

**The Pathway to
Cavenor's Garden**

by

Joan Page

Volume IXX

"THE PATHWAY TO TAVENOR'S GARDEN"

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A narrative based on the life of Captain Samuel Tavenor
1621 -1696

17, S43 4RA.
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To John:

Another attempt to bring history to life.

Once gain, there's fact, as found in your own book, a bit of extra information provided by various history books, and quite a bit of imagination where the additional characters are concerned.

Don't try to find Benjamin and Rebecca Foster on any records, or Francis Gibbs, but Major-General Philip Skippon is on record, as is Captain Jarvis.

I found a slight discrepancy concerning the year of Ann's death -1665 on page 45 of 'The Taveners', and 1666 in the family tree on page 51 - so I took the earlier date.

To use the language of the time I've once again referred to books and plays written during and about the time. One of the most reliable checks I find is the use of the King James version of the Bible. For example: thee/thou ye/you

The old Y was originally a form of th, as in 'Ye Olde Tea Shoppe' etc, pronounced 'the'. When printing became widely used it was easier to use the single letter y than the double letter th. Hence written documents tended the use the ye/you, while spoken language continued as thee/thou, and still does in some parts of England, such as our neighbouring Yorkshire.

I've included the floppy disc, so that if you need any more copies all you need to do is find somebody who has an Amstrad PcW10 word processor. Mr. Moorley takes my efforts straight from the disc. There should be a lot of Amstrad users around, as it's the only one of its kind at a reasonable price I believe.

Joan

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Chapter 1 Setting Out

An atmosphere of gloom had settled over the occupants of the seventeenth century farmhouse seated in the large dining room; it was like a cloud of sorrow, occasionally pushed towards the ceiling by the puffer of greyish smoke from the open fireplace, only to descend again and engulf the black-clothed mourners who had gathered together to attend the funeral of gentleman-farmer Samuel Tavenor.

On one side of the fireplace the grieving widow, Elizabeth, silently twisted in her hands the hem of the black woollen shawl draped around her shoulders; close beside her sat her parents, Thomas and Agnes Reynold; around a table in the middle of the room Samuel's brothers William, James, and John spoke in hushed tones as they discussed the contents of their brother's will, whilst Elizabeth and Sarah, the wives of William and John, sat side-by-side opposite their sister-in-law, ready to comfort if they could, but knowing there was nothing more that could be said to ease her sorrow. On a low seat beneath the window the deceased's children, Samuel, Priscilla, and John also sat in silence, as they had been instructed.

All of the members of the Tavenor family who were able to travel had come together on the estate near Romford to say a last farewell to Samuel, who had passed away in the early hours of the morning two days ago; the funeral had been held that morning in the parish church.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by a voice that seemed to emanate from somewhere outside the room, from another world, where grief was not permitted. In clear tones it announced: "Methinks I shall go to London tomorrow."

It was the voice of Samuel's eldest son, Samuel junior.

The uncles seated around the table stopped speaking; all eyes turned towards the fifteen year-old youth, who had risen to his feet, and now bravely faced the adults. It was Uncle John who voiced the question that was on the lips of all who heard the unexpected announcement.

"And what might thy purpose be in going to London, nephew?" he asked.

Samuel was mature for his years, and his realistic outlook on life was enhanced by a strong determination, which any observant spectator would have seen reflected in the square line of his chin, the hard glint in his deep-set grey eyes, and the straight line of his mouth. Normally this severe appearance would have been softened by a more friendly expression, for he was not often so aggressive, but he knew that today he would have a fight on his hands, and it was a battle that he intended to win.

"Methinks 'tis of no concern of anyone but myself," he replied, "But 'twould be well to tell all at the same time, while all of thee be gathered here. I shall go to London to join one of the London Trayned Bands, and I shall learn to become a fighting man."

There was no regular army as such in the land in those days, but in several counties Lords and Sheriffs had formed their own bands of County Militia. Many of these were of little real value when it came to engaging in battle, but The Trayned Bands of London were an exception, for together they comprised a force of six thousand men, many of whom served only part-time, but all of whom were fit, and had been instructed in the use of musket, cannon, and pike.

As Samuel had expected, the uncles showed signs of disbelief and disapproval, the women looked at him in astonishment, while his mother burst into tears.

Samuel walked across to where she sat, and put his hand on her shoulder to comfort her. It was the reaction he had expected, but for some time his mind had been made up, and only his father's illness had delayed his decision; now there was no reason to wait any longer, and he was not to be dissuaded by either threats or tears.

"Thou shalt do no such thing," Uncle William informed him in the calm voice of authority. He turned to Samuel's mother, and asked, in a more kindly tone, "Sister Elizabeth, dost thou know aught of this?"

Elizabeth shook her head, but said nothing, for she was now sobbing as she reached up to take Samuel's hand, hoping he would have pity on her distress, and would change his mind.

Uncle James, in an angry tone added his dissent. "Thou speakest true, Brother William," he said. "'Tis not fitting that a young man from a good family should go so young to join the militia of the town. And there will be work in abundance here for thee to do, nephew. Thou shalt not go, and there's an end to it."

"Thou art too young, nephew. None of the Bands would accept thee," was Uncle John's contribution.

Samuel remained silent; assuming that he had accepted their decision the uncles returned to the discussion of their brother's will, and Elizabeth gradually ceased her weeping. Little did the men realize that their words had had no effect whatever upon their nephew's resolution, and that Samuel, far from changing his mind, had every intention of departing the next morning; he had eased his conscience by informing them of his plan, and that was the reason why he had chosen to tell them all together. It was not as if he was truly needed at home. His mother would be well provided for, and she had John and Priscilla at home to offer any comfort she might need. The servants and farm labourers would serve her as loyally as they had served his father, and before many years had passed, John, who was now thirteen years of age and had far more interest in the farm that he himself had ever had, would be old enough to take his father's place.

Samuel made no reply to Uncle John, knowing full well that this was no time to start a family argument that could only cause his mother further distress. Seeing that he was not inclined to question their decision, the uncles assumed that their order would be obeyed, and returned to their former conversation.

If they noticed at all, they suspected nothing when Samuel retired to bed as soon as dusk began to fall. However, Samuel had not changed his mind; he was merely biding his time.

At the first light of day he saddled his horse, and rode off in the direction of London town.

It was early evening when Samuel reached the outskirts of the town, congratulating himself on his wisdom in allaying the fears of his family, so that by the time they discovered his departure he had already put a considerable distance between himself and Romford.

Having passed through the gate into the city he found a building outside which was a bough of fresh straw, denoting that it was an inn;

it was called the Boar's Head, and having secured for two pence a room for the night, he went for a walk around the town, and marvelled at the sights that met his eyes.

Romford was considered to be a large habitation, with its fine church and prosperous craftsmen plying their wares in the high street shops, but it was nothing like this. Here it seemed as though the entire population of England had converged to trade, to converse, and to enjoy life to the full, and the homes in which they lived were as diverse in appearance as the Londoners themselves.

Instead of low buildings, separated from their neighbours, he saw on the main streets three-storey houses, some of traditional oak, some of brick, and others, belonging to more prosperous citizens, with facades of stone; in addition to thatched roofs there were some made of slate, stone, or tile which would be more substantial in case of fire breaking out, and by the side or at the back of each tall house would be a ladder used to reach the various levels. In many of the houses the lower room which projected into the street was the shop from where a craftsman sold the objects he had made; outside were painted signs bearing pictures of creatures such as lions, eagles and griffins to indicate the nature of the trade, and horizontally shuttered windows, whilst other projections from the upstairs rooms, called penthouses, started at a height of nine feet from the ground so that a man on horse-back could ride beneath them in comfort. Whilst walking across London Bridge alone Samuel had counted over a hundred shops.

Most remarkable of all was the public latrine, initiated by the former Lord Mayor Richard Whittington, which provided two rows of sixty-four seats each, one for the men, and one for the women, located where they could be flushed regularly by the tidal flow of the River Thames, for despite the over-crowding the people of London were ever conscious of the plague that incessantly lurked around the sewers and drains of their city, and they made every effort to keep the streets clean. It was well that this should be so, for the streets, in addition to the taverns and churches, were communal meeting places; it was here that fashionably dressed businessmen conducting transactions rubbed shoulders with ragged beggars asking for alms; here the children played, and prostitutes openly solicited the passers-by. As long as daylight lasted, the streets were crowded, and pick-pockets prospered.

When dusk began to fall Samuel returned to the Boar's Head, where, having made sure that his horse was comfortable for the night, he ordered a jug of ale, and asked the landlord, "Could thou tell me, Landlord, the nearest place where I may go to enlist in the Trayned Bands?"

The landlord considered for a moment, before he asked, "Dost thou wish to know the nearest, or the best?"

Samuel smiled. "The best," he replied.

"Then thou art in luck," replied the Landlord. "The Westminster Band is the nearest, and 'tis reputed also to be the best. 'Tis but a short ride away from here." He proceeded to give Samuel instructions on how to reach the Westminster Band's headquarters.

Having finished his drink Samuel retired to bed; he was tired, and he wished to be up and about early the next morning, determined to waste no time lest his uncles should decide to follow him.

For a short time he lay awake thinking of his mother, regretting that he had not been able to take his leave of her as he would have wished, but it had been an exhausting day, and soon he was sound asleep.

He would not have slept so well had he been aware that two of his uncles had already arrived in London.

Half of the day had passed, and the sun was overhead before Samuel's presence was missed by the family. It was John, his younger brother, who had been the first to become aware of his absence. At first he had hesitated before enquiring of the adults where Samuel could be, for he knew this was not the time to ask questions, when they had more important matters on their minds, but when he questioned the servants one by one, they had had replied that they had not yet seen Master Samuel, and he must be still abed. John knew this was not so, for the two brothers shared a room, and Samuel's bed had been empty when he himself awoke that morning; Priscilla also said that she had seen nothing of their brother since the previous evening; determined to find where his brother was hiding, John made a tour of the outhouses; when he reached the stables he saw that Samuel's horse was not there. It was then that John began to worry, and timidly entered the dining room where his mother and the uncles were gathered.

"Mama," John said, "I have not seen my brother Samuel this day, nor hath Priscilla, or the servants. His horse is not in the stables, and if he hath gone riding early and not yet returned, I fear some mishap may have befallen him."

Uncle William's brow furrowed in a frown. "Doth he often ride early in the morn?" he enquired.

John replied, "'Tis that which doth trouble me, Uncle William. Oft times we do ride together on the common, but today he hath said nought to me."

Uncle William strode from the room, and he also went to question the servants, but all repeated that they had seen nothing of Samuel that day, although the cook did volunteer the information there were signs that he had taken an early breakfast, before she had started work for the day.

"Before sunrise, it must have been," she affirmed.

Uncle William arrived at the conclusion that young Samuel must have carried out his intention of going to London, an opinion which was shared by the other uncles.

