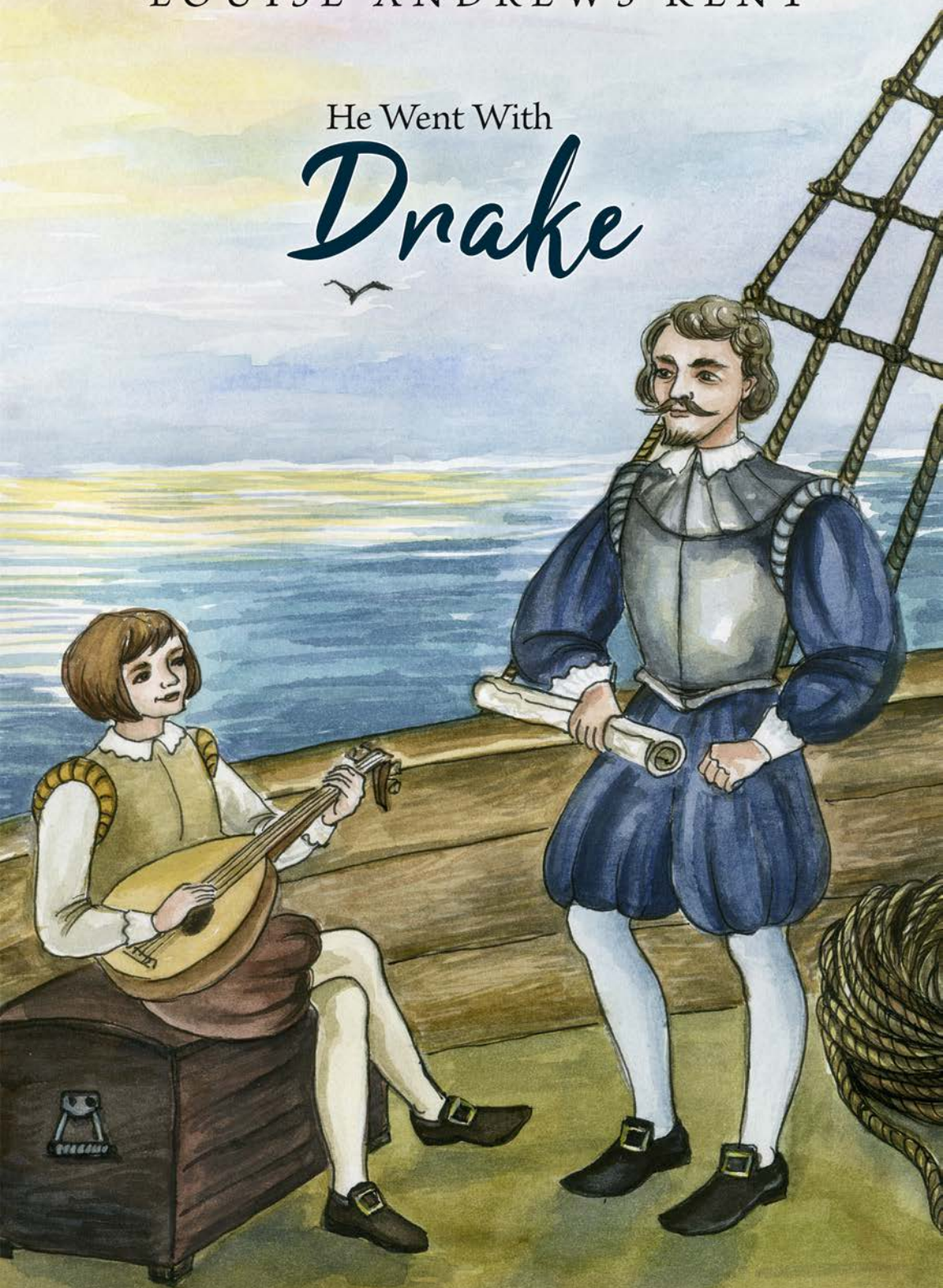


LOUISE ANDREWS KENT

He Went With

# Drake



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*Drake*



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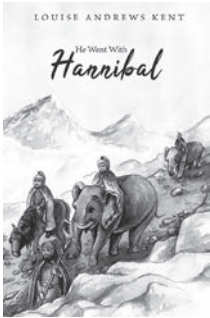
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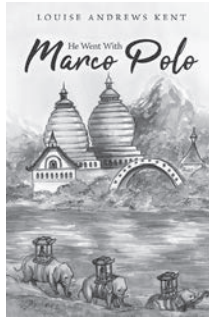
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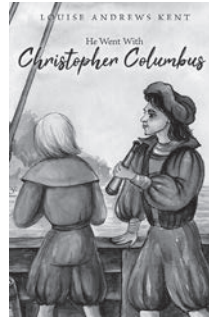
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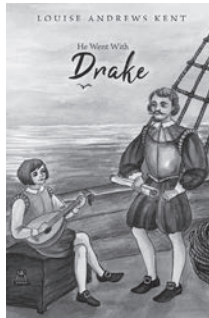
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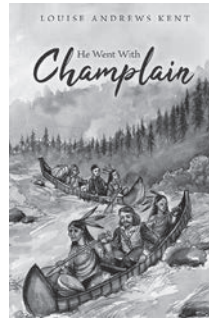
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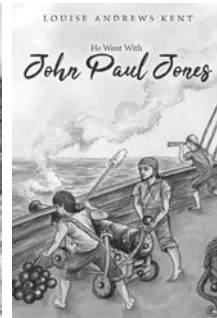
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## CHAPTER 1

# CAMPIONS'

WHEN OLIVER Barrett opened the door of his father's workshop, he sneezed three times as usual. There was always plenty of dust in the shop—dust of ebony, of ivory, of mother-of-pearl, dust of maple and pine and rosewood—of everything, in fact, used in making musical instruments. It floated like gold in the June sunlight.

Perhaps, Oliver thought between sneezes, there's really gold in it. After all there was sometimes gold with jewels set in it on the lutes and citterns his father made.

Stephen Barrett looked up from the mermaid he was carving, smiled at his son and said, "Bless you, Oliver! What is it?"

"My mother asks you, sir, whether the case for the cittern you are making for Master Drake is to be lined with the purple velvet or the crimson. She says if it is to be the crimson I must row across the harbor and fetch a piece. She says that since James and I have learned our Latin and Joyce has made a pudding we may all go—if it is to be the crimson, sir."

"And you think crimson would look best?" Stephen Barrett asked.

