

# DOWNLOAD PDF THE QUAKER PARTISANS. A STORY OF THE REVOLUTION. BY THE AUTHOR OF THE SCOUT.

## Chapter 1 : The Quaker partisans. A story of the revolution. By the author of "The scout".

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MY apology for intruding upon the public with a book connected with a subject so pitilessly be-storied as the Revolution is, simply, that its route is mainly over ground hitherto untraveled. The deep feeling that pervaded the community in the early part of the War of Independence showed no more striking and wonderful manifestation than appeared in the fact that members of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia, still claiming to be "Friends," actually withdrew themselves from the great body of the Society, and organized troops, composed of their own members, to assist in the great struggle. In all respects, except taking up "carnal weapons," -and making good and vigorous use of them too,-I believe they maintained all the religious usages of the Society, and, after the war, they built the church described in the following pages, in which they met for worship under the title of " Free Quakers. I lament that, since the story was written, the quaint little old house of Thomas Sanford has been so deplorably modernized and improved that no one would recognize it. The story has no particular plot, being intended only to tell what certain very irregular people did, under the pressure of varying circumstances, long ago, and having no reference to what regular and sedate people ought to do now. There is nothing grand, nor sublime, nor magnificent, in them; there is no stern or rugged feature, except one of which I will speak in a moment, to be seen, as far as the eye can reach, in that part of them among which my story begins; but the hills roll back in long gentle slopes east and west from the little river; low, exquisitely rounded hills, rolling back and back like waves, with sweet valleys sleeping between them, through which flow small streams, sometimes silently, sometimes gurgling over stones and against sharp turns in the banks, into the river. It is the beauty of tenderness and repose. Soft shadows slumber on the hill-sides and in the valleys, and nestle among the masses of foliage in the woods which still overspread the country. At present there are a few trees scattered over its sides and top, while a number of others, some large and some small, grow in front of it, on the strip of ground between it and the stream which. At the summit, the ground is covered with scattered boulders, some loose, but mostly only cropping out above the surface, which, near the front, is much broken; the highest part humps up, as it were, into a ridge, leaving a rugged, irregular terrace on each side, that on the south falling away rather precipitately, and that on the north stretching away up the stream, as I have mentioned, in a steep bluff, almost resembling an artificial embankment. The ridge above is not more than thirty or forty feet wide where it begins, running back, and gradually widening as it goes, to the distance of perhaps five hundred yards, before it is lost in the level of the ground in the rear; rough near the face of the rock, but growing smoother as you recede from it. Below the rock, for some distance down the stream, and extending two or three hundred yards on each side of it, the ground consists of low and level meadow, rich and fertile, as indeed is all the land in this part of Chester county. On the east side of this road, about two or three hundred yards below the main road, and in full view of the rock, stands a quaint little old brick house with a steep roof, which, though modernized in some respects, still retains one of the narrow windows, glazed with small lozenge-shaped lights set in lead, which was brought from England when the house was built. Verily, William the younger found it an exceedingly bad debt before he had done with it. The sun was sinking behind the trees, and the mist was beginning to settle down along the- course of the stream, while the light grew fainter and fainter as -the night came on. The old man had been sitting silently, his eyes wandering carelessly over the scene before him, when something in the by-road on which the house stood, attracted his attention. Turning partly around in his chair toward the door, he called,"Jenny! Can thee see who it is? At last he spoke. Jenny, get something for this friend to eat-I forgot to ask thee thy name -" "Bettle-William. Bettle," answered the other, dismounting; " but it would be as well, for several reasons, that my name should be kept as quiet as possible. Just call me William; nothing more. Here, Mike," he added, addressing the hired man, who had just made his appearance; "take this critter to the stable and give him a feed

