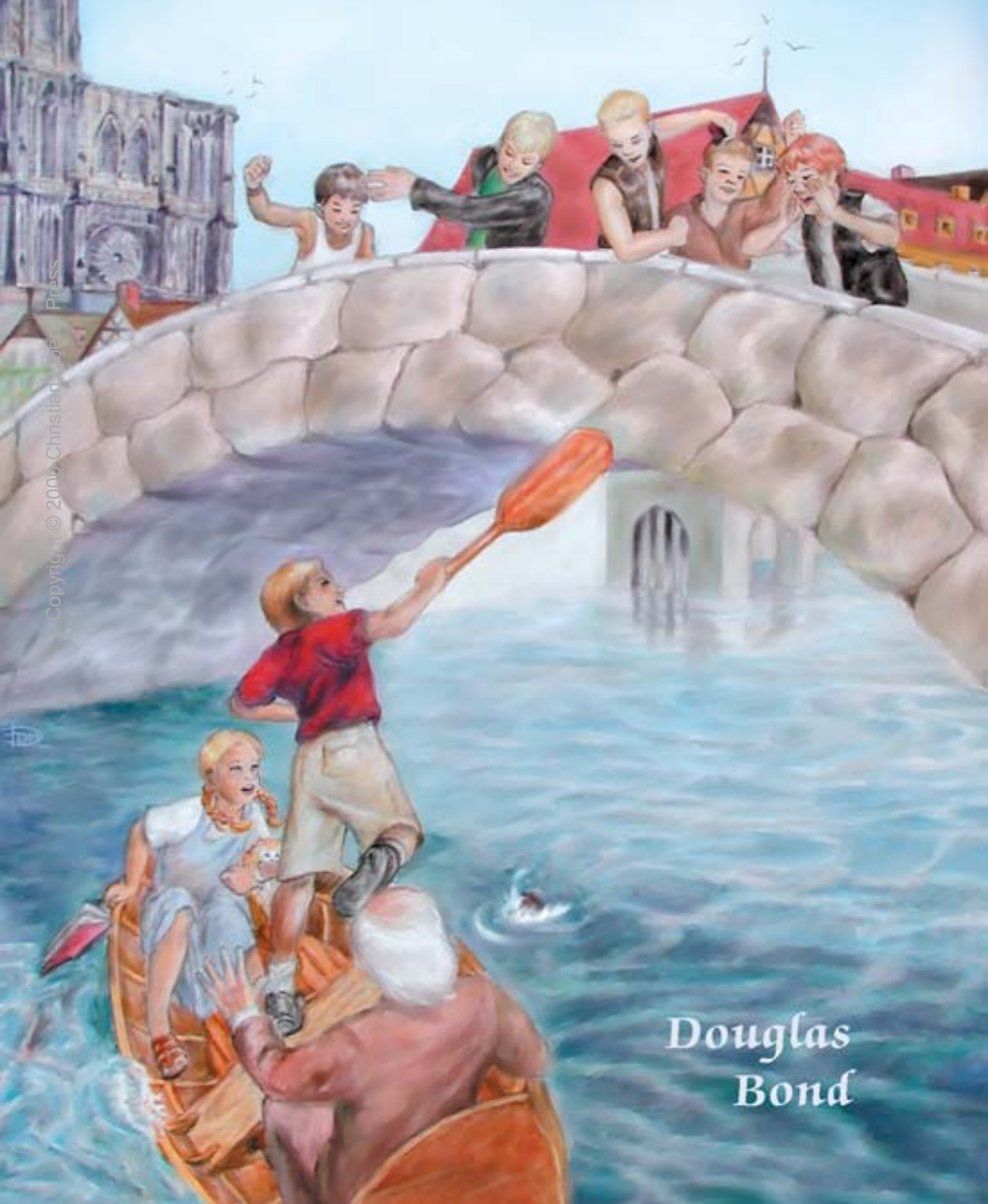


MR. PIPES

And Psalms and Hymns of the Reformation



Douglas
Bond

Mr. Pipes

and Psalms and Hymns of the Reformation



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Douglas Bond

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General editorship by Michael J. McHugh

Layout and editing by Eric L. Pfeiffelman and Edward J. Shewan

Copyediting by Diane C. Olson, Belit M. Shewan, and

Carol H. Blair

Cover design and graphics by Christopher D. Kou

Graphics by Christopher D. Kou and Robert Fine

Cover art by Dawn Doughty

Story illustrations by Ron Ferris

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Preface

Mr. Pipes and Psalms and Hymns of the Reformation contains more than an interesting story about two young Americans on vacation in Europe. It is a story about the most important subject in the world—the worship of Almighty God.