He looked solemn, sitting there with his crutch beside him

with the sunlight flashing on his knife, but there was a twinkle in his gray eyes as he added, "I think so too and I'd like well to be on the water myself this fine morning."

"Come too, sir," Oliver said eagerly. "Steer for us. James and I will help you into the boat and Joyce shall bring your cushion."

His father shook his head.

"I must finish this lady's scales and have all smooth and shining in case Frankie—Master Drake—should come. With this south wind it might be today," he said.

"Will it be finished?" Oliver asked.

"The mermaid, yes. That's the last scale. But there's still the rose for the sound hole and the polishing. Oh, there's much to do before the strings sing for us but it will be ready by the end of this month as I promised. See, I have even made the label."

It was a strip of parchment which would be glued on the inner side of the back under the sound hole. It read: "Made by Stephen Barrett of Boston, Lincolnshire, England. June, 1575."

Oliver sneezed again—one of the workmen was sweeping the floor, hunting for a pearl he had dropped—and asked, "If Master Drake lands in Boston today while I'm across there, how shall I know him?"

"Why, by his walk, swinging a little even on dry land as if he were on a ship's deck. And by his look, as if he's just seen a Spanish ship out of those wide blue eyes of his and knows already how to take her. His hair curls a little. It's a sort of brownish-gold but there's red-gold in his beard. I dare say his nose is sunburned and he'll be dressed fine but plain, in good English blue cloth, most like. He may be speaking soft but he never quite keeps the sound of a trumpet or the twang of fiddle strings out of his voice. Oh, you'll know Frank—that is, Master Drake—if you see him. But go across now—don't keep your mother waiting."