"In my mind I believed he had thought better of the plan. 'Twould seem I was mistaken," Uncle William said. He noticed that his sister-in-law was again close to tears; when he did meet with his nephew again there must be a reckoning for the trouble he had caused!

Uncle James comforted her. "Do not thou fear, Sister Elizabeth," he said. "I shall go to London, and bring him back."

"Then I shall go with thee," Uncle John agreed, "yet methinks to bring him back would not be the best answer to this situation. After tomorrow we must return to our homes and to our own affairs. When we are gone there can be no way of being sure this doth not occur again. 'Tis certain he hath made up his mind to be a soldier, whether his family agree or no."

Uncle William, the eldest of the brothers, had listened carefully to what John had said. At last he replied, "Methinks what thou dost say hath some reason, Brother John. Should we fetch him home, he will surely go again whene there is none to watch over him. I recall how our grandfather told me it was the custom in the days of our youth, when England was at war with her neighbours, that the elder son would inherit the land, and the younger chose to earn favour and fortune by following their king."

"But Samuel is the elder son," Elizabeth reminded them.

William replied, "Aye, and 'twould seem he hath passed his inheritance on to his brother."

"We have known for some time he did have little interest in the land," Elizabeth replied. "Dost thou mean we should let him stay in London?"

"Aye, sister, I do mean just that," Uncle William replied. "I suggest we follow him, and arrange for a junior commission to be bought for him, as befits the son of a gentle family. There is the bequest in his father's will, and if he must be a soldier, then 'tis best he should go with no ill-feeling, if thou wilt give thy consent, Sister."

Elizabeth could see that there was truth in what her brothers-in-law said, and although she was sad to be parted from her youngest son, she knew that no good would come of forcibly dragging him back home.

Bravely she replied, "Tell Samuel he may go with my blessing, and that should he ever return to these parts, I hope he will come to see me."

Early that afternoon it was Uncle James and Uncle John who departed for London; Uncle William had offered to go, but neither he nor his wife were in in the best of health, and as they must depart within a few days for their home in Great Baddow it was decided that it would be better for William to remain in Romford. It was not a long journey to London, but it would need hard riding to arrive there before nightfall, and there was always the danger of highway robbers. Fortunately for Samuel, on entering the town they passed by the Blue Boar in favour of a larger establishment, so that their nephew was unaware of their presence in the city.

Major-General Philip Skippon, the officer in charge of the London Trained Bands, surveyed the features and physique of the youth who stood before him; the lad was strong, and healthy, probably country-reared, and his ruggedly handsome face wore a determined look, as if he half expected refusal, and was ready to argue his case.

"How old art thou?" the Major-General asked.

"My sixteenth birthday hath passed not long ago," Samuel lied, having heard it said it was at the age of sixteen that a young man would more likely be accepted in the Trained Bands.

"And thy name is?"

"Samuel Tavor, Sir. From Romford, in Essex."

"Ah! An Essex man," the officer said, searching his memory for any prior acquaintances of that name. "Tell me, Master Tavor, why thou dost wish to become a soldier."

"It hath been in my mind as long as I can recall, Sir," Samuel replied. "I take delight in the chase. I have brought my horse with me. And should the need arise, I would consider it an honour to fight for my country."

He did not mention his king, for the monarch Charles was already beginning to lose popularity among the nobility, the gentry, and what was more important, among the members of parliament. Only last year King Charles, on the excuse that everyone should contribute towards the national defence, had extended the tax known as Ship Money, hitherto paid only by the inhabitants of the coastal regions, to include the whole country, and his tendency to imprison without trial anyone who refused to pay the customs dues and forced loans had not endeared the monarch in the hearts of his subjects.

The Trayned Bands were known to be loyal to Parliament.

"And if thou shouldst be accepted in our Band, Master Tavenor, what service wouldst thou be willing to give? Would thou fire a cannon, or run a man through with thy pike?"

"Aye, Sir. I would do aught that would be expected of me," Samuel replied.

The interview was interrupted by a sergeant, who whispered something in Major-General Skippon's ear.

"Bid them enter," the officer commanded.

To Samuel's dismay into the room walked Uncle James, and Uncle John. He had expected they would come after him eventually, but had not expected to see them before he had had time to enlist.

Uncle James announced, "May we be pardoned for this intrusion, Major-General, but the matter which doth bring us here doth concern the youth Samuel here, our nephew. Are we to understand that he be here to enlist in the Trayned Band?"

Philip Skippon noticed how young Samuel's face had turned pale, and how his lips had set in a tight straight line. He assumed that the two men were about to suggest that their nephew should return home with them. It was not an uncommon occurrence for a young man to run away from home to enlist, only to be taken back by an irate father who refused to give his permission.

In the presence of the man he hoped would be his future commanding officer, Samuel decided it would be prudent to hold his tongue until he had heard what his elders had to say.

"That is his reason for being here," the officer replied.

"And that is the reason why we be here also," Uncle James said. "We have come to ask if 'twould be possible to purchase for him a junior commission. As thou wilt see, Major Skippon, he doth come from a family of gentlemen, and is able to supply his own horse. We are here to assure thee that he will also be able to supply the other items that an officer must provide for himself and for his men."

Philip Skippon was obviously pleased by this assurance, but not as much as Samuel was. He turned to his uncles and smiled his gratitude.

"The most junior commission is that of an ensign, from whose ranks the standard bearers are chosen," Philip Skippon said. "I fear 'tis but an infantry commission; however, by the time that he hath completed his training in the use of musket and cannon, and in marching and battle formations, I doubt not that, as a horse-owner, he will be promoted to the ranks of General Cavalry Officer. Meanwhile, there is room for his horse in the stables here."

Samuel said, "Sir, I shall ever be indebted to thee, and to thee, mine Uncles. 'Tis all I have ever wished to be."

"So be it," said Uncle James. "Major-General, methinks we have wasted enough of thy time, so we shall leave our nephew with thee." He handed to Samuel a money pouch. "There should be sufficient for thy needs, nephew. Thy mother doth send hewr blessing, and doth request that thou shouldst visit her when thou canst."

"Tell her I shall. And tell her I love her," Samuel said. "And not least for what she hath done this day."

Samuel Tavenor had no difficulty in adapting to army life. As an officer, albeit the lowest junior, he was responsible for providing his own uniform, and when the time came for him to be promoted to the cavalry, he must also have his own horse.

The uniform of the officers and cavalry was designed to give both warmth and protection. The body was covered by a suit made of good quality woollen cloth, and a leather buffcoat with a long wide skirt that would cover the thighs when riding, surmounted by a cloak called a casaque; long bucket-top leather boots shielded the legs, whilst the head was protected by the lobster-pot shaped helmet. And perhaps most important of all there was the wide sash around the waist, a visible sign that the wearer was an officer of rank; in times to come the colour of the band would show whether the wearer supported Parliament or the King, but this was a time of peace, when all that was necessary was a shade or colour that would rally a group around its own captain.

Then there were the weapons, and these also were often made to the requirements of the individual officer, A sword in a buff sheath, called a baldrick, hung from the officer's shoulder strap, and a pair of wheel-lock pistols were carried in holsters attached to his saddle. Samuel donned his uniform with pride, for to him it was the symbol of his new status: no longer was he the son of a country gentleman, but he was a man, in his own right.

Many of the recruits were citizens who served part-time, so that Samuel had ample opportunity to visit his mother, wearing his uniform, of course, and to beg her forgiveness.

"I did not wish to cause thee further grief, Mother," he said. "Yet it was something I had to do. Thou hast known I have no interest in the farm. My heart hath yearned for adventure, and the challenge of combat. Had I stayed longer, 'twould have been harder to leave, both for thee and for me."

Elizabeth was too pleased to see him to be reproachful.

"Aye," she replied, smiling. "Thou wast ever the one to find trouble. I told the Uncles to give thee my blessing, and provided thou dost come to visit me from time to time, I shall be content."

Priccilla and James were equally pleased to see him.

"'Tis good to see thee again, Brother," was John's greeting. "I was anxious when thou didst depart without bidding us farewell."

"Lord, how thou hast changed!" Priccilla exclaimed. "I did not know thee at first. Thou didst leave here as a boy, and hast returned as a man."

What she said was true: the exercise and routine had not only strengthened their brother's physique, but the position of authority had given him an air of confidence.

In addition to instruction in the use of weapons and artillery, part of the training involved the drill for marching in divisions.

An army on the march was led by the Captain, who rode alone at the head of the column; at a distance of six feet behind him came two rows of musketeers; officers rode and drummers marched alone, whilst the pikemen and musketeers were arranged in rows four abreast.

Next came the Ensign. Although the rank of a junior officer, this was a much prized position, for it entailed carrying the company's colours, and was entrusted to the strongest and most virile trainee officers. Made of brightly-coloured taffeta, a light material which could be flourished skilfully to great effect while the regiment was marching, the flag would have the cross of Saint George painted in the top left corner, and devices such as crescents, stars, and spots to denote the seniority of the officer, with the exception of the Colonel's company, which had a plain flag of a single colour. The ensign standard was used as a rallying point on the battlefield. Standards captured in battle were valuable trophies, but the loss of a standard meant dishonour to the regiment.

Samuel's pride knew no bounds when, barely a month after he enlisted, one of the standard-carrying ensigns was promoted to the rank of General Officer, and he was offered the position of colour-bearer. To be in charge of the regiment's colours was indeed a mark of distinction! When marching in formation it meant that he came next after the Captain's musketeers, alone, guiding the other soldiers on their way; behind him followed a hundred more pikemen and musketeers, each group led by a sergeant or drummer, with the Lieutenant riding alone at the rear of the column.

Sometimes as the column marched the men sang, their voices keeping time with the rhythm of the drums; there were country songs such as 'John Barleycorn' and 'The Lincolnshire Poacher', fighting songs such as 'When the Cannons are Roaring', and Samuel's favourite:

"Who'll be a soldier, Who'll be a soldier,
Who'll be a soldier for Marlborough and me?
And he sang as he marched and he played upon his kettledrum,
Who'll be a soldier for Marlborough and me?"

It was a good life, with training in the daytime, and evenings in the tavern with the other ensigns, mingling with apprentices from the city's guilds. The men were to find that their training had not been in vain when, in 1642 King Charles raised his standard at Nottingham, and Civil War tore apart the peaceful land of England.

It was then that Royalists and Parliamentarians alike sought the support and control of the Trayned Bands; for the London Trayned Bands there was no choice; they had always been loyal to Parliament, and so they would remain.

By this time Samuel Tavenor had been promoted from Ensign to General Officer in the cavalry, and found a friend in another officer named Benjamin Foster. Little did they guess then that the friendship would last until long after both had left the service, and would be of benefit to both.

MARCHING IN DIVISIONS

Front of Column



Rear of column.

- C - CAPTAIN
- L - LIEUTENANT
- S - SERJEANTS
- E - ENSIGN
- D - DRUMMERS

- M - MUSKETEERS
- P - PIKEMEN

The Second Division was led by the Second Serjeant

If there was only one division of Pikes, the eldest, or chief Serjeant led the Second Division of Musketeers.