The worship of God in modern times has too often become shallow and man-centered. Many Christians at the opening of the Twenty-first Century, including young believers, have never understood the importance of approaching God with awesome reverence and majestic praise. As readers move through *Mr. Pipes and Psalms and Hymns of the Reformation*, however, they will not only learn about the fascinating lives of famous hymn writers, but will also be encouraged to cultivate an attitude of humble adoration as they approach their Maker.

Young Christians who grasp the significance of what they read will come to the wonderful realization that their worship is connected with the Church universal—the followers of Christ throughout the world, both past and present. In other words, young readers will understand that true worship is not isolated from believers of the past but is, rather, built upon their godly traditions.

Perhaps the greatest tradition of true biblical worship, aside from scriptural exposition and prayer, is the holy exercise of hymn singing. It is, therefore, the express purpose of this book to rekindle a genuine interest within the lives of young believers in the traditional hymns of the faith once delivered unto the saints. May God be pleased to use this little volume to revive an interest in and appreciation for that which is true and praiseworthy in the realm of Christian worship.

Michael J. McHugh

For Brittany, Rhodri, Cedric, and Desmond

Godly families are
differed from the ungodly
by openly singing the praises of God,
when others sing wanton and idle songs.

Richard Baxter, 1692



Chapter One

News from England

The Adventure Begins

Polly was finding the song more and more interesting because she thought she was beginning to see the connection between the music and the things that were happening.

“old your noise, everyone,” said the Cabby.
“I want to listen to the moosic.”

C. S. Lewis

The kitchen door flew open with a bang. Lanky, blond-haired Drew Willis bolted into the house clutching the mail in his hands, his face flushed with excitement.

“Annie!” he yelled, dropping the pile of letters and tearing into a thin, blue envelope. “It’s from Mrs. Beccles!” he said, as his sister came rushing into the kitchen.

“Don’t read it without me,” she said, finishing a braid in her shiny blond hair, while straining to see over her younger, but now clearly taller, brother’s broadening shoulders.

The children had met Mrs. Beccles last summer when they traveled with their mother to Olney, an ancient English market town, where they had expected to spend the most boring summer of their lives. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Mrs. Beccles owned and operated “Beccles Bakehouse,” and Drew didn’t think anyone made pastries as delicious as kindly Mrs. Beccles. From their first day in the village she had become their friend.

Drew read out loud:

My dears, Annie and Drew,

The most astonishing thing happened today in my little shop, and I simply had to be writing you about it, for as near as I can tell, it concerned you both.

Mr. Pipes and Dr. Dudley called in for tea at half-past four—they often do, as you’ll no doubt remember—but very soon their conversation became rather heated, leastwise, heated on Dr. D’s part, as you’d be expecting. Your dear friend and companion, Mr. Pipes, seemed to be proposing some adventure, of which Dr. D clearly did not approve. I couldn’t be hearing the details, of course, not being given to eavesdropping, but I did hear them mention your names more than once, that’s sure, and I’m feeling it in my bones this bodes well for your upcoming summer holidays!

—Oh, you’ll have to hold that thought for a moment whilst I pull some of my jelly-fills out of the oven—My, how I do wish I could send you some, Drew, knowing how much you be liking them and all...

Here, a dark red splotch interrupted the letter. Drew scratched at the splotch, sniffed it, then carefully tasted it.

“Well?” said Annie.

“Currant jelly,” said Drew, scratching again at the little splotch. “Umm-m, what I wouldn’t do for one of Mrs. Beccles’ jelly-fills! What do you think Mr. Pipes has up his sleeve?” he went on.

