare to John who was a kindly soul and could not bear to see the slaughter and hear the cries of the damned. At first he could not stand the orgy of blood, and went below decks until it was over. By degrees he steeled himself to the horrors of the trade, but never took part in them, and would have done so only to protect the Captain.

No quarter was asked or given, and the unfortunate Captains, whose ships were captured, expect no mercy.

From one of these captives, Captain Pedro learned that the British Navy was hot on his trail, so he set sail for the Tropics. Spanish merchantmen were his special prey, and were as a rule rich prizes with cargoes of gold and silver bullion, jewels and other precious stuffs. After the capture and looting of a ship the treasure was divided, the

taking the lion's share, which was not to the liking of his men, but on account of his great strength they were afraid to remonstrate. The loot divided, drinking and gambling started, arguments and fights took place, and the contestants had to be separated by the Captain.

Tony, who had been their leader before the Captain arrived was disgruntled at being displaced by Captain Pedro, and lost no opportunity to discredit anything the Captain did.

As the treasure accumulated, Captain Pedro began to fear that Tony might persuade his companions to steal it, so he decided to bury it on an island near the New England coast. Telling no one of his object, he set sail North.

On the way up the Atlantic coast a rich prize was captured, and after the loot had been divided, the usual drinking and gambling began. All of a sudden there was a great uproar, with shouting and cursing. The Captain hastening to find the cause of this commotion, found that Jo, Tony's brother, had been accused of cheating, and a fight had started. He separated the men roughly, Jo denying his guilt and Tony taking his side. This being a serious matter, the Captain said that he would hold court, that each side could present its case.

As the men stepped forward and told their version of the affair, the Captain listened gravely, and now and then asked a question. When all had finished, he stood for a moment as if making his decision. Then, in a firm harsh voice, pronounced Jo guilty. The rest stood silent, knowing that Jo would be marooned. The Captain told them that they had agreed to the punishment for cheating, and that Jo was guilty. Lest he should try to escape, Captain Pedro ordered him put in irons; and set sail for a small desolate island far from the path of ships.

Several days later they arrived at the island late in the afternoon, and Jo was put ashore against his will, with a gun, powder, and bullets, and a jug of water. As the sun, a fiery ball, descended into the sea, Captain Pedro sailed away leaving Jo to his fate, and John remarked that he had seen the "Flying Dutchman" in that red glare.

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Returning from her wedding trip, Jane learned of Henry's return to the village, and of his immediate departure. No one knew what had become of him. What the effect of this news had been upon her was not known, as she never mentioned the matter.

One day months later, James told her that he had talked with a man, just returned from New England, who said that there were fine opportunities in the New World for those who were willing to work. These glowing accounts fired James' ambition to emigrate to this new land, and Jane readily agreed, as she was willing to leave the village where she has seen so much unhappiness.

So, in the spring of 1720, Jane and James set sail from Londonderry on the good ship "Hope" with a party of Scotch-Irish emigrants, bound for the promised land. In those days of sailing ships, it was a long voyage across the Atlantic, and to while away the time, Jane brought her spinning-wheel and loom. These were set up, and as she was expert at spinning and weaving, she taught the younger ones these arts. Sometimes it was plain woolen homespun dyed with the walnut bark, and at others it was an intricate design that only a professional could weave, but always fascinating to the emigrants who knew naught of the art of weaving. She soon became a favorite with the passengers, who liked to sit and gossip as she threw the shuttle back and forth, and beat the weft with the heavy batten.

As the weeks passed and the ship came nearer and nearer to the New England coast, the emigrants became eager to land and be off to their new homes in the wilderness.

On a lovely midsummer day, July 28th., a daughter was born to Jane and James, and there was much rejoicing among the emigrants, as they declared that this was a "Good Omen" for them all. They brought their humble gifts for this baby girl.