There was a distance of 12 feet between each pair of divisions when marching
 i.e. 6 feet before the officer, and 6 feet behind him.

Benjamin was the son of a London leather-worker and saddle-maker, who by virtue of being a member of his guild had the right to be a citizen of London. Together they would spend the evenings drinking in one of the nearby inns, more often than not in the Black Swan, where the landlord's teenage daughter Rebecca, on the pretext of bringing more ale, would stay to speak with them. She was a spirited young woman, with long hair that fell in dark waves to her shoulders, large brown eyes, and a voluptuous figure; it was clear from the way in which she behaved that the landlord, although keeping his own counsel, was not a Puritan.

Benjamin fell in love with Rebecca at the first meeting, but was quick to see that although she divided her attentions equally between them, she was more attracted to his companion than to himself.

But in the Trained Bands, loyalty to a fellow officer was more important than the love of a pretty young woman, and Benjamin was content to admire her from afar while consoling himself that Samuel had shown no particular interest in her. The two young officers trained together, and spent their leisure time together; the time was soon to come when they would be fighting together, side-by-side on the battlefield, facing as foes men who would once have been their friends.

Chapter 2 A Soldier's Life.

When King Charles departed from London in 1642 to raise his standard at Nottingham, he had left London virtually in the hands of Parliament. All London Trained Bands were placed under Parliamentary control, and provided the core of the new army which was to be drawn from the volunteer citizens of London.

Major-General Skippon called together the officers of the London Trained Bands.

"Officers," he said, "all of ye have proved your skills, now cometh the time to pass on what ye have learned. The Regiment hath taken possession of a new training ground, to be known as the Artillery Garden, in Bishopgate. Starting tomorrow all of ye will report thence, to be given further instructions. The men who will join us now may be eager to support our cause, but they are untrained volunteers. I place into your hands the responsibility of making them into fighting men."

At the Artillery Gardens each of the officers was placed in charge of a group of men, with instructions that all should be taught how to handle a pike, to shoot accurately with a musket, and to fire a cannon. First Captain Samuel Jarvis spoke to the recruits; as an adventure-seeking young mercenary he had fought in Germany during the Thirty Years War, and he, unlike the younger officers, was well aware that the primary purpose of training was to prepare peaceful men for the ordeals of war. He gave a welcoming speech ending with the words:

'.....we have obtained the handsome skill,
By order, method, and by rule to kill.'

But although he emphasized the last line, there were those who ignored his words, and would later pay for their disobedience with their lives.

Samuel and Benjamin were to find that training was far more tiring than drilling; some of the volunteers were sensible, as well as enthusiastic, and learned quickly, so that they were sufficiently competent to be returned to the regiment; others were too eager for the fight to accept the rigid discipline of battle procedures, and needed several demonstrations before they could practise alone. Meanwhile the Parliamentary forces lost no time in seizing the national arsenals in the Tower of London, and in controlling artillery production in the Weald of Kent, where there were blast furnaces and ironworks. By careful planning they were forming the foundations of a formidable force.

The Parliamentary forces tended to be based in the garrison in London, whilst the Royalist armies centred around Oxford, where King Charles and his court followers had taken up residence, but eventually the time came when the troops must leave their comfortable quarters and march off to engage in battle.

It was then that Samuel Tavenor and his fellow soldiers were to learn that there was a vast difference between life in a garrison, and marching to war. One of the worst hazards was the English climate, which was usually cold and wet, with the result that most battles were fought in the months between April and November, and the chaplains and many of the soldiers returned home for the winter months.

Samuel was fortunate in that the officers were provided with tents, but for the infantry it was often difficult to find shelter of any kind. Although the quartermasters were sent on ahead to find lodgings in barns and stables, often a small village was unable to provide sufficient cover for the men, and on particularly cold and wet nights the foot

soldiers were known to burst into cottages and demand hospitality from the terrified tenants, considering themselves fortunate if they were able to have more than two hours' sleep in twenty-four hours.

Moreover, marching and fighting wore out clothes and shoes; an infantryman's shoes were made of cowhide, which lasted for only two or three months on the rough roads, and although many apprentice cobblers from Northampton had joined the Parliamentary army, there was no such thing as a left or right shoe, so that the footwear was uncomfortable when new. The young officer who remarked, "Thank God for horses! I wouldn't like to be a musketeer!" expressed what everyone was thinking.

Another hardship was the shortage of food, and there were times when even the most senior officers were compelled to forage for food, in addition to digging fortifications. The official daily ration for a fighting man was officially approximately 4,500 calories, consisting of 2 lbs of bread, 1 lb of meat, and 2 bottles of beer, and in garrison this was so, but when on the move such large amounts were not so easy to obtain, so that the men often went hungry. Lack of food and poor sleeping arrangements resulted in sickness.

Despite the private's pay of between four and six shillings each week, it is not surprising that there was a shortage of infantry in both of the opposing armies, for not only was their footwear inadequate, but each man also had to carry his own equipment, an additional weight of between fifty and sixty pounds of armour, helmets, swords and knapsacks.

The first weapons issued to the troops were of poor quality; the simplest of these was the pike, which was clumsy, difficult to carry, and sometimes a soldier yielded to the temptation to shorten the shaft, with disastrous results. The Pikeman wore heavy protective armour consisting of breastplate, helmet and leg-guards, and also carried a sword for hand-to-hand fighting. Swords were sometimes used to chop firewood, and often broke.

The Musketeer's equipment was even more cumbersome, comprising a heavy musket, which was difficult to fire because of its back-kick, was most unreliable, could not be carried easily on the shoulder, and required a musket-rest, which did have one advantage in being of a shape that enabled it to be used as a walking stick. Around his neck the soldier carried a bandolier of gunpowder charges that rattled in the wind and were highly dangerous should anyone become careless with lighted match cord, which fortunately was in short supply.

The cavalry fared slightly better; the horseman's pay was seventeen shillings and sixpence per week, but from that amount he was expected to feed his horse; also he was more easily able to forage, and above all, he was safer in battle. Towards the end of hostilities situations arose in which the cavalry outnumbered the infantry, particularly in the Royalist divisions.

After the column of fighting men would come the camp followers. Carters cared for oxen-drawn baggage wagons, which contained food not only for the men, but also for the oxen themselves. Accompanying them were the 'Leaguer Ladies', many of whom were wives determined to look after their menfolk, and who also acted as nurses. The roads were very hard, there was a shortage of maps, and it was not unusual for both followers and soldiers to stray from the column and be lost. When camp was made for the night the men would spend their evenings foraging, cooking, and repairing equipment.

Many of the soldiers carried with them cheap, abbreviated versions of the Bibles, which contained prayers, and stories from the Old Testament telling of God's concern for fighting men. There were those who paid little attention to their training, or as it was called 'battle-proofing' because they preferred to put their trust in God.

The first major skirmish at Edgehill in 1642 ended in victory for the Royalists. At first the new volunteers fought bravely, as long as there was a distance between them and the enemy, but when the time came to use their pikes, they forgot the warning of Captain Jarvis, that they must be prepared to kill, or be killed. A large number of the Parliamentary troops turned and ran, while others stood stupefied, and did nothing. In vain the officers tried to rally their men around the colours. When the battle ended at sunset the battlefield was strewn with the bodies of men who were too squeamish to defend themselves.

Samuel Tavenor returned to the officers' tents, and was thankful to see that his friend Benjamin had also survived; exhausted, cold, and hungry they tried to sleep away their fatigue, but sleep was impossible. Throughout the long cold night they were kept awake by the sound of their less fortunate comrades who lay wounded on the battlefield shrieking in pain, but even the surgeons could do little to ease the torment of those who were dying in agony. The following day the Colonel called together his officers.

"We can do no more," he said. "Give the orders to break camp and retreat." And so the Royalists won a significant moral victory.

After the battle King Charles, rejoicing in his success, refused the offer of a peace settlement, and ordered Prince Rupert to make a diversion on the way to London to attack Brentford, which was at that time occupied by two regiments of men commanded by the Earl of Essex. Had they continued to London it is most likely that the Royalists would have succeeded in taking control of the city.

However, the sacking of Brentford was so ruthless that it aroused fear in the hearts of the people of London, with the result that the London Trained Bands turned out in force to join the other regiments of the Earl of Essex. On the morning of November 13th twenty-four thousand men had assembled at Turnham Green to block the onslaught of the Royalists; realizing that they were heavily outnumbered, Rupert gave the order for the King's army to withdraw.

Early in 1643 the Parliamentary army consolidated its hold on the South-East, East Anglia, and the Midlands, but the centre of administration remained in London, and it was here that Samuel Tavenor spent the greater part of the year. At Edgehill he had learned the true meaning of battle, but it was in 1643 that he faced a greater challenge.

The Westminster Trained Bands had been called out to assault Basing House, in Hampshire, a fortified house owned by the Marquess of Winchester, which commanded the main route to Salisbury, and was a centre of loyalty to Queen Henrietta Maria. An earlier attack under the command of William Waller had been frustrated by heavy rain, and in a second attack troops who were hungry and unpaid deserted, and returned home. Clearly this was a task for the Trained Bands.

However, the attack was planned in November, a time when the more experienced troops who had served well through the summer months had been allowed to go home, so that the actual force consisted of a few capable officers, including Samuel Tavenor, backed by recruits not yet battle-hardened.

In the heat of the assault the musketeers paid no heed to the routine battle procedure that their Field Officers had tried to instil during the training sessions; they panicked, and instead of firing rank by rank as they had been instructed, all shot at the same time, and what was worse, they started to fire before they had secured an effective firing range. The result of their negligence was disastrous, for instead of felling the enemy, those in the rear ranks hit their own comrades. Realizing their mistake, and horrified by what they had done, they started to flee.

From his position on the cavalry wing Samuel Tavenor watched in dismay, his anguish heightened when he saw that one of the men who had fallen was the infantry colour bearer of his own regiment; there the Ensign lay on the ground, wounded, but still holding the flag, with the enemy pushing towards him in a menacing line. They were his own colours; the flag he had, as an Ensign, proudly flourished before the regiment when marching on parade. It should not fall into the enemy hands. He could not allow the regiment to be so disgraced. Never!

He spurred his horse towards the place where the young soldier lay, and, in one fluid movement dismounting and regaining his seat, he galloped in front of the fleeing infantry. Like a sheepdog assembling its flock he waved the ensign before the faces of the retreating men, and steered them to reform a united band.

But his valour had been in vain, for the Colonel had realized that with the troops now placed at his disposal a successful assault was impossible, and would only result in further loss of life. Reluctantly but wisely he told the bugler to sound the retreat call.

At least the retreat was then made in an orderly fashion, with dignity; the enemy soldiers retired to their original places inside the barricades which protected the stately home, and the battle was at an end.

On his return to London Samuel Tavenor was summoned to appear before Major-General Skippon.

