

Literature, &c.

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From Graham's Magazine.
LANSDOWN,
OR THE FIELD OF GENTLE BLOOD.
A True Tale of the Great Civil War.
BY HENRY WILLIAM HERBERT.

Chapter III.
[Continued from our last.]
A RETROSPECT AND A RESULT.

AND who, methinks I hear it asked, who was Sir Bevil Greenvil, that his death only should have made the king's victory at Lansdown a defeat rather than a triumph.

America should know Sir Bevil, not only that the man, whether he had been born a baronet or a clown, was a good man, a man of mark, a man such as in times less fruitful of great events, and their consequence, great characters, might well have stamped an epoch—but that, if not to him, to his family she owes something; and that, as to an individual to know his remote ancestors good and glorious, so to a state it is something to have its founders and their families worthy the praise of ages.

Sir Richard Greenvil—an error of our historians, into which the accurate and industrious Bancroft has fallen with the rest, has changed his name to Grenville, a different and more nobly titled family—the grandfather of our hero, was distinguished, when to be distinguished was no slight achievement, among the extraordinary characters who graced the era of Elizabeth of England.

Second to Raleigh only, his friend and companion, Sir Richard Greenvil was one of the boldest and most skilful of those daring navigators who steered their little barks scarce larger than the long-boat of a modern frigate, across the trackless ocean to the shores of the new woodland world, then styled, in honor of their virgin queen, Virginia.

On the 9th day of April, 1585, he sailed from Plymouth with seven vessels, bearing one hundred and eight persons to Carolina, its first settlers, with Lane, a soldier of distinction for its governor—on the 26th day of June, in the same year, his fleet, after incurring many dangers, and narrowly escaping shipwreck, made its way through the Ocracoke Inlet into the Roanoke.

A year had passed, and the colonists were waxing weary of the hardships and the perils of the wilderness, were looking towards the ocean for supplies from England, and sighing for the luxuries of the cities of their native land, when of a sudden it was rumoured that the sea was white with the sails of three-and-twenty ships, and within three days Sir Francis Drake had anchored his fleet at sea, outside of Roanoke Inlet, in the wild road of their habour. He had come, on his way from the West Indies to England, to visit the domain of his friend.

But it was vainly that with high heart and noble words he encouraged them; vainly that he gave large supplies—for Lane had yielded to the despondency of his man, and deserting his post with undue precipitation, with all the colonists, he embarked homeward with the great navigator.

A few days after this departure a ship arrived, laden with all the stores needed by the infant settlement. It had been despatched by Raleigh. But finding the "Paradise of the world" deserted, it could only return to England.

Yet a short time, but another few days later, Sir Richard Greenvil was again upon the coast, and resolute that England should not lose that noble colony, he left upon the island of the Roanoke fifteen men, to be guardians of the English rights.

It was to this man's earnest energy, second to that of Raleigh only, that Carolina owes her colonization by that noble race of cavaliers and gentlemen, whose families, whose names, whose chivalric and gallant principles yet dwell in her pleasant places.

And she, too, was well watered, before that colony was firmly planted, by some of the gentlest blood of England. And on her soil it was that Virginia Dare was born, the first child of English parents that saw the light on the soil of these United States.

Verily Carolina has some reason to remember the name of Greenvil, to look with some jealousy of interest to the career of the descendants of her founder.

Bright and brief, as is oftentimes the case with the best and noblest of our race, was that career.

And on the Field of Gentle Blood, virtue and gallantry, love, and all but fame, perished with good Sir Bevil.

It was late in the first year of that war which ended in the death of Charles upon the scaffold, that the Parliament being the masters of all Devonshire, and thinking easily to be the masters of Cornwall likewise, "sent their whole forces out of Somerset and Dorset to join those of Devon, and make an entire conquest of Cornwall," under Ruthen, a Scotchman, then the Governor of Plymouth, and the Earl of Stamford.

But greatly were they deceived in their purpose; for though Sir Ralph Hopton, the commander for the king, was vastly their inferior in numbers, yet with so much alacrity of zeal and loyalty, did Sir Bevil Greenvil, the generally most loved man of that county, Sir Nicholas Slanning, John Arundel and John Trevannion raise regiments of volunteers, ready

young gentlemen of the most considerable families of the county assisting them as inferior officers; and with such energy and activity of will did they labour to train them to the use of arms, that, within a very short time, they had near fifteen hundred men of foot raised, armed, and well disciplined for action.

