

THE STORY OF ROME

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Verginius left his beautiful young daughter Virginia in the care of her nurse

THE STORY OF ROME

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES
TO THE DEATH OF AUGUSTUS

TOLD TO BOYS AND GIRLS BY

MARY MACGREGOR

AUTHOR OF 'THE STORY OF FRANCE,' ETC.

WITH TWENTY PLATES IN COLOUR
BY PAUL WOODROFFE, W. RAINEY
AND DUDLEY HEATH



LONDON: T. C. & E. C. JACK
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AND EDINBURGH

TO
IAN AND WILLIE TAYLOR

DEAR IAN AND WILLIE,—The Story of Rome has been written, as you know, in your beautiful, quiet old garden.

And as the story grew, the short cold days of winter passed and the long warm days of summer were here.

In the garden a miracle had been wrought. It had become alive.

After slow, persistent struggle with storm and frost, the delicate bare branches were no longer bare, but clothed in living green. The hard black earth too had stirred, and shoots and blades appeared, until at length the garden was ablaze with gold, purple, crimson.

Sometimes I dreamed that, in its own different way, the Story of Rome too was a miracle, wrought out of the tears and throes of a brave and ambitious people.

For the story tells of the birth of a city and of its growth through storm and struggle, until it became a great world empire.

The city which Romulus founded was built upon a single hill; soon seven hills were not great enough to contain her. And when Augustus, the first Emperor of Rome, began to reign, part of Europe, Asia Minor, Egypt, Syria, and a large portion of Africa formed his kingdom.

Although the story was written in the quiet of your garden, little of its peace has stolen into the tale, and for that you boys may care for it the more.

As you read, fierce battle-cries will ring in your ears, and the clash of arms will startle you. You will hear the tramp of armies marching to new lands to conquer them and their treasures for Rome, the city of their love.

Sometimes you will catch your breath in horror as you read of terrible and cruel deeds, for the Romans were often pitiless, showing little mercy to those they conquered.

But at other times your breath will come quick with wonder as you read of the dauntless courage, the rare endurance of these mighty men of old.

And if there are many things which you do not admire in the people of Rome, yet they possess one virtue which you and every British boy and girl may not only admire, but gladly imitate.

What that virtue is I will leave you to find out for yourselves as you read *The Story of Rome*.—Yours affectionately,

MARY MACGREGOR.

THE STORY OF ROME

CHAPTER I

THE LADY ROMA

LONG, long years ago, Troy, one of the great cities in Asia Minor, was taken by the Greeks.

Many mighty Trojans had defended their city well, and among them all none had fought more bravely than the prince Æneas.

But when Æneas saw that the Greeks had set fire to the city, he fled, carrying, it is said, his father on his shoulders, and grasping by the hand his son Ascanius.

Moreover, so precious to him was the sacred image of the goddess Pallas, that he saved it from the burning city.

The gods, pleased with his reverence, helped him in his flight by building a ship. So when Æneas reached the sea he at once embarked in it, with his followers and their wives, and sailed away to seek for a new land in which to build a new city.

As the Trojans sailed they saw a bright star shining above them. Day and night the star was always to be seen, showing the seafarers the direction in which to steer.

At length the Trojans reached the western shore of Italy, and here, at a town called Latium, they disembarked.

The women were weary of the sea, and no sooner had they landed than they began to wonder how they could persuade their husbands

to journey no farther, but to settle in the pleasant country which they had reached.

Among these women was a lady of noble birth, who was wise as she was good.

Roma, for that was the lady's name, proposed that they should burn the ship in which they had sailed. Then it would be impossible for their husbands to go any farther in search of a new home.

The other women agreed to Roma's daring plan, and with mingled hope and fear the ship was set on fire.

When the men saw the flames devouring the vessel they were troubled, but when they found out how it had been set on fire, they were angry.

Yet, as anger could not give them back their ship, and as Italy was a pleasant land, the men did as the women wished. They settled near a hill called Mount Palatine, and there they built a city.

Some old stories tell that the city was called Rome after Roma, the noble lady who had first thought of setting the ship on fire.

But other stories say that the country in which Æneas landed belonged to a king named Latinus, who welcomed the Trojan, and gave him ground on which to build. Æneas married Lavinia, the daughter of the king, and called the city which he built after her Lavinium.

Soon after this, King Latinus was killed in battle, and then for three years Æneas ruled well and wisely not only over his own Trojan

followers, but also over the subjects of his royal father-in-law. His people he now called Latins, in memory of King Latinus.

When the three years were passed, war broke out against the Etruscans, who were at that time the most powerful tribe in Italy.

One day a terrible storm overtook the armies on the battlefield; so dark grew the clouds that the soldiers could not see each other.

When at length the sky cleared Æneas had disappeared, and was seen no more on earth.

‘The gods have taken him away,’ said the Latins. So they built an altar, and henceforth worshipped their king as the god Jupiter.

Ascanius, who had escaped from Troy with his father, now ruled in Lavinium. But he soon found that the city was not large enough for all his people; so, leaving Lavinium, he built a new city, and called it Alba Longa, or the Long White City.

Alba Longa stood in the midst of the Alban hills, not far from the site on which Rome itself was soon to be built.

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