

Verbatim extract from Chapter 1 : Parents and Childhood taken from the autobiography of Andrew Carnegie.

I may mention here a man whose influence over me cannot be overestimated, my Uncle Lauder, George Lauder's father.* My father was necessarily constantly at work in the loom shop and had little leisure to bestow upon me through the day. My uncle being a shopkeeper in the High Street was not thus tied down. Note the location for this was among the shopkeeping aristocracy, and high and varied degrees of aristocracy there were even among shopkeepers in Dunfermline. Deeply affected by my Aunt Seaton's death, which occurred about the beginning of my school life, he found his chief solace in the companionship of his only son, George, and myself. He possessed an extraordinary gift of dealing with children and taught us many things. Among others I remember how he taught us British history by imagining each of the monarchs in a certain place upon the walls of the room performing the act for which he was well known. Thus for me King John sits to this day above the mantelpiece signing the Magna Charta, and Queen Victoria is on the back of the door with her children on her knee.

It may be taken for granted that the omission which, years after, I found in the Chapter House at Westminster Abbey was fully supplied in our list of monarchs. A slab in a small chapel at Westminster says that the body of Oliver Cromwell was removed from there. In the list of the monarchs which I learned at my uncle's knee the grand republican monarch appeared writing his message to the Pope of Rome, informing His Holiness that "if he did not cease persecuting the Protestants the thunder of Great Britain's cannon would be heard in the Vatican." It is needless to say that the estimate we formed of Cromwell was that he was worth them "a' thegither."

It was from my uncle I learned all that I know of the early history of Scotland—of Wallace and Bruce and Burns, of Blind Harry's history, of Scott, Ramsey, Tannahill, Hogg, and Fergusson. I can truly say in the words of Burns that there was then and there created in me a vein of Scottish prejudice (or patriotism) which will cease to exist only with life. Wallace, of course, was our hero. Everything heroic centered in him. Sad was the day when a wicked big boy at school told me that England was far larger than Scotland. I went to the uncle, who had the remedy.

"Not at all, Naig; if Scotland were rolled out flat as England, Scotland would be the larger, but would you have the Highlands rolled down?"

Oh, never! There was balm in Gilead for the wounded young patriot. Later the greater population of England was forced upon me, and again to the uncle I went.

"Yes, Naig, seven to one, but there were more than that odds against us at Bannockburn." And again there was joy in my heart—joy that there were more English men there since the glory was the greater.

This is something of a commentary upon the truth that war breeds war, that every battle sows the seeds of future battles, and that thus nations become traditional enemies. The experience of American boys is that of the Scotch. They grow up to read of Washington and Valley Forge, of Hessians hired to kill Americans, and they come to hate the very name of Englishman. Such was my experience with my

American nephews. Scotland was all right, but England that had fought Scotland was the wicked partner. Not till they became men was the prejudice eradicated, and even yet some of it may linger.

Uncle Lauder has told me since that he often brought people into the room assuring them that he could make "Dod" (George Lauder) and me weep, laugh, or close our little fists ready to fight—in short, play upon all our moods through the influence of poetry and song. The betrayal of Wallace was his trump card which never failed to cause our little hearts to sob, a complete breakdown being the invariable result. Often as he told the story it never lost its hold. No doubt it received from time to time new embellishments. My uncle's stories never wanted "the hat and the stick" which Scott gave his. How wonderful is the influence of a hero upon children!

I spent many hours and evenings in the High Street with my uncle and "Dod," and thus began a lifelong brotherly alliance between the latter and myself. "Dod" and "Naig" we always were in the family. I could not say "George" in infancy and he could not get more than "Naig" out of Carnegie, and it has always been "Dod" and "Naig" with us. No other names would mean anything.

There were two roads by which to return from my uncle's house in the High Street to my home in Moodie Street at the foot of the town, one along the eerie churchyard of the Abbey among the dead, where there was no light; and the other along the lighted streets by way of the May Gate. When it became necessary for me to go home, my uncle, with a wicked pleasure, would ask which way I was going. Thinking what Wallace would do, I always replied I was going by the Abbey. I have the satisfaction of believing that never, not even upon one occasion, did I yield to the temptation to take the other turn and follow the lamps at the junction of the May Gate. I often passed along that churchyard and through the dark arch of the Abbey with my heart in my mouth. Trying to whistle and keep up my courage, I would plod through the darkness, falling back in all emergencies upon the thought of what Wallace would have done if he had met with any foe, natural or supernatural.

King Robert the Bruce never got justice from my cousin or myself in childhood. It was enough for us that he was a king while Wallace was the man of the people. Sir John Graham was our second. The intensity of a Scottish boy's patriotism, reared as I was, constitutes a real force in his life to the very end. If the source of my stock of that prime article—courage—were studied, I am sure the final analysis would find it founded upon Wallace, the hero of Scotland. It is a tower of strength for a boy to have a hero.

It gave me a pang to find when I reached America that there was any other country which pretended to have anything to be proud of. What was a country without Wallace, Bruce, and Burns? I find ill the untraveled Scotsman of to-day something still of this feeling. It remains for maturer years and wider knowledge to tell us that every nation has its heroes, its romance, its traditions, and its achievements; and while the true Scotsman will not find reason in after years to lower the estimate he has formed of his own country and of its position even among the larger nations of the earth, he will find ample reason to raise his opinion of other nations because they all have much to be proud of—quite enough to stimulate their sons so to act their parts as not to disgrace the land that gave them birth.

It was years before I could feel that the new land could be anything but a temporary abode. My heart was in Scotland. I resembled Principal Peterson's little boy who, when in Canada, in reply to a question, said he liked Canada "very well for a visit, but he could never live so far away from the remains of Bruce and Wallace.

*Note*The Lauder Technical College given by Mr. Carnegie to Dunfermline was named in honor of this uncle, George Lauder.*