“Whatever it is,” said Annie, “it’s got to be good if Mr. Pipes came up with it.”

“—And good,” said Drew, “if Dr. Dudley doesn’t like it.”

“Behind his stiff, British way,” said Annie, smiling as she remembered Dr. Dudley’s jutting chin and long, sniffing nose, “he really means well—I’m sure of it. I think Dr. Dudley just cares so much for Mr. Pipes he doesn’t want to see anything—well, you know—anything bad happen to him.”

“I guess you’re right,” said Drew doubtfully.

In the rest of the letter Mrs. Beccles filled them in on all the latest news from Olney:

Beatrice Faulkner won this year’s Pancake Race—the five-hundred-and-fifty-fifth anniversary race—I say, how time does fly! Mrs. Broadwith has new lodgers, imagine it, who flatly refused to eat her stewed tomatoes for breakfast; the local radio station is exerting considerable pressure on the vicar to be placing a ghastly antenna on the very spire of St. Peter and St. Paul’s—our parish church, of all places! What would Mr. Newton have thought! English Heritage has threatened to fine the Cowper Museum 100 pounds sterling for repainting dear Mr. Cowper’s door the wrong shade of red (how they know it’s the wrong shade I’ll never know, that’s sure!). Lambing season for the Howard family is very busy, as always, but the mild spring weather means fewer lambs are being lost to cold. Bentley and Clara send their love....

Annie and Drew’s minds flooded with memories from the narrow, cobbled streets of Olney (cars whizzing by on the wrong side of the street), their fishing and sailing adventures with Mr. Pipes along the Great Ouse, Lulu the white pony, Lord Underfoot the cat, their good friends, Bentley and Clara Howard and all their sheep, the great stone church built so long ago, and Mr. Pipes’s stories told around the old organ. Life in Olney was so unlike their life in America, but how they had grown to love that life. What

could Mr. Pipes be planning that would involve them? They both wondered.



A week later Annie lay on the floor of her bedroom, her bare feet propped up on her bed, a page of her sketchbook—full of crossed out lines—open in front of her. She looked dreamily at the ceiling, took a deep breath, and sighed. Mr. Pipes told her how to begin writing a poem, but no matter how hard she tried the words seemed to have a mind of their own. How did the hymn writers, that Mr. Pipes had told them about last summer, do it? “Remember, my dear,” he had said in his clear, gentle voice, “the rhyme must serve the meaning, not the other way round.” Somehow, recalling Mr. Pipes’s instruction only made her more discouraged as she gazed at her own efforts—

There was a man with whitened hair
Who for his friends so much did care.

—“Ugh!” she groaned.

A clinking sound suddenly interrupted her muse as the mailman dropped letters through the slot in the front door. With regular letters from Clara—some of them written in an elaborate code they’d worked out over months of using dancing paper doll-like symbols, every arm and foot position corresponding to letters of the alphabet—she’d trained herself to listen for the mail every day. After a dash across the hall and a quick shuffle through the pile of mail, she opened, with trembling hands, another blue envelope from England, this one from Mr. Pipes himself. Now, receiving a letter from Mr. Pipes was not so strange. He wrote often, letters filled with reminiscence of their adventures, and filled with encouraging words and helpful solutions to the questions they asked in their replies. But this letter seemed somehow different. Her eyes raced down the page.

“Drew! Oh, my goodness, Drew!” she called, jumping up and down with excitement. She reread the last paragraph of the letter to be sure her eyes had not deceived her.

The piano playing from the den abruptly halted, and a moment later Drew burst into the living room.

“He wants us to come back!” she squealed.

“Who?” asked Drew, scowling at her, irritated that she’d interrupted his practice.

“Mr. Pipes, silly,” said Annie.

Mr. Pipes was Drew’s long-distance music teacher who assigned hymns through the mail for Drew to practice. He’d just been struggling with learning “Minstrel Boy,” the tune Mr. Pipes preferred for Reginald Heber’s hymn, “The Son of God Goes Forth to War.” Sometimes he wondered about Mr. Pipes’s insistence that he begin piano lessons again. It was hard work!

“Let me get this straight,” said Drew, the excitement growing in his voice. “Mr. Pipes is inviting us back to Olney?”