With these they gave battle speedily to Ruthen, nigh Liskard upon Bradock Down on ground of his own choosing, and utterly defeated him, taking, with the loss of but a few common men, and no officer of name, twelve hundred prisoners, most of their colors, and all their cannon.

It was in this slight skirmish, otherwise hardly worthy of a place in history, that a circumstance occurred, in no small degree honorable both to the men and to their good and generous commander.

It is on record of the Cavaliers in this action—and here I will take the liberty of pointing out that I have seen this fact perverted by a recent writer, on the other side of the question, and represented as bearing on the conduct of both parties during the civil war, in which sense it is notoriously untrue—it is recorded, I say, of the Cavaliers, that they were always more sparing than is usually known in civil wars, shedding very little blood after resistance was given over, and having a very noble and Christian sense of the lives of their brethren; inasmuch that the common men, when they have been pressed by some fiercer officers to follow execution, have answered that they could not find it in their hearts to hurt men who had nothing in their hands.

A few days after this, again, Ruthen was beat at Saltash, and, hardly getting into a boat, escaped to Plymouth, losing all his ordnance, all his colors, and all the prisoners who had escaped from Liskard, and leaving the Royalists again masters of all Cornwall.

Early in the next year, after again beating Sir George Chudleigh and the Earl of Stamford at Launceston, near to Pendennis Castle, the Cornishmen advanced, under Prince Maurice and the Marquis of Hertfordshire, into Somersetshire, easily sweeping all the country, taking in three days Taunton, Bridgewater, and Dunstar Castle.

In the meantime, Sir William was sent down to take command in Bath, with a powerful force, well appointed with horse, cannon, and dragoons, in order to make head against the Royalists.

The Cavaliers were now at Wells, and skirmishes were fought almost daily, with various and nearly alternate advantage.

At Mendip Hill, the prince, with Robert Dormer, Earl of Caermarvon, defeated with two regiments of horse a vastly superior force of cavalry and dragoons, losing four-score of their own men, and killing thrice that number of the enemy.

A few days after this they advanced to Frome, and thence to Bradford, within four miles of Bath. And now no day passed without action, and very sharp skirmishes, Sir William Waller having received from London a fresh regiment of five hundred horse, under the command of Sir Arthur Hazlerig, which were so prodigiously armed that they were called by the other side the regiment of *lobsters*, because of their bright iron shells, with which they were covered, being perfect cuirassiers, and were the first ever so armed on either side, and the first that made any impression on the king's horse, who, being unarmed, were not able to bear a shock with them, besides that they were secure from hurts of the sword, which were almost the only weapons the other were furnished with.

So passed the time until the fifth day of July, when all announced the approach of a greater and more decisive action than had as yet been fought in the west.

Several attempts had been made by the marquis and Prince Maurice to give the enemy battle on equal terms, which he still avoided; and now the cavaliers advanced to Marshfield, five miles beyond Bath on the Oxford road, presuming that they should draw down the Roundheads from their ground of advantage, seeing it was their chief object to prevent the western army from joining the king at Oxford.

And now it followed, that through over-confidence and a careless contempt of their enemies they suffered themselves to be engaged at vast disadvantage and might well have been utterly defeated, but for the desperate and daring courage of the old navigator's grandson.

The range of Lansdown heights towards Marshfield, sinks not down gently in a long declining slope into the level country, but falls abruptly in one or those steep rounded swells peculiar to the chalk formation into the plain at its foot. Over the easiest part, the centre, of this ridge, the high road passes, but on the right hand and the left, the hills are almost inaccessible; and being covered with a thick growth of coppice, and a few stunted firs, they offer an excellent position of defence for musketry and marksmen.

To this brow, then, it was on the fifth day of July, Sir William Waller advanced with all his host, resolute to give battle and prevent the intended junction of the royal forces.

The whole front of his position being the brow of the precipitous hill, was fortified by a line of works and redoubts, admirably well constructed with fagots and earthen banks, cannon were planted there, and the redoubts were lined with strong bodies of small shot.

The woods on the right hand and the left, he garnished with musketeers sufficient to maintain them against any reasonable attack; and on a fair plain at the summit he posted his reserve of horse and foot, ready to charge the enemy on any point where he might be in force, or to

relieve and comfort any part of his own lines which might be worsted.