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and some water, and rub him down, and put some straw in the stall for him. The fiery animal, as he felt the heels touch him, sprang from all fours into the air, whirling half round as he did so, and suddenly humping his back in a way that shot Mike up as if from a spring, and landed him in a very crumpled state in the fence-corner on the opposite side of the road, while the horse stood looking at him as quietly as if nothing had occurred. Mike ran with a speed he never accomplished before nor afterward, never stopping till he was safe in the house, with the door bolted. Roland;" and the horse, in the heat of his mad fury, stopped as if he had been struck dead. Where shall I put him? They then returned to the house, where they found supper ready, with Jenny at the head of the table, her mother sitting at a little distance from it, knitting, and Mike in the chimney-corner, recovering, as well as he could, from his fright. Sure I niver was so frekened in my life. Bedad, whin he sthruck at me wid his fore faate, they splut the wellcurb like an axe. The supper was soon over, Bettle being the sole performer, as the family had finished their meal an hour before. He then entered into an explanation of the meaning of his visit. Did Thomas know of such, and would he give him the assistance Frank had promised? But it was strange for Frank to send thee to me on such an errand. Did you never hear of the Free Quakers? Thee will stay here, as a visitor, as long as thee sees proper, and I shall ask no questions about matters that are none of my business. And this reminds me that I have omitted a very important matter, that should have been attended to earlier. Here have I been talking, through the larger part of a chapter, about a young lady, without giving any idea of her personal appearance. The fact is, there was nothing very extraordinary about her to describe. I love to see a broad, well-opened eye, in either man or woman; one into which your own glance sinks, as it were, sounding unfathomable depths of clear light. When Jenny was aroused by conversation, or her attention was attracted in any way, she had a frank, earnest look, straight and steady, into the eyes of the one to whom she spoke or listened; an expression of simple, straightforward sincerity and faith, that showed a nature utterly free from guile in itself or suspicion of it in others. There was something in this look of hers, joined to her low, clear voice, that attracted Bettle as he had never been attracted before. He was a good-looking fellow himself, moderately tall, broad-shouldered and narrow-hipped, with welldeveloped muscles, and a rather small head, surmounted by light curly hair, and with bluish-gray eyes, in which, though their expression usually was mild and quiet, there shone now and then, as he talked of the -war and its events, a light, quick and flashing, that showed that there was a world of reckless daring beneath that quiet exterior. I am afraid that something else was sliding into his mind or his heart-along with this calculation, quite as insensibly, and taking a good deal firmer hold of it. At any rate, unconsciously to himself, his conversation was soon directed almost exclusively to Jenny, who sat opposite him, looking into his eyes with that earnest look I have mentioned, which seemed, without any design on her part, to read what he was saying, even before he had uttered the words. What feelings occupied her mind I will not undertake to say, or whether any but the curiosity and interest a maiden might naturally feel in listening to and conversing with a young and good-looking stranger who was talking upon subjects in which she felt a great interest. Women do not fall in love as promptly as men do. Sophisticated or unsophisticated, trained in the m6nage of society or growing up artless and unsuspecting in the seclusion of home, they keep a better guard upon their feelings, acting unconsciously from the instinct of danger, "a faculty entirely apart from reasoning or judgment, working independently of both, and always on the alert in the weak when thrown into collision with natures stronger and more aggressive than their own. It was so with Jenny Sanford. She was interested in Bettle; she could not help admiring him, and contrasting the gentleness and courtesy of his manner, not only toward herself, but toward her aged parents, with the hearty but frequently uncouth demonstrations of the young men of the neighborhood, who, up to this time, were all she had seen of male society. I said that Jenny was interested in Bettle; and, after the group had separated for the night, she found herself recalling his look and voice with a vague, indefinite kind of pleasure, such as she had never before experienced, and which she neither understood nor thought of analyzing. Even had she possessed experience enough to do so, she would at this stage, with her Quaker feelings, and principles even more powerful, have shrunk from the thought of becoming attached to a soldier, and one whose sole errand in the neighborhood was to procure men for a