"I have here a report of thy valour on the field of battle," he said. "Colonel Hammond hath given a full account of the way in which thou didst rally the men. Such action doth prove the worth of a true officer. 'Tis my pleasure to promote thee to the rank of Captain."

Samuel glowed with pleasure and pride. How proud of him his mother would be now! Yet the Major-General's next words aroused mixed emotions, as the challenge of new horizons mingled with regret to be leaving his friends.

"The Earl of Essex doth have need of brave and experienced captains such as thou, who are ready to take command," he said. "Tomorrow thou shalt report to him at the fortress of Deal, in Kent. Goodbye, Captain Tavenor. May God ride with thee."

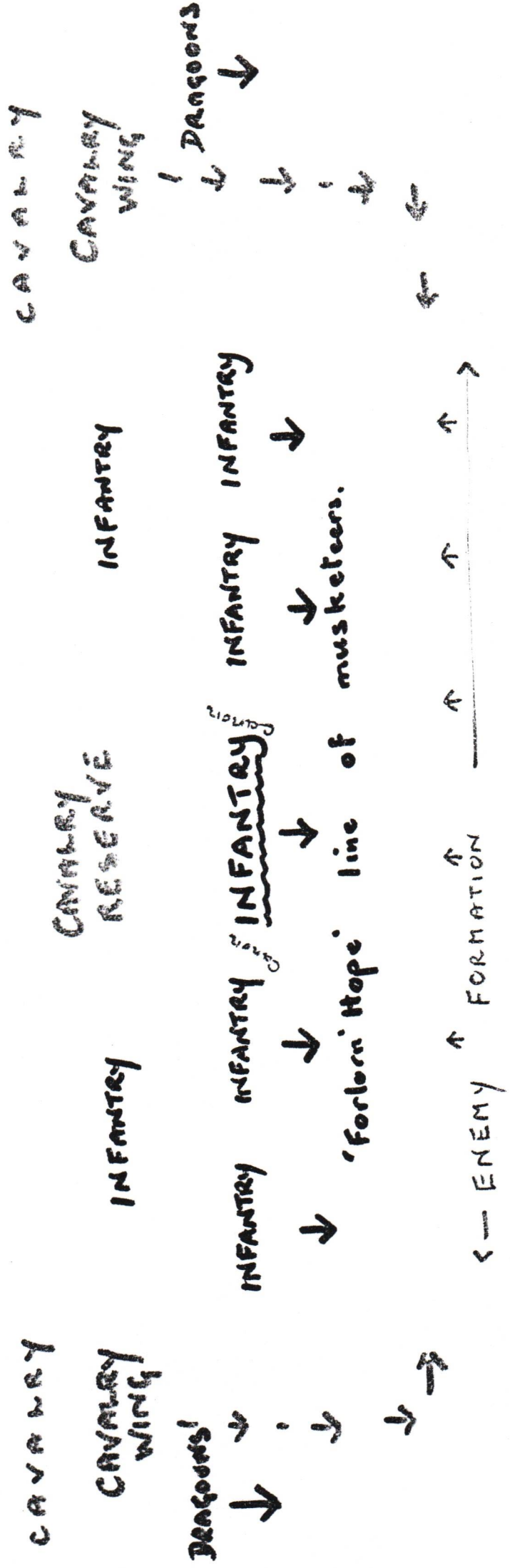
And so ended the second chapter in Samuel Tavenor's life. At the age of twenty-two he had achieved his ambition to become a fully-established officer in the Parliamentary force.

So sudden had been the change that he had little opportunity to bid farewell to his friends, but he did speak to Benjamin Foster.

"We are all proud of thee," Benjamin said. "To be promoted on the field of battle is indeed an honour."

"Aye," Samuel replied, "yet I have some regrets. Thou and I have been close comrades nigh on seven years, Benjamin, but it doth seem that our paths are now to part."

FORMATION for BATTLE in the ENGLISH CIVIL WAR



The "Forlorn Hope" of musketeers fires, then retreats, while dragoons move forward on the flank. The cavalry charge. The enemy cavalry, moving inwards to attack the enemy infantry. The infantry move forward for face-to-face combat. Some cavalry hold back in reserve.

"And I shall miss thy presence beside me," Benjamin replied. "But 'tis as God wills, and mayhap one day our paths will cross again."

It was Benjamin who was left to answer Rebecca's questions on why Samuel Tavenor no longer visited the Black Swan. On his next visit to the inn she asked, "Where be thy fellow officer this eve, Officer Foster?" He noticed how her smile turned to an expression of anxiety as she continued, "I hope he did not fall in battle."

Understanding her acute disappointment that the man she loved had left without saying goodbye, Benjamin tried to give some comfort.

"Nay," he replied. "He hath been sent to Deal Castle. He hath been promoted to Captain. He could not come again. 'Twas all done so sudden."

Sadly she said, "So we shall never see him again."

Benjamin took her hand in his, and told her, "Be of courage, Rebecca. True friendship doth not end with partings. Have faith, and pray. Methinks we both shall meet with Captain Tavenor again, one day."

Captain Samuel Tavenor stood on the ramparts of Deal Castle looking out over the shimmering waters of the English Channel; it was two years since hostilities had come to an end, and nearly five since he had been promoted to the rank of Captain. Today, in the absence of the Governor, he had been placed in charge of the troops in the castle, a duty which he intended to perform most conscientiously.

Since the end of the war a different kind of battle had been taking place: the battle for men's souls. Now that the contents of the Bible were more easily accessible, people had begun to ponder, to discuss with their neighbours, and to form their own ideas upon how faith should be expressed, and Samuel was steadily coming to agree with those who believed that a person's faith should not be guided by the clergy, but should spring from an inner, private communication with God. His faith, and how it could best be expressed, was one of the topics which was wont to occupy his mind on days such as today, when the sun was shining, everything was running according to plan, and there were no major problems to monopolize his thoughts.

His attention was caught by a horse-drawn cart approaching the gate from the road that led to the villages of Hackling and Worth, which lay some three miles inland from the coast; he strolled down to the gate-house where he expected the guards to be waiting in attendance, but it always paid to be sure. Becoming lax in time of peace could only lead to trouble later. He arrived at the gate as the sentries were enquiring of the carter his business in the town.

"Thou knowest well who I am. But I suppose 'tis a question I mun answer if thy rules mun be obeyed. I be come from Yeoman Gibbs, of the village of Worth, to bring this produce for the garrison," the carter replied, in tones of mock-exasperation, for the questioning had become a weekly ritual. "Every week I come with vegetables, as well thou knowest."

What the carter had said was true; every week he delivered farm produce for the castle kitchens, and every week the guards, who all knew him by name, went through the ritual of asking who he might be.

"That we do, Ned Slater," the guard replied. "But today be different. This day thou dost carry a passenger on thy cart."

Samuel also had noticed that the carter was not alone: beside him sat a young woman, perhaps a year or two his junior; from her crisp white cap emerged a cluster of dark brown curls that could only be naturally so, and she had the most beautiful blue eyes, wide and innocent, fringed by long dark lashes; she looked up at him with an expression he found most appealing. He was pleased to see that she wore a grey dress with a deep white collar, a style favoured by the Puritan ladies.

"Thou hadst better satisfy my guard's curiosity by telling us the name of this comely lady." Samuel suggested. "Is it thy wife thou hast brought with thee this day, Ned?"

"Nay, Captain," Ned replied. "This grand lady be the daughter of Master Gibbs, Yeoman of Worth. She did ask that I should bring her into town with me."

The young lady favoured Samuel with a charming smile as she explained, "My name is Ann Gibbs, Captain. I had need of some items from the town shops, and therefore did ask Ned to bring me with him, and to take me into the town on the way back. So be it thou hath no objections, Captain, I shall get down here, and walk a while within the walls, while Ned doth make his call at the kitchens. And thou, Ned, be sure to wait here for me. 'Tis a long walk back to Worth."

"That I shall do, Mistress Ann," Ned assured her.

Samuel gallantly held out his hand to assist her in alighting from the cart.

"Captain Tavenor, at your service Mistress Ann," he said. The seat seemed to be rather a long way from the ground, so he put his hands upon her waist, and lifted her down, placing her very gently on the wide path.

Hitherto Samuel Tavenor's life had been primarily concerned with war, not romance; apart from his sister Priccilla, for whom he had performed the same service often enough when they were young, it was the first time that he had thus held a young woman in his arms, and he had to admit that it was a pleasant sensation. She was as light as a feather, and he had the strangest urge to swing her around in a circle, the way he used to flourish the company colours, but decorum won the day. That was hardly the conduct of a Captain in the Parliamentary army! A young Ensign perhaps, could have been excused, but not a senior officer. Instead he remarked, "I would consider it an honour to accompany thee on thy walk, Mistress Ann, since 'tis clear that the men here do not require my supervision."

Side-by-side they walked through the courtyard, until they reached the steps that led up to the ramparts from where stout cannons placed at regular intervals covered every line of approach, whether by land or sea. "Come," Samuel said. "There is a magnificent view from the walls."

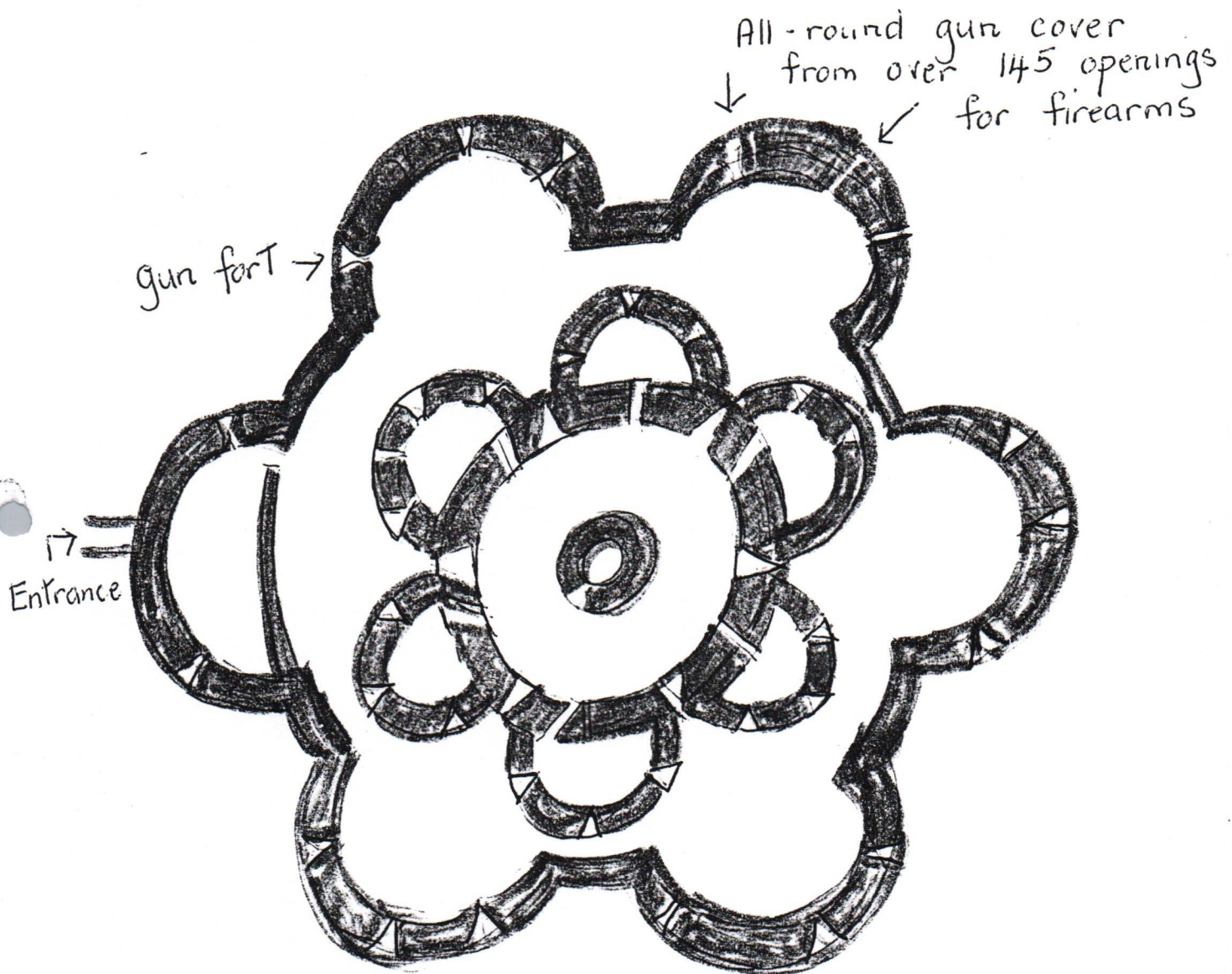
He stood back to allow her to ascend first up the narrow stairway, prepared to catch her should she stumble and fall, but they reached the battlement without mishap, and stood together gazing over the Channel, and the foreland to the south.