Some days later, as the breeze had almost died and they were making but little headway, a vessel was spied on the horizon, coming toward them. As this vessel approached the emigrant ship, to their consternation they beheld the black flag with its skull and bones and the "Bloody H" beneath. They felt that their doom was sealed, as they knew what to expect from the captain who sailed under that flag.

As the pirate ship slowly overhauled them, many of the emigrants knelt upon the deck and prayed. The captain told the passengers and crew not to resist, as it would be useless to fight the pirates, who were armed to the teeth. When the vessels were quite close together, several boats were seen putting off from the pirate ship. In the bow of the foremost boat stood Captain Pedro, a pistol in one hand and a cutlass in the other, and as the boats came to the ship's side, the cut-throat band clambered over the rail, the Captain leading.

The passengers and crew offered no resistance, and were quickly bound. Captain Pedro demanded of the captain of the emigrant ship if there was any rum on board, and being told that there was, ordered his men below to fetch it. As the thirsty band scrambled down to find the rum, Captain Pedro followed to see if there were anything in this ship worth taking. Much to his disgust he found nothing of value, and as he was about to return on deck, he pushed open the door to one of the cabins.

In the dim light he saw a large framework of wood, and walked over to see what it might be. He found that it was a loom and as he rubbed his hand over the cloth, he stooped to look more closely. He had a vague feeling that he had somewhere seen such cloth, of peculiar design, and finally it came to him that it was the pattern Jane had woven.

As he ran his hand over the surface of the fabric, he seemed to feel the presence of someone in the cabin, and turning, he saw in the uncertain light a form lying in a berth. Crossing over to this berth, he saw a woman lying there with her eyes closed, and to his great astonishment he recognized Jane.

As he gazed down at her, she opened her eyes, but did not recognize this ferocious looking pirate captain as her Henry. Recovering from his surprise, he asked roughly, "Why are you here?", and she pulled aside the covers disclosing the tiny form beside her.

Captain Pedro stood for some moments in silence gazing at the little baby, then drawing nearer he asked, "A boy or a girl?"

Jane replied, "A girl."

And again he asked, "Have you named her?" Jane shook her head.

The Captain said, "If I may name her I will spare your lives."

Jane replied, "You may name her if you wish."

So he leaned over the berth, and putting his large rough hand on the tiny head, softly pronounced one word, "Mary", and a large tear dropped from the Captain's eye to the coverlet.

Hearing a commotion on deck, the Captain quickly left the cabin, and was just in time to prevent the slaughter. His companions had found the rum, drank a good deal of it, and were in a mood to kill the emigrants and scuttle the ship. However, to their dismay, the Captain commanded them to unbind the prisoners and to harm no one. This being contrary to the usual custom, they were loath to obey. At further command from the Captain, the rest were unbound, but not until several had been roughly handled.

Captain Pedro quickly got both his companions and the rum into his boats and rowed to his ship, much to the joy of the emigrants and the ship's crew. Several of them rushed down to tell Jane of their good fortune, and were much surprised to find that the pirate had named her baby "Mary", and had agreed to spare their lives. This news spread quickly over the ship and the emigrants crowded into the small cabin to congratulate Jane and little Mary.

While this was occurring, a noise was heard on deck, and word came below that the pirates were returning. All were frightened, thinking that the pirate chief had changed his mind, and that they would all reach a watery grave. They hastened on deck again, leaving Jane and Mary alone in the cabin.

The pirates rowed toward the emigrant ship, but this time only one boat came with Captain Pedro in the bow. As all stood in silence on the deck in groups, he clambered over the rail followed by one of his companions, who carried several bundles. He told the Captain of the ship not

to be alarmed; that he was bringing gifts for the baby.

Taking the bundles, he proceeded below and entered the cabin. One of the bundles he unwrapped, displaying a bolt of beautiful greenish silk with a small blue flower brocaded upon it. Laying this on the berth beside Jane and Mary, he said, "May this be Mary's wedding gown." He then unwrapped the other bundles, which contained silks and presents for Jane.