“Not exactly,” said Annie.

“Let me see that,” said Drew, grabbing at the letter.

“Look at the last paragraph,” said Annie.

“Naturally, this is all conditioned upon your mother and stepfather’s approval....” Drew read aloud. He read on, skimming the rest of the paragraph silently. His heart beat more quickly as he read through the paragraph again. Could it actually be true?

“Annie,” said Drew, calming his voice with considerable effort. “Annie, do you realize what this means?”

“You bet I do,” said Annie, spinning around on her heel, her pigtails sailing behind her. “If Mom and Dad let us, we are off to Germany and Switzerland for the whole summer—and with Mr. Pipes! Just think—mountains, cowbells, castles—it’s too good to be true!”

“Don’t forget the Swiss chocolate,” said Drew, his eyes rolling back in his head as he flopped onto the couch with a laugh.

“No wonder Dr. Dudley had another of his heated talks with Mr. Pipes,” he went on. Sitting up, Drew cleared his throat and juttied out his chin. “I say, old fellow,” he began, doing his best imitation of Dr. Dudley’s accent. “My dear man, I’ll be dashed if you take those American children gallivanting all over the Continent—little blighters! They’ll have you in your grave before your time, that’s sure.”

Annie sank to the floor laughing as Drew continued.

“Of course, I’d simply never dream of interfering—” Here Drew, too, burst into laughter.



Their parents did not entirely understand the change that had come over the children since spending last summer with Mr. Pipes. For a time they tried to discourage it, to divert the children’s attention back to their old life and friends, but their mother couldn’t help noticing how positive the old man’s influence had been on her children. Barring the hymns they almost continually sang—*dirges*, as she called them—they quarreled much less than before, were more helpful around the house, and approached their studies at school with much more enthusiasm. But another whole summer under Mr. Pipes’s influence? They did so want their children to be open-minded and freethinking. However, after some discussion—while Annie and Drew

huddled anxiously at their parents' bedroom door—they gave their consent.

The last weeks of the school term seemed to last forever. Annie and Drew spent every spare moment talking excitedly about the adventure that lay ahead. They packed and repacked their knapsacks. Mr. Pipes had written that they needed to travel light, but they would also need sailing and fishing clothes.

"You see, my dears," he explained in his last letter, "one must make every effort to pack clothing that can be used for more than one purpose. For example, I will bring only two neckties—the best one for church and musical performances, and so forth, and my second best one for sailing, fishing, and generally pottering about the countryside."

Annie and Drew smiled. It was so like their dear, proper friend, Mr. Pipes. They repacked again. Drew even experimented with packing a necktie—but only one.

"How can time drag by so slowly," asked Annie the night before their flight to London, "and then all of a sudden what you've been waiting for is here? Oh, I'll never get to sleep tonight."

"Me neither," said Drew, trying on his knapsack for the hundredth time. "But maybe we can get some rest on the airplane—I can't believe we're actually going!"



Annie and Drew swallowed hard as the powerful jet engines roared and the airplane raced down the runway. Suddenly the plane lifted off, climbing steeply into the blue sky above; Annie gulped as she waited for her stomach to catch up. Drew worked his jaw back and forth trying to relieve the popping feeling in his eardrums. Annie

scrunched her eyes closed and gripped the armrest as the plane jolted through a layer of fluffy, white clouds.

“Another airline seat bites the dust,” said Drew, watching Annie’s fingernails dig deeply into the armrest.

In a few moments Annie relaxed as the plane leveled off and flew more smoothly. Seeing the sunlight flash on the shiny wings of the plane, she managed a smile as it carried them north and east toward England and Mr. Pipes.

With a “pling-pling” the fasten-your-seat-belts sign flicked off. After several minutes, a woman wearing a dark blue suit and matching hat stopped in the aisle and smiled at Annie and Drew. Holding something wrapped in plastic toward Drew, she asked, in Dr. Dudley English, “Might I interest you in headphones for music listening? Here are the selections available.” She handed him a little card. Drew scanned down the list: “Garage Mirage, Pragma Magma, and Mr. Wild-Man Band,” he read silently. He looked again at the headphones. There was a time when an opportunity to sit for hours soaking up music—this kind of music—would have been like eating his favorite ice cream—with all the toppings.