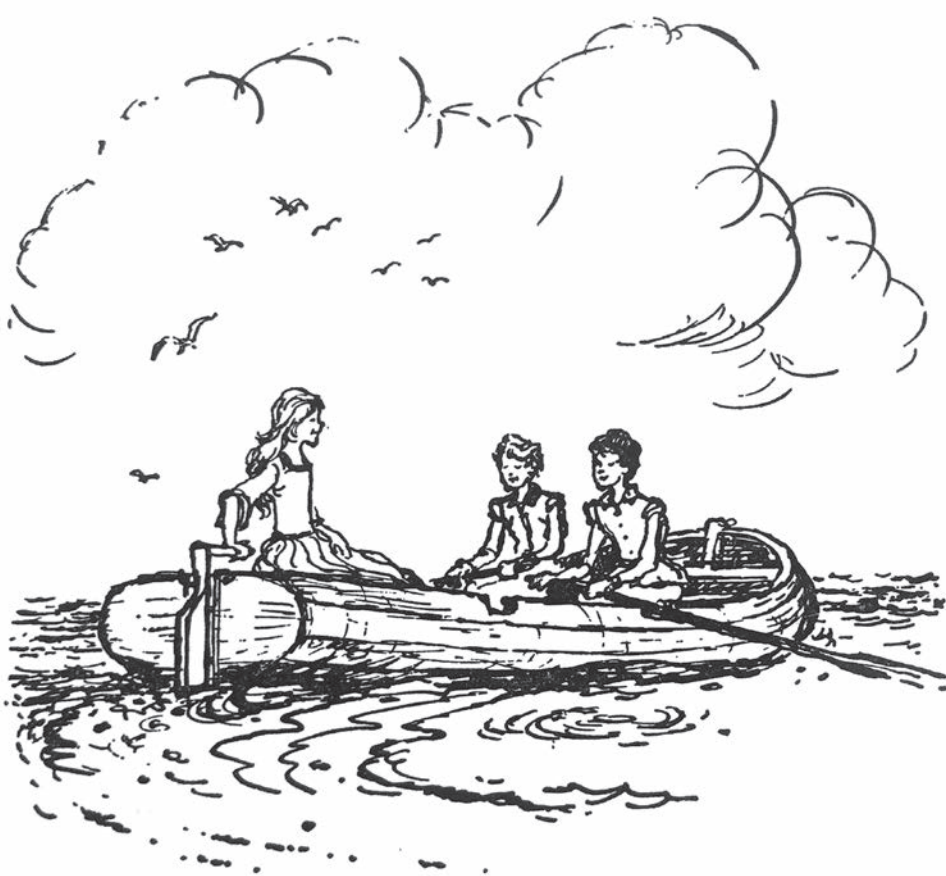
There was a forest of masts over in Boston Harbor that June morning. Far above them rose the tower of St Botolph's church, Boston Stump, people called it because it had no pointed spire, only a lantern. It could be seen for many miles at sea and from far across the flat country around it. Oliver liked to hear its great booming bell ring out the hours. Once the sexton had let him ring it. He felt as if the rope would carry him up into the tower, but the sexton had held him down.

Of course he was small then, only eight. He would be twelve tomorrow and he had grown so tall that his cousins, the Champion twins, were both shorter. For a time Joyce had been taller than either of the boys and could knock them both down; one at a time, that is. Oliver liked her better now that he was taller and stronger than she. Still when he and James heard people say that Joyce looked like an English rose, they both made rude noises.

James would groan and say, "Well, roses have thorns, so has she. Look out for her—she scratches, bites too."

Oliver secretly liked Joyce's sunshine-colored hair, pink cheeks and greenish-blue eyes. Perhaps Joyce knew this, because she had not scratched or bitten him for a long time.

She was in a good mood and steered well as they left the Barrett wharf and started across the dancing blue water of the harbor. Oliver and James, as they tugged at their oars, both talked about their favorite subject, Master Francis Drake. Joyce had heard it so many times that she did not listen much. She knew all about how the Barretts and the Drakes, two Protestant families, had been chased out of Devonshire by their Catholic neighbors and how they had gone to live side by side in two old ships drawn up on the shore in Kent. She knew how her Uncle Stephen and the Drake boys—there were twelve of



them—had tumbled in and out of boats almost before they could walk, how they could swim like dolphins and smell a change of wind like gulls.

She knew how her Uncle Stephen, who had been learning how to make viols and lutes from his father, had run away to sea with Frank Drake and had sailed with him on voyages to the Spanish Main. She knew too that from the last of these voyages her uncle had come home with his right leg cut off far above the knee. It had been hurt by a Spanish bullet. The surgeon said that the wound was poisoned and he could do nothing, but Master Drake had said in a voice like the crack of a whip, “Go and tie up that bleeding finger over there! And leave me your tools.”

He cut off his friend’s leg himself, talking gently all the time, and did it so skillfully, Stephen Barrett would say, “that I hardly

felt the pain till after all was over and then mostly in the part of my leg that was not there. Even now, when the wind changes at night into the east, I dream I'm on the Spanish Main once more with Frankie—with Master Drake—and I wake with my right foot aching," he would add and then go back cheerfully to his work of carving and polishing.

Stephen Barrett had come back from that voyage with gold in his pockets. He had bought a good stone house and had built the workshop and the wharf. He chose the house because his wife liked to live within sight of Boston Stump. He would have liked to buy Campions' for her. It had belonged to her grandfather but hard times had come and the Campions had lost the manor and its farms and broad fields.