Jane, with tears in her eyes thanked him for these gifts, and for sparing their lives, and thought to herself, that there must be some good even in a pirate. She asked him why he led the life of a pirate and he replied that he had been disappointed in a love affair. Then she wanted to know why he did not quit this nefarious trade, but he replied that there was a price upon his head, and he could not stop now. He asked her where the emigrants were going. She told him that they were bound for a small village in southern New England, where they had relatives and friends.

She wanted to know his name, but he told her Captain Pedro was the name he had taken, so as not to dishonor his family.

With this he left the cabin, and astounded the captain of the emigrant ship by handing him several gold pieces as payment for the rum he had taken. He was quickly rowed to his ship, and as the breeze began to freshen, the pirates disappeared and were seen no more.

After the pirates left the ship, the emigrants flocked down to the cabin to see what gifts the pirate chief had brought to little Mary, and greatly admired the silks. They made a good deal of little Mary, as they knew she had saved their lives, and promised that they would all attend her wedding, when she was married in the Pirate's silk.

Some time later, when Jane was able to be up and about, she examined the presents more carefully, and unfolded the bolt of beautiful silk which was to be Mary's Wedding Gown. As the lovely silk was unfolded, she felt a rough place among the layers of the silk, and on investigation, this proved to be a small bit of ribbon concealed under several layers of silk. This she took to the light and was amazed to discover that it was a piece of the keepsake which she has given Henry when he left for France.

So this rugged, ferocious looking pirate captain was Henry, her former sweetheart; but of course she could not have recognized him in that disguise. There was nothing she could do, so she kept this secret to herself, wishes that she might have recognized him at the time.

She remembered he had asked where the emigrants were going, and that she had told him to a village in southern New England. Of course, it was too late for marriage, but if she could meet him again, she might persuade him to give up piracy, and settle down in New England.

Jane, however, kept her thoughts to herself, and finally the good ship "Hope" reached Boston town with its load of emigrants, eager to reach their new homes.

They remained in Boston town a short time, and there James contracted a strange malady. This came to a crisis and he passed away in spite of all that could be done for him. After the funeral, Jane, stunned by the loss of her husband, decided that she must proceed to her new home, with Mary.

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On returning to his ship, Captain Pedro decided to bury his treasure as soon as possible. Tony and some of the men were sullen at not being allowed to slaughter the emigrants and scuttle the ship.

Some days later they came to an island off the coast of Maine and with John, Tony and several others, Captain Pedro buried the chests of treasure. Later in the afternoon, as the sun was sinking, a ball of fire, John remarked that he again saw the "Flying Dutchman". The Captain laughed, as little he believed in superstitions.

That night, the Captain was awakened by someone prowling about his cabin. Seeing a shadowy figure moving toward him in the moonlight, he leaped from his berth and grappled with this man. As they wrestled about the cabin, he saw the gleam of a dagger, and from the great strength of his antagonist, thought it must be Tony trying to avenge the marooning of his brother. During the struggle, the Captain arrested the dagger from his adversary, and it fell to the floor with a clatter. They made considerable noise during their struggle, and footsteps were heard approaching. With a terrific wrench, the Captain's assailant freed himself and rushed out of the cabin.

A few moments later, John and several of the others rushed in and the Captain quickly told them that someone had tried to murder him. They climbed to the deck but heard no sound. The Captain then summoned the whole band, but Tony did not respond. The vessel was searched and a small boat was found missing. And on account of the darkness, it was impossible to follow Tony. On the floor of the cabin was a jeweled dagger, which the Captain presented to John, making him his bodyguard, which he was for the rest of his life.

Captain Pedro realized now, that he had an enemy abroad and the treasure must be removed to another place. This was done the following morning, and then the Captain sailed south toward the Caribbean Sea.

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Jane and Mary traveled with the emigrants over the rough trails, and after some hardship arrived at their new Home.