"'Tis indeed beautiful here," Ann remarked. "I thank thee, Captain. I love the sea, yet although it doth reach not far from my home, it could well be a hundred miles away, for all we may see if it. See how the water changes colour, and how the waves have white tops, like little clouds coming into the land. I could stand here for ever, watching the sea."

Laughing, Samuel told her, "And then thou wouldst be cold, and hungry, Mistress Ann. Yet surely there can be no reason why thou shouldst not come again, when the weather be fine? I shall look for thee on the days when Ned bringeth the provisions, and mayhap we may walk up here again. Unless thou dost have a husband, who would not consider such attention seemly."

Blushing, Ann assured him, "Nay, I have no husband." Before she descended to where Ned, his delivery completed, was waiting in the courtyard below, Samuel had also extracted the information that she was in fact two years younger than himself, that she had an older brother and two younger sisters, that she was not betrothed, and that there was no reason why they should not meet again.

DEAL CASTLE



Deal Castle, once carried 119 guns.
Built in the reign of Henry VIII, it
has long, dark passages, battlements
and a huge basement.

Situated s.w. of Deal town centre.
An English Heritage property.

Having ensured that she did not fall on the steps, and after courteously assisting her climb into the seat beside Ned, he returned to the battlements, where he stood and watched until the cart was a mere speck on the dusty road. The following week, as if by chance, he appeared again when Ned Slater arrived with the provisions, and again entertained the carter's passenger by escorting her to a different part of the battlement, further from the main entrance. On the third meeting he became so bold as to slip his arm around her waist while they stood admiring the view; on the fourth he turned to face her as they descended the dark, narrow stairway, so that she was at exactly the right level for him to enfold her in his arms, to kiss her tenderly. From that moment they knew they were in love.

As the weeks progressed her family became inquisitive regarding Ann's regular requests to ride to the fortress with Ned; her brother Francis was exceptionally curious, and decided to have words with the carter.

"Tell me, Ned, what can be the errand of my sister Ann, that she should ride with thee so often to the town?" he asked. "Doth she stay by thy side all the time?"

"Nay, Master Francis," the carter replied. "While I unload the cart, Mistress Ann doth take a walk around the courtyard."

"Doth she walk alone?" Francis persisted.

Ned was not prepared to betray Mistress Ann by being an informant for her brother; he decided to evade the question. He replied, "That I know not, Master Francis. I know only that when I have unloaded the cart, and am prepared to come home, she will be waiting for me."

"And when she goeth into the town? What is't she doeth there?" Francis persisted. "Doth she meet someone there?"

"I know not, Master Francis, for I sit in the cart and wait," Ned replied. "Methinks she doth look around the stalls and shops in the street. Never have I seen her exchange words with any of the townfolk."

Francis Gibbs was not entirely satisfied by the answers, and deduced that either the carter knew nothing of what his sister was doing, or he was prepared to remain silent concerning her suddenly acquired habit of journeying into town every week, instead of two or three times a year as she had previously done. After the next visit he was waiting in the hallway to tackle his sister as soon as she entered the house.

"Come here, Sister Ann," he demanded, and led the way into the small room which he and his father used as an office; it was sparsely furnished with a high desk and chair, shelves which contained ledgers, pens, and inks, and candles in pewter candle-sticks; there was also one other carved wooden chair on which he indicated that his sister should take her place, while he himself stood with his back to the fireplace.

Ann perched herself on the edge of her seat, and waited; she had half expected this interview. In the normal course of events her parents and her sisters, Alice and Prudence, showed no interest in how she passed her days, but Francis believed in knowing exactly what was going on in the rambling old farm-house. However, she was not to be intimidated. Francis was but three years her senior, and she saw no reason why she should account to him for her actions.

"Is there some matter thou dost wish to discuss with me, Brother Francis?" she asked.

"Maybe, maybe not," Francis replied. "Show me first the purchases thou didst make in the town this day." He noticed that her cheeks had suddenly become a deeper shade of pink than they usually were.

"I purchased nought today." Her tone was defensive. "There was nought to my liking."

"Nought today, nought last week, and nought the week before," Francis remarked. "Methinks thou hast bought nothing since the first time thou didst request to accompany Ned to the town, five weeks ago. Thou had best tell us what it is thou dost require that the shopkeepers of Deal are unable to supply, and mayhap we may send Ned to London to purchase it there."

Ann was becoming annoyed with his questioning.

"'Tis nought to require so much trouble," she replied."

Her brother was not satisfied with the answer; as if to give vent to his frustration he strode across to the window, then turned to face her again; when he spoke his voice was ominously controlled.

"Aye, Sister Ann. That is true," he said. "Nought to require so much trouble, because there is nought thou dost need. 'Tis not to buy goods in the town, methinks, that thou dost ride with Ned, but to meet someone there." The heightened colour in her cheeks confirmed his suspicions. "Methinks 'tis a man thou dost go to meet!"

He was to find that it was anger, not embarrassment, that had brought the colour to his sister's cheeks. What right did he have to question her so, and to pry into her private affairs? Had it been her father, that would be different. A father should naturally be concerned to know of his daughter's friends. But as for Francis, it would be better for him if he should confine his suspicions to keeping watch over his own bride-to be, Grace Slater.

"And of what interest can that be to thee, Brother, whom I should meet in town?" she demanded to know. "I am not Mistress Slater! I am thy sister, not thy betrothed, and I am of age. I need no consent from thee to meet with a man."

Her brother's lips twisted in a sneer.

"Unless that man be of unsound reputation," he replied.

A gasp of astonishment escaped from Ann's lips. "Dost take me for a fool, Brother?" she asked, her voice rising in anger.

"Not a fool, but an honest, trusting young woman who may easily be deceived. Thou knowest nought of men, apart from our own family, and near neighbours," Francis replied, trying to explain his concern for her welfare. "'Tis not unknown for a scoundrel to seduce an honest woman, and thereby improve his station in life. Who may this man be? One of the soldiers in the garrison?"

"Aye," Ann defiantly informed him. "And we have done no wrong. We have done nought but walk together in the castle, in full view of all who do dwell and work there. There is no cause for thee to fear for my safety, Brother Francis."

"A common soldier? A pikeman, or a musketeer? Thou dost allow thyself to be seen walking with a peasant, the sort of man we would employ as a labourer, and say I have no cause to fear for thy safety?" Francis sneered.

"He is neither a pikeman nor a musketeer," Ann informed him, "but an officer, a captain."

Francis considered her reply. "That doth put a better light on the matter," he remarked. "Yet 'twill not do. Thou shalt not continue with this association. Next week thou shalt tell him the affair is at an end, and thou and he shall meet no more."

"And what if I refuse?" Ann tilted her chin as a gesture of defiance.

"Then I shall speak to Father, and with his permission shall keep thee confined in thy chamber till the Captain may find another wench to amuse him. I doubt not there are other maids now, who claim his attentions. One more or less will make no difference to him, I'll be sure."

Anxious not to let her brother see that she was close to tears of frustration, anger, and despair, Ann rushed from the room, and went upstairs to the chamber which she shared with her sisters; she fell face downwards on the huge four-poster bed, and wept. Francis always meant what he said - she had known him long enough to be certain of that! - and to suggest that there were other women in Captain Tavenor's life made the thought of being parted from him even harder to bear.

Her mood of dejection persisted throughout the week; she lay awake at night, and toyed with her food; on the day before the deliveries would be made she looked so pale that her mother remarked, as they sat at dinner, "Ann, my child, methinks something ails thee. Perchance 'twould be better if thou shouldst remain at home tomorrow, and venture not into town until thou art well again."

To Ann's surprise it was Francis who came to her rescue.

"Have no fear, Mother," he replied. "The ride will bring some colour back into her cheeks. 'Tis my belief she hath spent too much time in her chamber these past days, and doth need a breath of sea air to restore her spirits. But mark my words well, Sister Ann. Be sure to purchase all thou dost require tomorrow, for 'twill be some time before thou may travel into town again. I will not permit Ned Slater to make a detour for thy sake when he be needed here on the farm."

Samuel Tavenor could see at once that something was wrong.

"Tell me what doth ail thee, Ann," he suggested; they had walked to the east side of the battlements, and were watching the waves breaking on the shore; he had put his arm around her shoulders, to comfort, and protect.

"What doth ail me, Captain, is that I may not come here again," she told him. "My brother hath forbidden it, and he and my Father do ever stand united in any affairs that concern the family."

"And would that cause thee to grieve, Mistress Ann, if we should thus be parted?" he asked, in a gentle, tender voice.

"Aye," she replied. "It would."

"And how great would be thy grief?" Samuel asked. "Would it be sufficient to persuade thee to leave thy family, and to stay with me for ever?"

"Could that ever be so?" she asked; she saw that his expression was earnest, and knew that he was sincere in what he said.

"If thou were to be my wife 'twould be so," he said.

Ann smiled up at him, her face no longer pale and sad, but radiant with delight.

"Is't possible?" she asked, hardly daring to hope.