It had been bought by some people named Desmond. They had come from Ireland and were strangers in Boston, a place where strangers were looked at carefully and for a long time before anyone called them friends. The Desmonds were Catholics. So were the Campion twins. They were second cousins whose parents had died of the plague when the twins were babies. The Barretts had taken care of them ever since.

They went often to Campions', sometimes for lessons in Latin with Father Andrew, the priest there, sometimes to hear Mass in the chapel. In the happy days since Queen Elizabeth had been ruling over England neither Protestants nor Catholics trembled for their lives. It was the law that English people must go to the services of the Church of England on Sundays but they might hear Mass privately. The twins often went to the chapel at Campions'. Oliver sometimes went too, hearing in Latin many of the words he heard in English on Sundays.

He went because Campions' was to him, as it was to his mother and Joyce, the most beautiful place in the world. James

cared nothing about it. The last thing he wanted was to be a country squire with cattle and sheep and horses on his green fields. He and Oliver both dreamed of far countries beyond the seas, of sailing with Master Drake into secret harbors, of mules loaded with wedges of gold, of ships ballasted with silver. James also dreamed of hanging a necklace of emeralds as big as walnuts around Isabel Desmond's neck. Oliver thought rubies would be better but never said so. The twins both openly admired Isabel and so did Oliver's mother. Isabel's mother was Spanish and Mistress Barrett had a great deal to say about Isabel's Spanish beauty and about her graceful ways. She was a year older than the twins, a few months older than Oliver and was, he thought privately, like a Spanish princess. He said, however, that he did not like her.

Joyce liked her because James did, but the thing Joyce liked best in the world was horses. To spend a day at Campions' and to ride one of Isabel's palfreys was Joyce's idea of perfect happiness.

Their boat was now passing the mouth of the river that flowed past Campions' and into the harbor. Before the boys knew what Joyce was doing, she had steered them into it. Oliver noticed it first because he saw that Joyce had what he called her Campions' look. Her cheeks got pinker and her eyes greener and her mouth twisted into a half smile.

Oliver dug his oars deep into the brown water. After all the tide was rising. It was about as easy to row up the river as across the harbor. The shop where his mother bought Genoa velvet was as near one as the other. Besides he liked to pass Campions'. It was not only beautiful. There was something mysterious about the Desmonds and Oliver liked mystery.

James had been rowing with his eyes shut. He was pretending

that he was at an oar in a pinnace of Master Drake's. It was a black night and before the moon rose they were going to capture a Spanish galleon. Perhaps two. James had not planned just how to do it. He trusted Master Drake to take care of the details. Suddenly he realized that the choppy water of the harbor had become smooth. He opened his eyes and began to tell Joyce what he thought of her steering.

"Horses!" he exclaimed. "Horses! We're going riding, I suppose! Why didn't you stop her, Oliver?"

"She's the Captain," Oliver said. "You and I are only galley slaves. Besides, we'll get there just as fast—if you'll pull your oar, Master Champion."

James grumbled but pulled his oar. They could see Champions' now. It stood a little higher than the river among strangely shaped trees. They knew them all. There was one clipped into the shape of an eagle. Another was an elephant not much bigger than the eagle. There was a knight on horseback and a ship under full sail. Beyond them was a rose garden where the roses showed red and white against the pinkish brick of the walls.

Joyce did not look at the roses or the house with its shining windows and clusters of tall chimneys.

"There's Lady Clare," she gasped, steering almost into the bank.

"Horses!" growled James.

Lady Clare was black. She had a white star on her forehead and one white foot. She was slender and quick. Her mane and tail flowed like dark water over dark stone. Her coat shone like polished ebony. Her eyes were like jewels out of a queen's crown.

This was what Joyce thought.

Oliver was sure Lady Clare would be good to ride. He had

heard the Desmonds' head groom say she was a decent enough little mare with mayhap a drop of Arab blood in her.

To James she was just another horse, an animal that always wanted to go where he didn't. Horses enjoyed starting to jump, then stopping suddenly, pitching you off into a rose-bush. In James's opinion they needed sails and strong steering gear.