In those days there was much work for willing hands to do, and Jane tried to hide her sorrow and give her love to



ROY

little Mary. The villagers treated her kindly and she was able to support herself and Mary by her skillful spinning and weaving, as in the New England climate there was much need for warm woollen cloth. Some of the well-to-do ordered fancy cloth, and there was never a time that she did not have an audience of interested spectators, who watched her deft and skillful movements and saw the intricate pattern grow thread by thread. All day long could be heard the whir of the shuttle and the thump of the batten as it beat the threads into the web of cloth. And passersby would stop to greet her, and talk the gossip of the village.

Little Mary was, of course a favorite, and every year a great celebration was held in the village on her birthday, as that day was also the important day in the lives of the emigrants. They brought her gifts of clothes, and toys and choice things to eat. And had Jane let her, she would have eaten herself sick.

As the years rolled by, Jane, being a comely woman, had many admirers, and several suggested that she marry again, so that little Mary would have a step-father. But Jane, now that she was free to marry again, thought of Henry's returning, and waited year after year, hoping that some news would come from him.

Finally a rumor reached the village, that Captain Pedro had been killed in a sea battle with a ship of the British Navy.

About this time the settlers were hard pressed by the Indians, and several massacres occurred in nearby villages. This set Jane to thinking that she and Mary should have a man in the house to protect them, and now as Henry was gone forever, never to return, she married again.

The years quickly followed each other, and Mary grew up into a strong, rugged girl with auburn hair and greenish eyes, strongly resembling her mother.

The Indians came near from time to time but they never attacked the village, though there was always the threat of their doing so.

One day a man dressed in the garb of the sea, appeared in the village, and inquired for Jane Allyne. He was told that her husband had died some years before and that she had married again. On being directed to her house, where he found her, she was very much surprised to see him, as he was none other than John. When she had recovered from her surprise, she asked him what brought him there, and he replied that Captain Pedro had sent him with presents for Mary and herself.

She was stunned at this new blow that fate had dealt her, and told John that the rumor has been spread, that Captain Pedro had been killed in an encounter with a naval vessel. John then told her about a battle in which the Captain had been seriously wounded, and how they escaped to southern waters where they remained for several years. He said that the Captain never tired of talking of her and

little Mary, and would have come North sooner, but the British Navy had too many ships along the coast.

He said that the Captain had changed greatly since he had captured the emigrant ship and named Mary, and that it was John's opinion that from the time the Captain left Ireland until he came into the cabin upon that fateful day, his mind had been unbalanced; he had been a little mad. Anyway, he had changed after that, and never took a life except in self-defence.

He told her of Tony's attack upon the Captain's life, and that as his life was always in danger, he had two bodyguards, one of which was John.

After giving them the presents from the Captain, which were much admired, John departed leaving Jane much depressed. From time to time John appeared at the village bearing gifts for Mary and Jane.

When Mary was about twelve years old, Jane had a feeling that her time on this earth was short, and on John's next visit she told him that she wished to see Captain Pedro again before she died.

Later, one stormy night, Captain Pedro arrived at the village, accompanied by John, and there met Jane again, the first time since he had captured the ship and named Mary. He was very much pleased to see them, and remarked how much Mary resembled her mother. Jane implored him to give up piracy and to return to the country, there to live the life of a country gentleman. After some argument he finally consented, and told her that should anything happen to her he would see that Mary was well cared for. As Jane bade the Captain good-bye, she felt that she would never see him again.

On John's next visit to the village he learned of Jane's death and of Mary's engagement to a young Scotch-Irish emigrant. John assured her that both he and the Captain would attend her wedding.

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In 1742 Mary was married in the famous pirate's silk in the village church, Captain Pedro and John attending. They were dressed in the costumes of the sea which greatly contrasted with those of the villagers. Mary was a picture in the beautiful greenish silk, with her auburn hair and greenish eyes. The Captain presented her with a crystal necklace as her wedding present, which was greatly admired by all. Only John and the Captain knew that this necklace, supposedly crystal, was of real diamonds, and of tremendous value. During the great celebration, which was the largest the village had ever known, Mary was deluged with presents from her friends and those who had been passengers on the emigrant ship.

