

“My mother was dead,” the captain went on, “my oldest sister was married, and my youngest sister was at school in Philadelphia, and my brother, two years older than myself, made life miserable for me in trying to boss me.”

“Oh!” exclaimed O’Halloran, “don’t I know that same? ’Tis meself that’s been along there.”

Captain Fambrough looked at the old place, carefully noting the outward changes, which were comparatively few. He noted, too, with the eye of a soldier, that when the impending conflict took place between the forces then facing each other, there would be a sharp struggle for the knoll on which the house stood; and he thought it was a curious feat for his mind to perform, to regard the old home where he had been both happy and miserable as a strategic point of battle. Private O’Halloran had no such memories to please or to vex him. To the extent of his opportunities he was a man of business. He took a piece of white cloth from his pocket and hung it on the broken sapling.

“I’ll see, sor, if yon chap is in the grocery business.”