As they passed the house Oliver could see several people on the lawn in the shade of the yew trees. Isabel was there, dressed for riding in blue velvet. Oliver's far-sighted blue eyes could see the jewel that pinned the white plume to her hat and the ivory and gold handle of her riding whip. Sir George Desmond's tall black figure leaned against a column with a griffin ramping on it. Sir George usually leaned against whatever was nearest to him. Everything was black about him—clothes, hair, beard, eyes—except the yellowish skin of his face and hands and the yellow-white of his starched ruff. He was not speaking. Indeed he seldom spoke. Beyond a slow courteous "I wish you a good day, faster Barrett," Oliver had never heard him say anything. However, his wife, also in black and about as broad as she was tall, could scold people in Spanish, French and English and she was doing so now in tones easily heard on the river.

"Doughty! Always Doughty!" Oliver heard her say crossly.

Sir George's steward Jonas Oak was always ready to speak for his master. "Sir George wishes... Sir George says... Sir George thinks..." Oak would say, even to Lady Desmond, in his harsh abrupt voice.

Oak was a pasty-faced, heavily built man with small pale gray eyes, one of which usually seemed to be looking past Oliver's left ear. He was dressed in brownish-gray almost the same muddy color as his hair and beard. Stephen Barrett, who

liked most people, said Oak was a fat-fisted varlet and that he would not trust him farther than an acorn would fall on a frosty night. Now Oak said something to Lady Desmond and she was suddenly silent.

Isabel saw them and waved. The boys and Joyce waved too, letting the boat drift back close to the wharf. Oak said something to Father Andrew, the priest, and he called to them to come ashore. He was a cheerful red-faced man who taught Latin to Oliver and James and Isabel.

Joyce steered in towards the wharf. The boys would have gone on to Boston but Isabel called their names. They tied up the boat and walked through the clipped yew trees to the garden.

As they came out past a yew clipped like an elephant, Oak was saying in his harsh grating voice to Sir George: "You are not well enough to ride."

"I want Joyce to ride with me," Isabel said to the boys.

"We have to go to Boston to buy some velvet," Oliver said. "My father is making a cittern for Master Drake to give the Queen. The velvet is to line the case."

"Well, I daresay you are old enough to go alone," Isabel said, switching her whip. "I'll leave Joyce at your house. The groom will bring the horse back. My father was going but he's—he's changed his mind."

"He's not feeling well," Lady Desmond added.

Sir George, who looked no more ill than usual, murmured that he had a slight headache.

Joyce asked politely, "Oh, but would not riding cure it?" yet could not help beaming with happiness when Sir George shook his aching head.

"Sir George needs rest," Jonas Oak said and shouted for the groom. As the girls went to the gate to mount their horses, Oak

turned to Oliver and said roughly, "What's that you said about Drake? Is that pirate here?"

"He's not a—" Oliver began, but started sneezing.

Father Andrew blessed him, laughed and said smoothly, "Ah, Oak will be having his jest! Sure he knows the Queen sends Captain Drake out on her business and well he does it too. How long will he and his friend Master Doughty be staying?"

"Why," Oliver said, "he has not come yet. And I heard nothing of his friend."

There was an odd silence in the garden.

Sir George broke it by saying fretfully, "Your arm, Oak. I must rest now."

"We must go too, Lady Desmond," Oliver said.

She waved him and James away impatiently with her fan of black ostrich feathers. She spoke to the priest in a low voice that grew louder as they followed the path through the yews. It rose to shrill tones as they reached the wharf.

"You and Oak and your fine schemes," she said. "I told you Doughty would not come."

Oliver wondered what she meant, but as they rowed towards Boston, he thought mostly about what had been made for him in the shop for his birthday tomorrow. It was always a well-kept secret, but he was sure there would be something. When he had stood there sneezing that morning he had noticed that old Pieter from Antwerp had a piece of moth-eaten blanket thrown over something beside him. Whatever it was, Pieter had been rubbing it with his own secret polish that smelled like honey because it had beeswax in it. It made pieces of fiddleback maple look honey colored. He had a rag, dark with polish and powdered rottenstone, in his hand but he was not polishing anything.



Well, tomorrow I'll know, Oliver thought.

In the meantime there was the crimson velvet to get and he must find out if Captain Drake's ship had come.

No, he was told, there was no sign of her.

The speaker, owner of a little fishing smack full of sole and haddock, asked if Oliver knew where Master Drake would sail next. Wherever it was, he added, it would make the King of Spain squirm and teach him that he didn't own the ocean.

He had seen King Philip once in London when they called him King of England, a man as cold as a dead haddock, he said.

"And if it comes to a fight between Frankie Drake and that red-eyed yellow-faced king, I'll stake my whole year's catch on Frankie to win," the fisherman added and began to unload his fish.