The Captain told Mary that he planned to retire to the country when he could find a location which would remind him of his old home in Ireland.

As the years passed, several sons were born to Mary, and from time to time John came bearing gifts from the Captain. She was always anxious for news of the Captain's country estate, and John supplied her all the details.

Some time before, the Captain had followed the Merrimac Tiver up to a small branch called the Contoocook, and along this small river searched for a likely spot for his estate. He found a lovely place on a high hill overlooking the surrounding country, and decided that here he would spend the rest of his days.

He secured a grant of thousands of acres of land, the Crown willing to grant him the land and give him a pardon on his promise to retire from the sea.

He then sent his chief ship-carpenter across to his old ancestral home to draw plans, so that he might have a mansion similar to that of his ancestors. He brought his followers, his negro slaves, and his ship-carpenters to this lovely spot, where they cleared the land and began to cut timber with which to build the mansion. Temporary log cabins were built for them to live in while the timber and lumber was cut and seasoned. It was many months before the mansion could be erected.

A clay bed was found and kilns built in which to fire the brick for the two massive chimneys. A blacksmith shop was set up for the forging of the necessary nails and hardware.

On the cleared land, ledges of granite were found, from which were split great slabs to form the foundation and steps of the mansion.

As the work was progressing, word reached the Captain that Mary's husband had died, leaving her alone with her young children. He now hastened work on his estate, and sent word to Mary by the faithful John that he would come soon to fetch her to her new home.

At last the mansion was complete and furnished, ready for the house warming.

The with John and several of his trusted followers, he went with coach and outriders to bring Mary and her children.

When they arrived at the mansion, they were greeted by a large throng of people, the sailors in their garb of the sea, the negro slaves, the country folk for miles around, and a group of friendly Indians.

For several days they sang, danced, and feasted, and while Mary and the children enjoyed it immensely, she felt that if only Jane had lived to be there their happiness would have been complete.

The Captain realized that before he could settle down to the life of a country gentleman, he must bring his treasure from the coast where it was hidden, to his home where he could guard it.

So, taking John and his other body-guard, also several of his followers he proceeded with coach and four to the coast. After much hard traveling, they returned one dark night with the treasure in a steel bound chest. The Captain decided that the chest must be buried before morning, so he gave his followers plenty of rum, with the exception of his body-guard. As they were all tired out after their long hard trip and drowsy with rum, they soon fell into a sound sleep.

In the middle of the night when all was quite, Captain Pedro and the body-guard carried the heavy chest from its place of concealment in the house and set it on the ground. Then, after procuring a candle lantern and a spade, they started round the corner of the house, carrying the heavy chest between them.

Mary was awakened from some unknown cause, and hearing footsteps below, descended to the first floor. From one of the windows she saw shadowy forms moving past the house carrying something heavy. She was curious to know what was going on, and stepped out of the door to follow as they turned at the corner of the house. There, she stopped and looking around saw the two figures striding across the field with their heavy burden. She heard a voice counting, as though pacing off the distance.

It was a stary night, and looking up she was surprised to see that they were walking directly toward the North Star. Following at a safe distance, she could still hear the monotonous counting.

At last the figures stopped. Set their heavy burden down and started to dig a fairly deep hole by the light of the lantern. Mary saw them lower the chest, for now she knew that was what they had been carrying. From the size of the figures she knew that it was Captain Pedro and his body-guard.

After the chest had been lowered and while the smaller figure was still in the hole, she saw a sudden movement of the larger figure, heard a dull thud, but nothing more. The remaining figure began to fill up the hole, and Mary rushed back to the house.

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The next morning, Captain Pedro's body-guard was missing, and he told them that he had been sent on a mission. Mary only knew the truth, and she also knew that it was the custom of pirates to always leave a spirit to guard their treasure.