His position was in itself a strong one. It had indeed not one weak point, for the high road, by which only it could be assailed, was flanked on both sides by the fire of his lines, and afforded a fair ground for charging with horse the columns of the enemy before they could deploy, even if they should win the summit; which seemed almost impossible, scoured as they must be and ransacked by a converging fire of musketry and ordnance.

It had, moreover this supreme advantage, that the operations of the defence all lay *within*, while the attack must be made *without* the circumference of a circle; rendering it comparatively difficult for the cavaliers to re-inforce their columns of attack.

Having thus, like a good and wise commander, strengthened himself at all points, Sir William Waller pushed down from his position a heavy body of horse and dragoons to beat up the enemy at Marshfield.

It was as lovely a morning as ever shone out of a summer heaven over a scene of rich soft landscape, when, as the Royal host were breakfasting, fearless of interruption, the scattering shot of their out-posts and the loud startling clangor of the cavalry trumpets, informed them that there was something to do.

The first man in the saddle, as ever, was the Earl of Caermarvon—"who always charmed home"—and with his single regiment, he fell so hardily, and with so vigorous a charge, on the advance of the Roundheads, that he checked them, and gained time for the marquis and the prince to put their forces in array and come up to their succour.

Then you should have heard the din of kettle-drum and bugle, clanging and flourishing the call to arms; you should have seen the officers spurring from post to post with orders; and the leaders, toiling with voice and truncheon, to order their battalies.

Then you should have beheld the seeming rush of disorder and confusion, out of which momentarily grew ordered ranks and seemly discipline.

It was not long, with such colonels of regiments as Sir Bevil Greenvil, and Slanning, and Trevannion, before the army was prepared to bide the onset.

The enemy's horse were forced back on their main body and beaten in charge after charge; but when they came in sight of the formidable, and as it seemed almost inaccessible, position of Sir William, "as great a mind as the king's forces had to cope with the enemy, they resolved not to attack them to so great disadvantage."

Nothing remained then, when it was evident that the rebels would not come down from their place of strength, but to fall back to their old quarters.

Sir William Waller saw, and regretting the prudent move, unwontedly prudent, of the Cavaliers, resolved to risk something to bring on a general action, and instantly lunched all his horse and dragoons into the plain by the hollow road, upon the retreating columns.

The artillery had already been drawn off, and the infantry was in full retreat, when down the hollow road which they filled entirely with one vast mass of bright steel casques and orange scarfs and proud chargers, the Round-head horse burst down on the king's cavalry.

Undauntedly the prince and the stout earl swung out to meet them, but for all the exertions of their officers, who played their parts with invincible valour, the slightly armed Cavaliers could not be brought to charge with their wonted fiery impetus.

Before the solid shock of the iron-clad invulnerable Roundheads the royalists recoiled, amazed and thunder-stricken; the rather, that never till that day had they met any horse, who had dared to withstand them, face to face, much less who had been able to hold ground against them.

It was hard labor then to rally them at all; though the prince rode through their ranks exploring them by their old renown and unblemished honor, though the hot high souled Dormer reproached them with words of fire; and hardly would it have been effected thus, but that the Cornish foot, pricked by the sound of battle, as the high blooded charger by the spur, breathless with running, their long muskets at a trail, Greenvil and Slanning leading their advance, eager as to a banquet, came up to their aid in good time.

Then in place of the clang and clash of rapier and cuirass, rose the sharp rattling roll of the tremendous musketry, which had swept Bradock's Down; and ravaged Ruthen's lines at Saltash.

Then, foot by foot, could be traced the progress of the charge of those wild footmen by the wild Cornish cheer, by the blended wacrics of Greenvil, Arundel, Trevannion, Slanning, rising above the feeble shouts of the half beaten Roundheads.

In vain Waller's dragoons, trained to fight on foot as on horseback, met them with heavy volleys from their musketoons; for, charging with the butts of their heavy guns, they cleared the way in a moment.

In vain Hazlerig's lobsters poured their steel-clad masses against their naked front.

Steel cap and corset were no more defence than the frieze jacket against that murderous storm of bullets—rider and horse went down; and they drew off discouraged and discomfited.

Then, winging their rallied horse with Cornish musketeers, who lapped the enemy's flank with incessant fire, Caermarvon and the prince charged home and vanquished the invincibles.

Fresh bodies were poured down from the ground of vantage, and with augmented numbers, the rebels faced about and again fell

again and again into disorder before that deadly fire; before those fierce impetuous charges.