He looked out the window for a moment and thought of a phrase Mr. Pipes once quoted in a letter: “Worldliness makes sin look normal and righteousness look odd.” He turned back to the flight attendant. “No thanks—but—” he hesitated, “—do you have anything to eat?”

Annie scowled at him, “*Drew?*”

But the flight attendant laughed. “I’ll be back in a moment with drinks and a little snack. Dinner will follow shortly, after which time dessert will be served, then tea.”

“Sounds great!” said Drew, licking his lips.

“It sounds like we’ll be eating most of the flight,” said Annie.

The flight attendant laughed again. “We do want our passengers happy!” She disappeared behind a little curtain for a moment then reappeared balancing two trays. Annie and Drew flipped down their seat trays in anticipation.

“Here now, this ought to hold you until dinner,” she said, setting before them several bags of peanuts, a currant scone each, and an assortment of jams and jellies. “I suppose you prefer soda?” she continued, reaching for two cans of pop from the other tray.

“What’s in the pot?” asked Drew.

“Tea—*hot* tea,” she said. “We English can’t live without the stuff, but I’m given to understand you Americans don’t think much of it.”

“Oh, but we like tea,” said Annie, “with milk and sugar, please.”

“How lovely!” said the flight attendant as she skillfully balanced the tray while filling two cups with the steaming liquid.

“May I have more sugar, please?” asked Drew, gazing into his cup before sipping.



Darkness spread rapidly as the airplane raced northeast and the sun raced the other way, finally disappearing over the horizon. Annie passed the time by looking at her drawings and poetry written last summer with Mr. Pipes in Olney. She breathed the faint but still fragrant aroma of the dried flowers she’d gathered and pressed in her book. Chewing on her pencil, she scowled at several lines she’d written. Why couldn’t she write poetry like Mrs. Alexander or William Cowper? She sighed deeply. Oh well, she’d keep trying.

The hours passed as Drew, a puzzled expression on his face, watched a rugby match on the small TV monitor in the back of the seat in front of him. They both fell asleep somewhere over the frozen wastes of Greenland.

“This is your captain speaking,” jolted them awake. Drew stretched and yawned. Annie wiped the sleep out of her eyes with both fists. “Breakfast will be served momentarily,” continued the captain. “Do enjoy. We will arrive at Heathrow about 11:00 a.m. London time.”

“Oh, no!” said Drew, sniffing the air and looking hungrily down the aisle. “You don’t think they’d serve us stewed tomatoes for breakfast, would they?”

“Better get used to it again, Drew,” said Annie, who didn’t like stewed tomatoes any better than Drew, but who also didn’t feel—probably never felt—as hungry as her brother. “Maybe they will ease us back into British cuisine slowly and just serve fried mushrooms and soft-boiled eggs—with a side of baked beans and deep-fried toast. You never can tell.” She seemed to be enjoying his distress.

“Ugh!” said Drew.

Breakfast proved to be much more of an American affair than Drew had feared, and after the trays were cleared away the plane began its steady descent through the broken clouds toward London. Drew grabbed the map from the seat pocket in front of him and studied it carefully.

“Where are we?” asked Annie.

Drew glanced out the window at the red, sandy tideland below. “We must be near the Solway Firth just here.” He pointed to the map.

“What on earth is a *firth*?” asked Annie.

“Don’t know—maybe British for some amount between four and five,” said Drew. “But it’s the name of this notch

of water that marks the western border between Scotland and England—a firth must be like a bay, I'd guess.”

Annie looked more closely at the map. “So, if we stay on this route, how close to Olney will we come as we fly toward London?”

Drew traced a line from the border of Scotland and England down to London. “It looks like this time we’ll go almost right over Olney!” he said, his excitement growing.

Annie and Drew sat with their faces plastered against the window on the left side of the plane. Green pastures, separated by hedges and low stone walls, stretched below. Sunlight shone through the broken clouds in bright patches on the checkered scene, and tiny, ant-sized cars made their way slowly along winding country lanes.