With his treasure where he could always watch it, the Captain now settled down to live the life of a country gentleman and manage his estate. He provided bountifully for Mary, and her sons grew up to be sturdy men in the community.

Life at the mansion was pleasant. With its routine of work, Mary managing the household while the Captain sat in the sun and smoked with John and ponder over the events of his adventurous life.

He liked to tell Mary of his exploits on the sea, and of the time when he captured the emigrant ship and named her, which seemed to be a turning point in his life. He and John would spend hours talking over those sea battles with which had made the Captain famous, or infamous as one looks at the matter. With Mary's advice he tried to help the unfortunate, and do good with his ill-gotten wealth.

Many travelers on the Post Road stopped at the mansion and were entertained, as it was the rule that no one should be turned away who needed food or shelter. They were surprised to find such a fine estate in the wilderness, and the Captain took great pride in showing them about.

It was a typical sea captain's house. Large, four-square high-posted, with hipped roof, and painted red with white trimmings and green doors. The large mansion with its ells and three great barns was framed with massive timbers and fastened with oak pins. It had four entrances. One at each side. The massive doors being hung on long strap hinges, each running the full width of the door. The hinges on the front door, however, were of the crane type, it being much larger and heavier than the rest. All the doors had the "Double-Cross Witch-doors", as they were called, as it was thought that these crosses would keep the witches from entering.

The white and blue room, paneled in wood, on its North side, had deep cornices and blue panels painted on the plastered walls; each with a buff stripe and with blue stenciled border at the top.

The large twenty-four light windows had real glass brought from the coast, so that Ocean-Born-Mary would be the first woman in this vicinity to have glass in the windows of her home.

The staircase in the front hall, perhaps the finest piece of workmanship about the mansion, had delicately turned spindles and a very high rail, to remind the Captain of the rail of his ship. This lovely staircase was enclosed in fine paneling and was much admired by all who saw it.

Primeval pines furnished long wide boards for the wainscoting and paneling.

Inside shutters, those sliding into the wall, were placed on all the windows of the first floor, perhaps another reminder of the Captain's ship.

All the floors were laid as were ships decks, and in the kitchen with its massive fire-place and brick oven, the floor was slanted like a ships deck from the great hearth-stone to the outer wall. Also were the door and window frames slanted, and the Captain always felt more at home in this room.

As befitting a country estate, a compartment was built into one of the large chimneys for the purpose of smoking hams and bacon. The massive box-locks with their oval brass knobs were a mark of wealth.

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One day a traveler stopped and after being fed, told the Captain that he was an astrologer and would like to read the Captain's chart. The Captain was interested, as was everyone, and give the astrologer his birth date. With this information, he erected a chart of the heavens at the time of the Captain's birth and proceeded to read it. Much to the Captain's surprise, the astrologer told him of his eventful life, of his good fortune or bad, and his love affair which turned out so disasteriously. The astrologer now said that he would look into the future, and progressed the Captain's chart. He studied this in silence for some time, and the Captain growing impatient asked if there was anything wrong. At last the astrologer replied that the Stars indicated that the Captain would meet with a violent death, some years hence. He could not be sure of the year, but in the not far off future, the Captain's Star would be in the eight mansion, the mansion of death, and badly afflicted by Mars, the war lord, from the twelfth mansion, the mansion of enemies.

The Captain laughed and replied that he still had his strength and his mighty cutlass. He could still protect himself, and he had the trusty John always near him. John removed the jeweled dagger from the place where he had always kept it, and told them that he had never had occasion to use the dagger in defence of the Captain and hoped he never would. Everyone laughed, though Mary could see that the astrologer's prediction had affected the Captain, but she relied on John and his dagger to see that no harm came to him.

As the years rolled by the astrologer's prediction did not come to pass and was forgotten. The Captain became an old man, his gray hair turned white, and his great strength began to leave him. The faithful John, he too, an old man by now, was always near his master, and they spent the hours together smoking and talking over old times.