"I see no reason why it should not be so, if thou wilt be content to be wed to a soldier," he told her. "And now that we no longer must march to war, there can be no reason why thou and I should not make a home together, and raise children."

"If only it could be so," she breathed.

"And so it shall be," Samuel replied. "Go straight home today, and say nothing. But at this hour next week I shall call to pay my respects to thy father, and to ask for thy hand in marriage." He guided her into the shadows of the stairway, where he could cement the union with a kiss, without being disturbed.

Ned was surprised when Ann suggested they should go straight home without calling in the town. Francis Gibbs was equally surprised when his sister, having tracked him down in the stables, breezed in with a smile on her face, and announced, "I am home early today, Francis. I did not call in the town. I have all that I need."

The last remark made Francis more than a little suspicious, although everything seemed to have gone according to his instructions. In his opinion his sister was far too cheerful for one who had said her final farewells to a lover, and as the week progressed with no change in her buoyant mood, and Wednesday arrived with no suggestion that she should travel into town, he began to wonder whether the wary captain had broken off the relationship, and Ann was trying to hide her grief beneath a show of high spirits.

On Thursday afternoon a Parliamentarian cavalier approached the Gibb farm; having tethered his horse to a tree by the kitchen door he asked to be allowed to speak to Master Nathaniel Gibbs.

Ann's father, having no idea whatever of what could be the reason for the intrusion, made the captain welcome, and invited him to come in and sit down while he explained the purpose of his visit. He could only assume that the officer had come to discuss some change in the arrangements for delivering produce to the castle garrison.

Samuel gave to Nathaniel a folded sheet of paper, and said, "Master Gibbs, the letter you have in your hand was written by Major-General Philip Skippon, of the London Trayned Bands, and it will assure thee of my good character. I have come to ask for the hand in marriage of thy daughter Ann."

Nathaniel Gibbs read the letter and was most impressed; not only was this man from a good Essex family, who had been sufficiently wealthy to buy his commission on entering the Trayned Bands, but he was also brave, and had earned his promotion by valiant deeds on the field of battle. He surveyed the virile, handsome man who sat on the opposite side of the fire-place. His daughters should marry, eventually, and Ann had passed her twenty-fifth birthday. What better husband could he hope to find for her?

"Hath my daughter any knowledge of thine intentions?" he asked.

"Aye, Master Gibbs," Samuel replied with a smile. "Methinks my request shall meet with her approval."

"Then I give my consent," Nathaniel agreed. He walked to the door, and called to a servant, with the instructions that his wife, son, and daughters should come to him at once; as they entered Samuel rose to greet them; for a moment Ann hesitated in the doorway, hardly daring to hope, until she heard her father say, "Captain Tavenor here hath called to ask for Ann to be his wife, and I have given my consent."

Ann rushed to Samuel's side, her face radiant with happiness as she took his hand in hers; her mother and sisters were profuse in their exclamations of delight, and Francis also offered his congratulations, after he had read Philip Skippon's glowing recommendation.

So that was the reason why Ann had been so cheerful! He might have known she would not renounce her romance without a fight. However, it was best that she should marry before she reached the age of thirty, and this man was an acceptable suitor, despite the clandestine meetings. To please his father Francis was willing to welcome Captain Tavenor into the family, but it would not be easy to forgive the way he and Ann had been so secretive about their affair.

Now all that remained was for Samuel to visit his mother, who must be one of the first to hear the news, and to set a date for the wedding.

Chapter 4 Recognition

Samuel Tavenor and Ann Gibbs were married in 1649, and to Ann's great delight took up residence in the officers' quarters near to the fortress of Deal Castle. Their first child, Ann, was born on December 28th 1650, followed on 24th May 1652 by the eldest son, Samuel; in all there would be thirteen children who included John, Priccilla, Nathaniel, David, Ann, Thomas, Ben and James.

During the years that followed the cessation of hostilities many of the Trayned Band officers gradually resigned from their posts to become craftsmen in the City of London, where any man who could produce goods for sale could prosper, as did the farmers and yeomen such as Nathaniel Gibbs, who lived sufficiently near to the rapidly expanding towns to provide food for the ever-increasing population.

One of these officers was Benjamin Foster, who had decided to follow in the footsteps of his father and grandfather, and to resume the family occupation of leather-work and saddle-making. He had also acquired a wife. The distance between London and Deal Castle had proved to be too great for her to continue loving Samuel Tavenor as the years passed by with no news of him, and when Benjamin proposed marriage she gladly accepted.

The seventeenth century saw many changes in the people's attitude towards their daily lives, not least in the influence of the church. Attendance at the church of the parish in which a person lived was compulsory, with fines levied on defaulters, and the conduct of the parishioners was also supervised by the church authorities. Church courts were responsible for the punishment of disorderly behaviour, drunkenness, abandoned babies, jilted wives, and adultery. The teachings of the church instilled a belief in life after death, and in a salvation that could be achieved only by personal communication with God in the magical sacrament of Holy Communion, therefore it was in the interests of every citizen to be a regular worshipper.

However, as a result of the Gunpowder Plot many had come to fear both the strength and the intentions of the more devout Catholics, and during the Civil War Protestantism had become associated with patriotism.

From the day when he had joined the Trayned Bands Samuel Tavenor had remained a staunch supporter of Parliament and the Protestant faith. It was not surprising that his loyalty should eventually be brought to the notice of the supreme leader, the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell himself. In the month of February in 1653, Samuel was summoned to London, where he was informed that as a reward for his faithful service, he was to be appointed to the post of Governor of Deal Castle.

The document in which the appointment was proclaimed read:

'Oliver.P.Cromwell, Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland. To all whome there present may concern.

Know yea that I reposeing spetiall trust and confidence in the fidelity and integrity of you, Samuell Tavernour, Doe here by constitute and appoint you to be Governor of Deal Castle and of all the forces of and within the same.

Which said Castle, together with all the ordnance and ammunition stores and habiliments of war and those unto belonging you and by virtue hereof to receive and take unto your charge and ye said buildings and fortifications thereof you are to uphold and

maintaine in good repair, which ye shall defend and keepe for ye use and service of the Common Wealth and shall not render or suffer the same to be rendered delivered up to any person or persons whatsoever, unless he or they be thereunto authorized by myselfe.

And you shall duely exercise the officers and souldiers within the said castle in armed and doe your best endeavour to keepe them in good order and discipline, commanding you to obey them as your Governor.

And you are to observe such orders and directions as you shall from time to time receive from myselfe.

Given under my hand and seald the thirteenth day of February 1653."

Samuel, Ann, and the children moved into the Governor's rooms in Deal Castle, where they were to share an extremely happy marriage, which was perhaps the most satisfying time in both of their lives: Samuel was proud to have earned recognition for his services, whilst Ann, ever mindful that this was where their romance had begun, never tired of the sight and sounds of the sea.

With the end of open warfare everyone had expected that England would become a peaceful land inhabited by contented people, but instead it had become a land of unrest; there were arrests of dissidents, risings, and petitions made to Parliament. In 1657 Oliver Cromwell was offered the crown, but abiding by his principles, refused the honour; a year later he died, and was succeeded by his son Richard. When Parliament was dissolved in the autumn of 1659 there was no legal government in England, and the young Richard Cromwell lacked the charisma and militaristic strategy that had made his father a supreme ruler. The people of England longed for peace and stability, so it was inevitable that the followers of Charles II should ask the exiled monarch to return to England to take up what he considered to be his rightful position.

Had the Tavenors remained with the London Trayned Bands these disturbances without a doubt would have affected their lives, but in the castle at Deal, away from the tribulations of affairs of state, the urgency for change had not touched their lives.

However, with the restoration of the Crown, everything changed.

Samuel confided his fears to Ann.

"I fear that we must leave Deal Castle," he told her. "I have served the cause of Parliament too well to be easily forgiven by our new monarch. "Methinks before many days pass we shall be told that we must leave our home, and start a new life elsewhere."

"Where shall we go?" Ann asked. "Shall I ask Father if we may reside with him at the farm, as Francis and his wife Grace did when first they were wed?"

"I think not," Samuel said. "I have sufficient money to buy a house for us nearby, in Dover, a shop. Then I shall engage in trade, buying and selling items that arrive in the port from France. We shall not starve, good wife, I do assure thee."

It transpired, however, that Samuel's fears were without foundation. In an attempt to put an end to the disputes of the past twenty years an Act of Indemnity and Oblivion pardoned all offences arising from the conflicts, including changes in the ownership and administration of lands, with the exception of the fifty-seven men who had signed the execution warrant for the death of Charles I.

Fortunately Samuel Tavenor had not been one of those, and so his Governorship of the Castle of Deal was confirmed by the King.

As Governor of the Castle Samuel was frequently visited by local farmers, and one of these in particular was a man of some learning; his name was Edward Prescott, he lived at Guston Court, and he was the leader of the local Baptist sect in the town of Dover. When the discussion of farm produce and supplies was ended, they would invariably turn to the topic of religion, and Samuel found his interest increasingly drawn towards the simple faith of Prescott and his friends.

Hearing that an open-air meeting was to take place in fields adjacent to Deal Castle, the Governor was driven by curiosity to hide behind a hedge, where he could listen without being recognized, for it would not be appropriate at this stage to attend the meeting openly. As he listened he became so impressed by their doctrine that he wanted to join the sect.

On 13th April 1663 he literally took the plunge, and was baptized by immersion in the Delft Stream at Sandwich, after which he became a regular attender at the Arminian Baptist meetings at Dover.

During the following year Ann's health began to fail; although only forty years of age, continual child-bearing had taken its toll of her strength; her health gradually declined. On January 6th 1665 she died in her sleep, and was laid to rest in the shadow of Upper Deal Church.

With the death of his wife, religion became the most important aspect of Samuel's life, and, no longer bound to the traditions of the established faith he decided that the life of a soldier was not compatible with his Christian beliefs. After long and deep consideration he asked to be allowed to resign from his post.

It was Edward Prescott who helped Samuel to come to terms with losing Ann.

"Grieve not, Brother Samuel," he had said. "The work of Mistress Ann on earth was done, and God hath rewarded her by freeing her from all earthly toil and cares. We must rejoice that she be now with Our Lord in Heaven. But thou, Samuel Tavenor, thy work is yet to begin. Now is the time to pray for strength to fulfil the tasks that have been set for thee."

The family moved to Dover, where Samuel Tavenor rented a shop and set up a grocery business in Market Lane. The dwelling seemed small and cramped, after the spacious apartment in the castle, but trade was good, and what troubled Samuel most was the care of his children.

Ann, the eldest girl, now sixteen years of age, had gone to London in the employment of a wealthy merchant, in whose home she resided, and who treated her as one of the family. The eldest boy, Samuel, on his fourteenth birthday had become apprenticed to a surgeon, and as was the custom now lived in the home of the man who would teach him his trade.