Yard by yard they were beaten in—till at last decimated in numbers, deprived of their confidence and moral spirit, they scarce recovered themselves in their impregnable position, under the cannon and redoubts of their fresh infantry, who had not that day drawn a trigger.

Satisfied now with the successes of the day, the Prince would have ordered off his victorious soldiery.

The Cornishmen, however, were not satisfied.

For when the order reached them to retreat, they raised at once three bursts of their fierce cheering, and called aloud, "Their cannon! their cannon! we want to bring off their cannon from the hill!"

There was a doubt among the leaders; but Bevil Greenvil plead so hard, urging the spirit of his men, and the demoralization of the enemy, that he prevailed.

Then on they went, Nicholas Slanning storming the woods on the one hand, and Trevannion on the other, and Sir Bevil leading his pikes to the left of the high road, on which he was covered by his horses, right in front of the redoubts under the fire of musketry and shot of ordnance, charged, to the teeth, three times by horse in full career.

Onward! still onward! unchecked by the storm of round and grape which tore their files asunder; hurling the horse from their leveled pikes, as the bull hurls the mastiff from his horns of proof, shaking the earth by their compact and solid tread, sweeping away every formation of the foe by their tremendous volleys, making the welkin ring with their thunderous cheering—onward went that astonishing English infantry!

That same English infantry, with the same spirit then, the same mixture of heroic dash, and dogged perseverance which has since rendered it the world's wonder!

On it went, bearing all before it!

And now the lines are won, the victory was all but complete; when a fresh charge was poured upon the royal foot, as they deployed in some confusion on the hill's brow.

Sir Bevil, clad in but slight half-armor, like many of the leaders for the king, conspicuous by his blue scarf and black feather, dashed his spurs into his chargers flank, and rallying his pikes in a moment, met the Parliamentarians in full shock.

A Roundhead officer, all steel from head to foot, confronted him, with a broad orange scarf above his corset.

But as Sir Bevil, feeling as it were by an instinctive sense who was his new opponent, sprang on to meet him; he avoided the hand-to-hand encounter; drew a long pommel from his holster, and discharged it full into the chest of Greenvil's charger.

Down went the brave beast headlong, and while the rider was struggling up, still cheering his men in that deadly peril, a pike-head pierced his corset, and a Lochaber axe, wielded by one of the Scotch footmen, broke all the fastenings of his helmet by a tremendous downright blow, and left him bare-headed.

At the same moment the mounted officer sprang down from his saddle, sword in hand, and opening his vizor, displayed the countenance, kindled with every hellish passion, of George Chudleigh.

The fallen leader, wounded but still alert and courageous, made violent efforts to extricate himself from his fallen horse, raising himself on his left hand and wielding his sword skilfully and powerfully with his left.

Again the huge poleaxe fell, and dashed his right arm down shattered and useless by his side.

And then George Chudleigh—there was now no more danger—rushed in and clove his bare head with reiterated blows of his keen broadsword, shouting—

"To hell! to hell! and say George—"

But his infernal triumph was cut short, and he fared ill that in his devilish exultation he had raised the visor of his helmet.

A ball, surely aimed by an unerring marksman, smote him between the eyes, crashed through the base of his brain; and with that frightful curse upon his lips, his soul went—whither?

But blinded with his own blood, faint in the very death pang, forgetful of himself, and mindful only of his monarch, the brave, the good loyalist sprang to his feet, and died erect and fearless, shouting in tones, which went to every heart of those who heard him, high above all the din and roar of battle.

"On! Cornishmen, on! on! and win the day for the king and Bevil Greenvil!"

He spoke and was dead ere the sounds had ceased to ring abroad, but his spirit died not with him.

For then was accomplished, as it is stated upon his monument—it stands, where he fell, on Lansdown to this day—that Bevil Greenvil's spirit, when the man was dead, slew more foes than his living arm had vanquished.

With one appalling yell, 'a Greenvil a Greenvil! victory for the king! vengeance for Greenvil!' the wild Cornishman went in, after one shattering volley at the pike's point and the musket's butt, and won the day within ten minutes, for the king and their slaughtered leader.

Such was the victory which that good man's and gallant soldier's death converted almost into a defeat.

So were the sweet wife's fears and the brave husband's fancy both proved but too prophetic.

Had Greenvil survived Lansdown, and Falkland and Caermarvon fatal Newbury, it may be