John always reproached himself, and felt that he might have done something to keep the Captain from becoming a pirate, but Captain Pedro told him it was destiny; it was in his stars, it had to be and perhaps after all it was best.

He did everything possible to make life happy for Mary, did for her as he would have done for Jane.

Late in the afternoon on a beautiful autumn day, while Mary and the Captain were walking in the fields, Mary called his attention to the sunset. The sun, a ball of fire, was sinking beyond the distant hills, and as the Captain turned and saw it, he gan an exclamation, "The Flying Dutchman".

Mary wanted to know if anything was wrong, but the Captain would only tell her that it was a bad omen. Mary laughed, but saw that the Captain was affected by this superstition. On returning to the mansion she told John of this, and he too seemed to think it a bad omen, but told her that he would watch the Captain, that no harm might come to him.

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The next afternoon while the Captain was taking his afternoon nap, Mary called John, who was with him, to do an errand for her. On returning a few moments later, John found the Captain missing. He rushed back to Mary telling her. She, thinking of the bad omen, told John to go in one direction and she would go in another; they must find the Captain.

John ran out at the side to the barns, while Mary rushed to the back of the house and down to the grove behind, a favorite walk of the Captains. From a distance she saw two figures moving among the trees, and as she drew nearer saw that it was the Captain and another old man fighting with cutlasses. As the autumn sunlight illuminated the gorgeous foliage, she could see the figures lunging and slashing, the glint of the steel flashing in the sunlight. Realising that she was powerless to stop this fight, she turned and fled to the house for John. As she drew near the house, John appeared and Mary, now quite out of breath, stopped and pointed toward the grove. John sensing that there was trouble, rushed past her, Mary following as quickly as she could.

As John drew near he saw that the two old men were nearly exhausted, but before he could reach them, the Captain's antagonist lunged forward and thrust his cutlass through the Captain's body. As he tried to recover, John grappled with him, and with his jeweled dagger killed Tony, and avenged the death of his master.

The Captain was mortally wounded, and John and Mary knew that he had only a few moments to live. He told them not to worry, as he was going to a better world where he would see Jane again and would be waiting for them. He began to talk about his treasure, but had become so weakened that he could not proceed. Then with a gasp, he expired in Mary's arms.

He was taken to the Blue Room where he would lie in state until the funeral. Word of his death quickly spread, and the country people flocked to the mansion to mourn the death of the Captain, as he had done so much for them. When the mansion was built, a tomb had been constructed under the great hearth-stone in one of the kitchens, and this massive stone was raised as preparations were made for the funeral.

The funeral of the Captain, an impressive affair, was attended by a throng of country folk for miles around, and many friendly Indians. They had known the Captain as a kindly gentleman, retired from the sea, but knew not that he had been a famous pirate.

The Captain was lowered into his tomb, with his mighty cutlass and his black flag, which he brought with him from the sea, was wrapped around him. John having no more use for the jeweled dagger, placed it upon his breast. Then the massive stone was lowered, and the Captain, after a long and adventurous life, lay at peace with the world.

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After the Captain's death, John spent much of his time in the kitchen, sitting on the settle near the great hearth-stone. Mary found him many times talking to the Captain, and John told her that the Captain would come soon to fetch him. Mary tried to console him, but she knew that he would never be at peace until he had joined his master. The others thought these conversations only the babblings of an old man.

One night late in October, Mary was awakened by the sound of hoofs and the rumble of wheels. Looking out of her bedroom window, she saw a ghostly stage-coach come down the hill and pass the mansion. It stopped at the well near the apple tree, a white figure opened the door, another one got in and the coach rumbled on again down the road.

The next morning John was found dead in his bed, and Mary knew that the Captain had come for his old friend.

Though the loss of the Captain and John saddened Mary, she knew that she must carry on, as she still had her sons and her grandchildren.

From time to time as she needed funds, being a strong and sturdy woman, she dug up the chest and removed enough to satisfy the needs of her family, but told no one from whence the money came.