Surprised by the youth's choice of career, the former Captain had been proud when his son had explained, "Father, I remember how thou hast told us of the wounded men lying on the field of battle, crying out in pain, but with none to give relief. I too would be a soldier. One who could go to the aid of his wounded companions, with the skill to make them whole again." How could he refuse permission for his son to follow so worthy a profession?

At home there still remained thirteen-year old John, who had elected to help his father in the shop, twelve year-old Priccilla, Nathaniel, David, and Thomas, and Ben and James, who were still infants.

COINS OF THE REIGN OF CHARLES I.

Obverse:

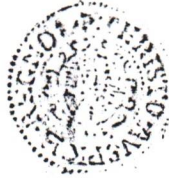
Reverse:



.XII D (12d)
 "CAROLUS D G
 MAG BR FR ET
 HI REX"
 "REGNO CHRISTO
 AUSPICE"



VI (6d)



IIII (4d)



III (3d)

Approximate
translation of
inscriptions:

Obverse:

Charles, by the
 Grace of God,
 King of Britain
 France (?) and
 Scotland.



II (2d)

Reverse:

Ruler by the
 favour of
 Christ.



I (1d)



$\frac{1}{2}$ ($\frac{1}{2}$ d)

(Possibly a token?)

Although Priccilla did her best to take the place of her mother in keeping the house and the family in order, the younger boys, David and Thomas, who had inherited their father's thirst for action and excitement, proved to be too adventurous for their sister to have any success in keeping them out of trouble. Samuel confided his worries to Edward Prescott, who had the ideal solution.

"I know one who will gladly come to thine assistance, Brother Samuel," he said. "My niece, Susannah Harrison. Thou hast come to know her at the meetings, and thy children are known to her. If all should go well, mayhap thou should wish to engage her as a house-keeper."

The suggestion strengthened Samuel's conviction that God would send someone to help in time of trouble, and that he need have no fear in embracing the Baptist faith, for it was significant that it was from them that the offer of help had come; it seemed that God was enrolling the efforts of Edward Prescott and his supporters to do good in the world.

Susannah was a serious girl, easily twenty years Samuel's junior; in complete contrast to Ann, who had captivated Samuel's heart from the first glance, she was the type of girl whose mouse-coloured hair, pale, freckled complexion, and brown eyes would not warrant a second look. But her strict Puritanical upbringing had endowed her with the mature outlook and commonsense of a matronly housewife, and she had no difficulty in restoring order into the home; only a few weeks had passed before the two infants had come to regard her as a second mother, and she had earned the everlasting gratitude of both Priccilla and her father.

Chapter 5 Reunion

The restoration of the monarchy brought with it a return of other activities denied to the citizens of England during the Common Wealth years; there was a return to the 'good old days'; maypoles were again erected on village greens, and there were parties, dancing, and parades where crowds of excited townfolk followed drummers through the streets, flourishing banners, and firing shots as they marched. The people decked the streets with flowers, and hogsheads of beer and bread were handed out to the poor.

One by one the entertainments banned by Oliver Cromwell's Parliament returned - the gaming tables, public dancing rooms, music houses, puppet shows, and rope-dancers, and there was a growing demand for predictions from the fortune-tellers and astrologers who were eager to take money from the gullible crowds.

"I like it not," Samuel remarked.

Edward Prescott sagely nodded his head. "Mark my words, "Brother Samuel," he said. "There will be retribution to come for this sinfulness."

His opinion was to be proved correct sooner than anyone expected, but it was in London, not Dover, that the first sign was seen.

Benjamin Foster his wife Rebecca, and their two children, seven year-old James and four year-old Alice, were living in the Aldgate district of London. Benjamin was attending to a customer when they heard the repeated cry: "Look! 'Tis a sign from Heaven!" echoing in the nearby street.

The two men ran out into the street to have a better view above the overhanging upper rooms; there, sure enough, so low in the sky that it seemed to be in danger of touching the rooftops, was a luminous ball behind which trailed a tail of fire and smoke; a comet. It was later described by Daniel Defoe as being 'of a dull, pale, languid colour, and its motion very heavy, solemn, and slow.'

Hearing the commotion, Rebecca and the children had rushed to the upstairs window, as had their neighbours, so that by the time the comet passed overhead the street was packed with spectators, and there were heads and shoulders leaning out of every window; certainly this was not a sight to be missed. An eerie silence fell as they looked upwards at the strange object passing overhead.

The comet continued on its leisurely way, and the inhabitants of Aldgate found their voices.

"What was it?" one whispered.

"A star," said another.

"Nay, 'tis too low, and too big for a star."

"Could it be the moon coming down from the sky?"

"'Tis too big for the moon, and 'tis yet day."

"'Tis not the sun! The sun still be there, see!"

"'Tis an omen," affirmed one of the men, an elderly gentleman dressed in the sombre clothes of a Puritan. "An omen, for us, the people of London. See how low it doth fly above our rooftops, so that none in the world may see it but ourselves."

"What doth it mean?" a woman cried in a loud, fearful voice.

"We must go to see the astrologer. He will know," came the reply.

In a city where the people were ready to believe in the power of dreams, old wives' tales, apparitions, and other supernatural manifestations, there was no shortage of fortune-tellers and astrologers who, dressed in black cloaks and velvet jackets, were available to interpret any unusual experience, at an extortionate price.

All over the city such men and women were proclaiming, to those who came to take advantage of their superior knowledge, the simple fact that the comet foretold a heavy judgment, a punishment that would be slow, but severe, terrible, and frightening. Their words brought terror to the tightly-packed citizens of London, who from that time lived in constant fear of the misfortune that lay in wait for them, and from which there was no escape.

The first few cases of the plague were reported in December, in the parish of St. Giles. It was fortunate that the weather had turned extremely cold, and severe frosts which persisted well into the month of February halted the onset of an epidemic by preventing the germs from multiplying, so that the city remained comparatively healthy. But when the spring weather returned in April it brought with it not only an increase in the number of cases of the plague, but also of the equally-dreaded spotted fever.

Alarm spread rapidly through the parishes of St. James' and St. Brides' and then into other parts of the city. Stories were told of strange apparitions, harbingers of death, seen floating in the air, of ghosts in the narrow passages between the houses, and of spectres in churchyards. Astrologers and fake doctors grew rich, the former assuring the people that they could predict life or death, and the latter producing expensive potions and lotions which they claimed would give immunity from the disease.

One of the many bills advertising such treatment read as follows:

An eminent High Dutch physician, newly come over from Holland, where he resided all the time of the great plague last year in Amsterdam, and cured multitudes of people that actually had the plague upon them.

While those of a superstitious and trusting frame of mind continued to part with their money, the more prudent decided that the best course of action was to leave the city until the epidemic had subsided; the plague was ever hovering in wait, and their parents and grandparents had told of how it was common practice in the days of Queen Elizabeth for theatres to be closed regularly, to prevent the spread of infection.

Benjamin Foster was one who decided that there was no sense in risking their lives for the loss of a few months' business.

"We must go away till this is past," he told Rebecca. "I shall board up the house till we return, and we shall make our way to a smaller town, where the plague will spread less easily. 'Tis well I did not part from my trusty horse when I left the Bands. He hath seen me safely through battle, and shall again lead us all to safety."

"Which way shall we go?" Rebecca asked.

"To the South," Benjamin replied. "I have seen enough of the Midlands to know much of the land was laid waste in the war, and there will be no welcome for a former soldier. So it is with East Anglia and the South West. But the counties of Kent and Surrey saw less of the battle, and 'tis there we shall fare best until 'tis safe to return again to our home."



Almost 100,000 Londoners died of plague in 1665-6, the last serious outbreak in Britain

Having decided what he would do, Benjamin made his way to join the crowd outside the Lord Mayor's dwelling, where those who shared his opinion were waiting to obtain certificates of health and passes that would enable them to travel through the countryside; without such documents they would be unable to pass through any town, or to lodge in any inn.

It was well that they had taken this precaution, for by an order of the Government turnpikes and barriers had been erected. It was when they reached the first of these that Benjamin remembered his old friend Samuel Tavenor. Unlike some families who had loaded carts with their possessions, so that it was obvious they were fleeing the city, Benjamin had persuaded Rebecca to walk with him while the two children rode on the horse, and all that they carried was food for the journey, money for their needs, and a small bag containing a few clothes. It would be slow progress, but by resting overnight in the villages through which they passed, Benjamin hoped they would be able to find a place where they could stay for the duration of the infection.

The turnpike guard issued his challenge: "What doth be thy purpose in travelling this road?"

Benjamin replied, "We go to visit a friend who doth live in these parts, a Captain Tavenor, who doth reside in the garrison at Deal. We fought together in the war."

The guard was suitably impressed: he noted the children riding, and the lack of household equipment, and came to the conclusion that the man could be speaking the truth.

"'Tis a long way to walk," he said.

"Aye, but I have marched much further, and as thou dost see, my wife is strong and healthy. We shall stay at an inn when we have walked enough. See, I have the papers to prove we may do so." He handed the documents to the guard, who, satisfied, raised the barrier and allowed them to pass on their way.

When they paused for the night at an inn it became clear that the villagers who resided near to the city had no wish to give more than the briefest hospitality to passing travellers. Benjamin had been thinking about his friend since they left home, and on the second day he announced: "We shall do what I told the guard. We shall go to find Captain Tavenor. He will advise us on where we may best live till 'tis safe to return home."

Several days later they arrived in Deal to find that the former Governor was no longer there, but were advised to seek for him in Dover. On arrival in the town Benjamin found an inn where he could rent a room for his family and stable his horse, and then, while they rested, he went on foot alone to seek for his friend.

It was outside Samuel's shop that the two men came face-to-face.

The years that had passed since last they met had made changes in the appearance of each: Samuel's hair was turning grey, whilst that of Benjamin was steadily disappearing, although he had now acquired a moustache and beard; there were wrinkles and lines around the mouth and eyes; but they both recognized a familiar face, and searched their memories until at last recognition came.

"Benjamin Foster!"

"Samuel Tavenor!"

The exclamations were simultaneous, as were the next remarks of:

"How dost thou come to be here in Dover?"

"I never thought to see thee again, Benjamin!"

Samuel said, "Come inside, my friend, and tell me what hath transpired since last we met, and why thou art here today."

"I came in search of thee, to ask for advice," Benjamin replied. "I am here with my wife Rebecca, and our two children. Dost thou recall Rebecca, the daughter of the landlord at the Black Swan?"

"Aye. I recall Rebecca," Samuel said. "So she is now thy wife! Where is she?"

"In the Mariners' Arms, up the road. I have a room there. We have had to flee the city of London. The plague hath arrived again, not in our parish, but there have been signs that this will be worse than we can know." He went on to recount how the comet had passed low over the city, and the panic it had caused. "But that is not the worst, friend Samuel," he said. "There are stories of swellings, and pain that cannot be borne, of teeth loosening, a constant scent of apples, red blotches on the skin, people falling down in apoplexies, and of strong men being driven mad by the torment. There are tales of mothers murdering their own children, and of others throwing themselves out of windows. I tell thee, Samuel, London hath become a fearful place to be. I know not which be worse, the plague itself, or the terror in the hearts of all who live there. When we left the city the infection was still far from our own parish, but I fear for the lives of my children, and I saw no sense in waiting till some passing traveller brought it knocking on our door."

