

LIBERTY TREE

Fourth Edition

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A Beka Book®  Reading Program

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Liberty Tree

Eager voices raised a charge,
"People should be free!"
Men agreed and soon became
The Sons of Liberty.

"To meet within a building's walls
Alerts the enemy,
But no one would suspect some men
Talking by a tree."

Thus at a tree began the war,
The fight for liberty.
And from its boughs were proudly hung
The banners of the free.

Soon the rousing news was spread
Across the colonies.
Many men joined in the fight
And chose their Liberty Trees.

And just as brave hearts then were stirred
By banners in a tree,
My heart is stirred to see unfurled
The flag that waves for me.

—Tracy Glockle



Elizabeth Irvine's Ride

Alberta Walker/Mary R. Parkman

Think not of your weakness but the strength of your cause; not of your danger but the greatness of the service which you can render; not of your hardships, but of your glorious chance to live and die fighting the good fight.

Elizabeth Ann was a bright, black-eyed girl who lived in Virginia long years ago when the beautiful Shenandoah Valley was covered with forests instead of smiling farmlands as it is today. She loved to play about under the great trees with her brothers and sisters, and she often longed to ride along the western trail that led over the mountains.

"Some day I shall ride and ride into the blue hills of the sunset," she said. But she knew that dangers lurked in the wild country beyond their plantation at Deerfield. At night she could hear the howling of wolves in the woods and there were, besides, the Indians. From the time she was a very little girl, she had been used to seeing them filing over the trail in their bright blankets and moccasins. Sometimes they looked very fierce in paint and feathers. They always seemed wild and strange.

Shenandoah (shĕn'ən-dŏ'ə)

One day when Elizabeth was a little girl about eight years old, the children were playing merrily in the woods. Suddenly an old Indian woman stepped out from behind a tree and said, “Me Shawnee Kate—much hungry.” While the other children hid away in fright, Elizabeth came running back, her little pinafore filled with cornpone and apples.



pinafore—a sleeveless, apronlike garment
cornpone—flat bread made of ground corn

After that, Shawnee Kate appeared again and again. Sometimes she would nod to Elizabeth and pass by without speaking. Sometimes she would ask for a drink from the well.

Elizabeth would bring her something to eat and say, "It must be a hungry walk over the hills. Some day I am going along the trail, and maybe then you will give me something by your campfire."

"Kate not forget," said the Indian woman.

The years passed and Elizabeth did go over the trail—to a home of her own. The day came when she put her hand in Francis Irvine's and went with him to the clearing called Long Glade. She rode away on her horse, Dundee, a present from her father.

"I have often longed to ride this way," she said to her young husband; "and now it is truly my trail—the way to my new home."

The days at Long Glade were happy and busy. There was no time to be lonely, not even when she was alone in the cabin from morning till night. She sang as she spun her linen and carded the wool that was to make clothes for herself and her husband. The pewter plates, too, that shone like silver on the dresser, proved her a good housewife.

pewter—made of an alloy of tin
with lead, brass, or copper

One day her husband said, "We are all going on a long hunting trip. It is just the time to get our winter's supply of venison. If we don't get our share now, Kill Buck's braves will not leave a deer on the mountain."

For the first time, the new home seemed very lonely. Young Mrs. Irvine found herself thinking all that afternoon, as she wove her wool and linen into stout linsey-woolsey, of the days when she had played with her sisters about the old home at Deerfield.

A shadow fell across the doorway. There was an Indian woman standing there.

"Why, Kate!" cried Elizabeth in amazement. "I thought you were with your people at South Branch. I didn't know you were in this part of the country. Come in and rest."

"No rest," said the old woman. "I come to tell you. Kill Buck makes ready get scalps Deerfield."

Elizabeth raised her hand toward the great dinner horn. Then she remembered; all the men of the little settlement were away chasing deer on the mountain. She looked out to where the western sun was dropping behind the trees. It was thirty miles to Deerfield; it would be dark before she could go half the way. There was no time for waiting and think-

venison—deer meat

linsey-woolsey—cloth made from linen
and wool or cotton and wool

ing. There was but one thing to do. She ran to the pasture lot. "Dundee! Dundee! Come, Dundee!" she called. The horse galloped up, whinnying joyfully as she held out the bridle and buckled the saddle firmly on his back. "It's for Deerfield, Dundee!" she called to him softly, bending low over his neck as they started along the trail.

"It's a rough trail," she said to herself, as the horse stumbled in the gathering dusk, "but it's *my* trail, and God will bring us safely through the dark."

Thirty miles is indeed a long way over a rough forest road. Darkness had closed about her before she left the headwaters of the Glade. It was midnight when she came to the first mountain path, Buffalo Gap. Dundee had to feel his way, dodging rocks and stumps. With his wonderful "horse sense" he kept to the trail in spite of the briary undergrowth and overhanging branches that jealously struggled to cover up the man-made way through the wilderness.

Now an owl hooted directly overhead. Again and again came the howls of wolves disturbed by the strange invasion of the dark forest. Elizabeth shivered as she thought that some of Kill Buck's Indians might be hiding there, too.

There were eight more miles to go after the passing at Buffalo Gap. Elizabeth bent over and patted

briary—full of briars; prickly