Her sons arose to high positions in the community, and when the Revolutionary War began, they were commissioned officers in the Continental Army, one a Major and another a Captain. They gathered men to fight and drilled them on the hill above the mansion. Their training complete, they were off to War, returning from time to time on short furloughs. Her sons away, Mary managed the estate, and felt that the Captain was always near to guide her. The War over, her sons returned, and a great celebration was held.

Though Mary told no one of the treasure, she planted trees, elm trees, to mark it, as the Captain had told her it was always the custom of pirates to mark their treasure. She made a diagram which she hid in a secret compartment of her desk, but felt that she would tell her sons if anything remained in the chest before she died.

Every year Mary's birthday was celebrated. In 1800, when she was eighty years old, she painted the American Eagle on the large panel over the fire-place in the Blue and White room, and thence forth, it was known as the "Eagle Room". Sixteen stars were painted above the eagle, and sixteen stripes on the shield, there being that many States in the union at the time.

Mary traveled about the country in her coach and four, bringing gifts to those who were ill, and helping her less fortunate countrymen, with ~~money~~ taken from the treasure chest.

Every year at Thanksgiving, when the harvest had been finished, there was feasting at the mansion.

As the years flow by, and Mary became ninety years of age, she spent most of her waking hours in the Eagle-Room, at her desk writing a diary of her life. And as she would sit there writing, and would hear the door latch lift, she knew the Captain was near.

Early in 1814, her ninety-fourth year, Mary felt that her time on earth was nearly over and that she must tell her sons of the treasure left in the chest.

So, on February thirteenth, she summoned them to her bedside in the Eagle. She told them that she heard the rumble of wheels and the beating of hoofs on the ground, but as the ground was covered with a deep blanket of snow, they knew this must be an hallucination.

They raised her so that she might see from the window. Now, unable to speak, she raised her hand and pointed toward her desk near the window. At the same moment, the sun long obscured, flashed out in sudden glory and flooded the room with light. Mary, without another sound, fell back to breath no more. Although she could not speak and tell her sons of the treasure, she had pointed to her desk where the secret was hidden, but her sons thought that she had only pointed to the sunlight.

There was great sorrow at the mansion and the whole surrounding country mourned her death. Many were the people who came to see her as she lay in the Eagle-Room.

The snow filled roads were cleared with massive plows pulled by many yoke of oxen, and her grave was dug by the negro slaves, in the frozen ground on the hill overlooking the mansion.

Late one afternoon, by the light of pine torches, the funeral procession started from the mansion. The black draped bear, carried by negro slaves, silently wound its way up the hill, followed by a long line of mourners. In the weird light of the flaring pine knots, Mary was laid at rest in the family burying ground, and the mourners returned to the mansion.

Suddenly a door was flung open, and in rushed an old negro, wild eyed and trembling. When he had been calmed enough to speak, he said that he had just seen a white coach drive down the road with Mary and Captain Pedro inside, and John outside driving.

The treasure was never found, nor were Mary's famous wedding dress, crystal necklace, and the diary of her life.

The following year her son, the Major, while directing the slaves in the field behind the mansion, was thrown from his horse and killed.

As the years rolled by, Mary's other sons decided to leave the mansion and it was sold.

Then from time to time, it changed hands, and as the history of the mansion and the story of Ocean-Born-Mary faded in the passing years, it was sadly neglected.

But, even in its neglected condition, the Spirits of Captain Pedro and Ocean-Born-Mary lingered near it, and prevented its destruction, and it is said that they will always remain near the old mansion which they loved so well.

Of the treasure, it is said that at the proper time, some one will be led to it, some one who will use it for good purposes.

As the years flew faster and faster, and generation followed generation, the Story of Ocean-Born-Mary faded away in the distance and at last became a legend.

The End

NOTE: If the prophesy is fulfilled and the treasure is found, a sequel will be written, telling the details of its finding and disposal.

R.