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purpose which she had always been taught to abhor as unrighteous and abominable. No, Jenny was not in love, yet; but the soldier had a share in her dreams, nevertheless. THE family were stirring next morning by sunrise; a, good old country fashion, which we in the city have pretty thoroughly got rid of. In the country, had we been with Bettle, as he walked slowly along the road toward a little bridge which he had crossed the evening before, just before reaching the house, we might have seen what he did: If we get up by sunrise in the city, what have we? The sun does not rise on the city at all. He only gets up from behind the houses or the end of the long street, a mile or two off. We have no crisp, dewy air full of the fresh, sweet scent of new-mown hay and cloverblossoms; but, instead, a smoky atmosphere, with a chilly dampness, impregnated with villainous coal-gas, and heavy with a vague, sooty smell, as though it had been cooked over-night and been slightly scorched in the process. Bettle sat upon the rail of the bridge, watching the glancing water as it shot away beneath him, and abandoned himself passively to the influence of the scene around him. Many thoughts passed through his mind. Old recollections of childhood crowded back upon him, some quaint and grotesque, bringing a faint smile upon his face as they trooped fantastically before him; some tender and solemn, full of that indefinite sadness which is not sorrow nor regret, but resembles them only "As the mist resembles rain. From some power of association and sympathy, he felt as though he had always known her. She was the embodiment of many a boyish vision and romantic day-dream. She it was, he knew now, whom, under Protean shapes, he had defended and saved in all manner of imminent perils, in his dreams. Jenny looked as fresh as the morning itself, and blushed just a little as Bettle greeted her, for she recollected something of her dreams, in which the young soldier had figured somewhat prominently. Bettle had recovered his faculties, and with them his cool ease of manner; and no one would have suspected that the frank, off-hand, careless man had in his nature the capability of such a reverie as the breakfast-horn had roused him from. He talked to the old people about the harvest and the prospect of crops, told the young men anecdotes of the war and its stirring incidents, talked with Jenny of the beauty of the country around, inquired of Mike concerning his bones, and offered to introduce him to Roland,-an offer which Mike declined with a grimace, "and, by the time the meal was over, had the whole family as completely at home with him as though they had known him for years. American officer in those days was expected to be able to do as well as his men, or better,-while the two sons stood by, watching with admiration the beauty of the animal, and the skill with which his master groomed him; and Mike stood at a more respectful distance, eyeing the horse rather nervously, especially as the latter, though he stood perfectly still, once or twice turned his eyes toward him, and laid his ears back. Do the people in the neighborhood often come up here? They never come if they can help it, and never stay long when they do. They say it lives under the big rock that sticks out over the water. The boy glanced at him with a half-quizzical look. But who was this Deborah, and what brings her ghost here? Is there any path by which horses can be got up here? But what would thee want to bring horses up for? At any rate," he added, half soliloquizing, "it would be a capital place to retreat to if we were hard pushed. It is too rough and helter-skelter a life for any but young men who have some spare strength and vitality to draw upon. Boys, come down here; I want ye. This-what did thee say was thy name? My name is William Bettle. I am one of the lieutenants of a troop of irregular cavalry under the command of Captain Ellis Clayton, a worthy member, like myself and a good many others of the troop, of the Society of Friends. Does Tommy Sanford know that? Now, I have been perfectly frank with you. What do you say? But I must go; I have several more I want to see to-day. He found it quite refreshing after his warm ride to meet Jenny again, looking as fresh as she had done ill the morning, and with the faintest possible little blush upon her face as she asked him " how many soldiers he had caught? The next morning was a repetition of the one I have already described, with the exception of the reverie on the bridge, which was not repeated. He spent the two weeks in diligently gathering recruits, and training them in the peculiar discipline of the troop, of which he, as indeed were all the lieutenants, was as perfect a master as the captain himself. He found, however, in addition to those he had procured the first day, half a dozen of whom the ducking-episode at the raising had procured him four, on the spot of just that restless, adventurous temperament to which the irregular service he promised them was especially adapted. He had now eleven

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able-bodied young men, all well mounted-this he made a sine qua non and armed, some with rifles, some with fowling-pieces. Satisfied, by this time, that he had possession of all the patriotism of the neighborhood,-all that was likely to be demonstrative, at least, he prepared to return to Philadelphia with his small force. He loved Jenny Sanford. He felt as little doubt that his love was frankly and freely returned. Love is always sudden, lady. I said before that women do not fall in love as promptly as men do; but when you first discovered that you loved your husband that is, or is to be, I care not which, were you not conscious of a feeling in your heart that was never there before? Something new and strange, and of a wondrous power, to which you had been, up to that moment, a stranger? Well, the day came. The new recruits were waiting on the Lancaster road, and Bettle stood with Jenny at the gate of the old farm-house to say farewell.

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