"Thou did right," Samuel told him. "I would have done the same. How can I help thee? Dost thou need lodgings? I doubt not we could squeeze thee in with our family."

"How many children hast thou, Samuel?"

"At home now, seven," Samuel replied. He went on to recount how Ann had died, and how Susannah was now caring for the children and the home.

Benjamin smiled, "Methinks seven children must be enough for one house," he said. "I have enough money to keep us until I may find work, and 'tis about that I came to seek advice. In London I have a saddle-making and leather-work shop, and methought perhaps I could hire a stall, and make sufficient to keep my family and myself until it be safe to go back to our home."

"We will go to see William Tanner," Samuel said. "Here, John. Thou must mind the shop while I be gone."

In a short time Benjamin Foster and William Tanner had come to an arrangement whereby William would rent to Benjamin a stall near to his shop, and would supply him with leather at a reasonable charge.

Well pleased, Benjamin said, "I thank thee, Master Tanner, and thee, Samuel."

"Bring Rebecca and the children to dine with us tomorrow eve," Samuel said. "I would like to meet her again."

Meanwhile Rebecca had been making the acquaintance of the landlord; on learning that she was the daughter of a London innkeeper, and well-versed in the trade, he too had suggested an arrangement whereby she should work for him in the inn in return for a room at a reduced rent.

Remembering her former love for Samuel Tavenor, Rebecca was a little anxious about meeting him again; however, she soon decided that she had chosen well in marrying Benjamin Foster.

In Rebecca's opinion Samuel Tavenor was a good man, but she could never have come to terms with his Puritan outlook. Unlike Susannah, she could not be docile and obedient; her nature was too fiery for that. When they returned to the inn she remarked to her husband, "It was good to see Master Tavenor again, but I rejoice in having the good sense to marry thee, Benjamin Foster."

As the months passed by Samuel Tavenor came to the conclusions that his children needed a mother, and who could be more suitable than the young woman who was already established in his household?

Since the death of her parents Susannah had been in the care of Edward Prescott, her mother's brother. When approached by Samuel Tavenor for his niece's hand in marriage, Edward Prescott was delighted to give his consent, and on 14th June 1666 Samuel and Susannah were married in Canterbury.

Later in the year, towards the end of September, the news arrived in Dover that a great part of the city of London had been destroyed by a disastrous fire, which had also brought an end to the ravages of the plague. The city of London was desolate, but safe.

"Methinks 'tis time to return, and to build our lives again," Benjamin said. "I know not whether our home will still be there. 'Tis said more than half the city has been burnt down. But I have saved a fair sum, enough to start afresh."

Rebecca asked, "Dost thou not wish to remain here, Husband? We have friends, and work to do."

"That is true," Benjamin replied. "But our parents and relations were still in the city when we left, and we must return to see what fate befell them. London is our home. But this time thou and I shall not walk all the way. I shall buy a cart, and perchance there will be no need to call in so many inns on the way."

On taking leave of his friend he said, "And thou, Samuel Tavenor, if thou shouldst ever come to London, be sure to find us. I shall ever be in thy debt for thy kindness this past year."

In the years that followed all went well for both families. Benjamin and Rebecca found the street where they lived, including their former home, was in ruins, but the Black Swan had already been replaced by a more substantial building of bricks, and they were able to reside there with Rebecca's father, who had survived both the plague and the fire, until they could move into a new house of their own.

For Samuel trade continued to prosper, so that by 1674 the shop had become sufficiently large for him to be entrusted with the business of supplies to the Guard of James, Duke of York; from grocery his trade diversified into other merchandize, including the sale of a barrel of gunpowder to the Corporation, to be used in defence of the town. It was a happy home, although there were to be no children from his second marriage.

Meanwhile Samuel's future had taken a significant turn when he had become a local preacher in the Baptist cause. He was an eloquent speaker, and brought many more worshippers to share in the belief which had become the most important part of his life.

Chapter 6 Persecution

When it became evident that the restoration of the monarchy was to be permanent, the Catholics lost no time in organizing a systematic persecution of the Baptist dissenters; the scheme began in 1665 with the Five Mile Act, whereby it was forbidden for Baptists to dwell in certain areas. At that time the borough of Deal was not included in these, and well over two hundred members were scattered along the coastal areas, with their nominal headquarters at Dover.

When, in 1669, Samuel Tavenor had become a regular preacher, and his shop was established as a meeting place for the Baptist Community, his activities came to the notice of the persecutors.

It began while he was preaching at an open-air meeting.

For the first five minutes all went well; as was usual when Samuel spoke, the crowd was attentive, sitting quietly on the grassy slope below his make-shift pulpit.

Suddenly, as if at a previously rearranged signal, from among the crowd, a body of a dozen or so burly, rough-looking men rose to their feet, and rushed forward to seize the unsuspecting preacher. One, who was obviously the leader, had been chosen to explain their actions to the members of the congregation who sat as if turned to stone, uncertain what they should do.

"This man doth break the law of the land and of the church, and must be taken before the magistrates," he announced, as the others proceeded to drag Samuel to a cart that stood some short distance away.

On the journey Samuel wondered how this could have been so well planned, and suspected that someone had informed the authorities that he would be speaking at the meeting. But who could that be? The only person he knew who could not be regarded as a friend was Francis Gibbs, who had made some effort to hide his feelings for Ann's sake, but had never forgiven Samuel for the clandestine courtship. He had lost no time, when Ann died, in stating that since Samuel Tavenor now had no connection with the Gibbs family, he would no longer be welcome at Worth. But Samuel doubted whether his brother-in-law, with whom he had had no contact since then, could know enough about his affairs to be the instigator of such an action. Yet it was obvious that someone had informed the authorities that the meeting was to take place, someone who was in some way connected with the Baptist Community.

And this was to be only the first of such disturbances, for on several occasions he was dragged away, while delivering a sermon, and taken before the Magistrates.

"This preaching and these illegal meetings must cease, or thou shalt be punished as befits the crime," he was told. "Should this disloyalty to the church and to the King continue, thou must be imprisoned, where thou canst do no harm."

Undaunted Samuel boldly reaffirmed his beliefs.

"My loyalty must be only to God," he had replied.

Eventually the matter came before the King's advisers.

On January 21st 1670 James, the Duke of York, informed the Lieutenant of Dover Castle that His Majesty was displeased by reports of illegal meetings being held in the Dover area, and demanded that the situation should be rectified immediately.

As a result of this Samuel Tavenor, along with seven other Baptist leaders including the Mayor of Dover, was summoned to appear before the

Privy Council. When asked to stop preaching, Samuel steadfastly refused, and as punishment was imprisoned in Dover Castle.

Susannah was in despair, but Edward Prescott came to her aid. Only three of the children now remained at home: John, Priccilla, and Thomas, all of whom were now at an age when they could care for themselves. Nathaniel and David had taken up apprenticeships; Ben had died soon after his mother, and Ann and James a year after, in the winter of 1666.

Samuel could have languished in gaol for ever, but numbered among the notable persons in King Charles's court were several who had sympathy with the Baptist faith; moreover they were men to whom the King had just cause to be grateful, for services they had rendered in connection with his restoration. Together they intervened to secure Samuel's release. He returned home to find that Dover Corporation had ordered that all meeting houses should be sealed.

In 1681 Samuel became joint Elder, along with Richard Cannon and Thomas Partridge, of the Baptist Community. By this time the membership had grown so large that it was necessary to divide the community into three congregations: Dover; Deal with Sandwich; and Folkestone with Hythe. Each year in the month of May there was a combined meeting of the three sects. It was during this time that Samuel Tavenor was instrumental in the erection of the General Baptist Chapel at Deal. Above the doorway was inscribed the three words which summed up his faith: God is One.

However, Samuel's trials were not yet at an end, despite an agreement whereby meeting-houses could be opened under licence.

It was in the summer of 1682 that five men appeared at the shop, brandishing a false warrant which said that they had been sent by the magistrates to seize his goods and furniture.

A crowd gathered in the street, while Susannah sat on the stairs and wept, to see the objects she cherished being taken away. It was only after the commotion had subsided and the crowd dispersed that an elderly man, who had been quietly watching, approached Samuel Tavenor.

"Didst thou examine the name on that document?" he enquired.

He had seen the men before, and doubted their credentials for performing such a task.

"Aye. Else they would have taken nought," Samuel replied. "'Twas signed by one of the Dover Magistrates. He and I have met before. I know him well."

"In that case thou dost have a just cause for complaint," the stranger said. "I myself know the law well, and I assure thee, Master Tavenor, that the authority for such an action must come from a higher source than the Magistrate of Dover. Come, we will visit the Magistrate together, and complain about this injustice."

Aided by his new friend Samuel successfully visited the magistrates and demanded the return of all his possessions. But the persecution had now become so great that he feared for the lives of Susannah and the children.

"For the safety of all of thee, I must go from hence," he said.

"John, I leave the business in thy hands, and I know my friend Edward will assist in every way. But 'tis no longer safe for thee should I remain here."

"Where shalt thou go, Husband?" Susannah asked.

"To London," Samuel replied. "I shall go first to find my friend Benjamin Foster. Be of good cheer, Susannah. I shall send letters to thee when I can."

The London in which Samuel arrived was much changed from when he had left to go to Deal; roads had been widened, houses were built of brick and stone, with no overhanging projections, so that daylight could penetrate the streets, and the towers of magnificent churches rose towards the sky. In the place where the Black Swan had stood was a new building with a sign that depicted the name of the establishment, but he was pleased to find that Rebecca's father was still the landlord, and he had no difficulty in finding the new home of his friends.

Benjamin and Rebecca were delighted to see Samuel again, and assured him that he was welcome to stay with them as long as he had need. There he continued preaching, composing hymns, and writing letters of comfort to his friends, and to Susannah.

On the accession of William and Mary religious tolerance returned to England, and Samuel was able to return to Dover. The first thing he did on arriving there was to apply for permission to use his home as a place of public worship. The licence giving permission was granted on 19th April 1692, and Samuel was elected Pastor.

From that time onward the Community continued to flourish. Baptisms were performed in the stream at River, near Dover, and the lane which connected Samuel's dwelling house with the Market Square became known as Tavorer's Lane. Anxious that the Baptists should not need to return to the Catholic church for any religious observances, he gave a portion of his land for use as a burial ground, which became known as 'The Old Baptists' Burial Ground,' or 'Tavorer's Garden.'

It was here that Captain Samuel Tavorer was buried, beside his son Samuel, who had died in 1682 at the age of thirty years; five years later they would be joined by his second wife, Susannah.

Captain Samuel Tavorer died on 4th August 1696, in his seventy-sixth year, leaving behind a memorial by which he would long be remembered, 'Tavorer's Garden.'