“Isn’t this fun?” said Annie. “I feel like a giant looking down on a miniature world. Look at that little village—it’s made all of dollhouses. Everything seems even more beautiful from this angle, don’t you think, Drew?”

“Sure, but they still drive on the wrong side of the road,” said Drew with a laugh.

“The *other* side of the road,” said Annie. “What’s that narrow strip of dark green trees zigzagging through the fields?” asked Annie. “Wait! Did you see that flash of sunlight in among the trees?”

Drew scanned his map, calculating how far they might have traveled in the last half-hour. He strained to see below.

“The village is huddled around a doll-house church,” squealed Annie, gripping his arm. “Drew, I think it might be—it couldn’t be—”

“It’s Olney!—maybe,” said Drew, “and Newton’s church! Remember meeting Mr. Pipes at the organ that first

day last summer?—that’s the river—The Great Ouse!—I think.”

Almost frantic with excitement, and amidst tongue clicking and disapproving glares from nearby passengers, the children searched the scene below for more familiar landmarks.

“I see the bridge—remember when Dr. Dudley watched you get walloped by *Toplady’s* boom and fall overboard just below it?” said Annie, only with great effort restraining herself from laughter at the memory.

“Yeah, yeah,” said Drew good-naturedly, “and who was at the tiller not watching the wind direction? I certainly never heard a ‘Jibe ho!’ from you before the sail came swooshing around and the boom thonked me. Boy! How I’d love to go sailing with Mr. Pipes again!”

“Hey! That must be Mr. Pipes’s cottage—it has to be!” interrupted Annie.

“No way!” Drew bumped his forehead on the window in his eagerness to see. The village faded into the rolling green fields and hedgerows as the plane sped toward London—and their friend, Mr. Pipes.

Crisscrossed with bridges, the Thames snaked its ancient way through the jumble of church domes and spires, stately buildings, and the sprawling bustle of London. The engines slowed and hissed as the plane, wings dipping, dropped several hundred feet toward the city. Annie looked straight ahead, digging her fingernails into the palm of her hand. She screwed her eyes tightly closed and swallowed.

“We’ll be down soon,” said Drew, comfortingly. He looked out the window and continued, “Wow! What a view from up here, though. And to think, Mr. Pipes and Dr.

Dudley are down there somewhere in among all those grasshoppers!”

“Dr. Dudley would be deeply offended at you calling him a grasshopper,” said Annie.

As the runway grew closer below them, the plane seemed to go faster. With a “squilch, squilch,” the tires touched down on the tarmac, and the plane taxied to the terminal. After standing in line “forever,” as Drew described it, they cleared customs and passed through a security checkpoint. Annie caught sight of Mr. Pipes first, dropped her knapsack, and broke into a run. Drew gathered up her bag and hurried after his sister. Mr. Pipes, wearing his brown tweed suit and necktie, smiled with pleasure at the sight of the children. Annie threw herself into his open arms.

Drew, trailing behind under the weight of their carry-on luggage, arrived a moment later. Looking at Mr. Pipes’s sparkling eyes rimmed below by his narrow, little glasses perched on his nose, and crowned above by his white, billowing eyebrows, Drew realized just how much he had missed the old man all these months. Mr. Pipes planted a fatherly kiss on Annie’s cheek.

“Words fail me,” he said, “in expressing my deepest joy at seeing you. And, my dear Annie, how you have grown!”

Here Mr. Pipes turned to Drew. “And the *little* brother,” he winked at Annie, who used to enjoy referring to Drew as little, “one no longer need look closely, Drew, to see that you have grown taller than your older sister. You stand almost a head taller than she.”

Drew set down the luggage and extended his hand. Mr. Pipes grasped his hand and with his left arm enfolded Drew’s broad shoulders with a hug. A flood of recollection came over Drew as he caught the scent of wool, Earl Grey tea, and something that reminded him of the pipes and keys

of the organ surrounded by the ancient stone arches of the parish church where Mr. Pipes had been the organist for more years than Drew knew. He even thought he caught a whiff of the river—and of fish.

“Mr. Pipes,” said Drew, looking up at his balding forehead and flowing white hair, “I’m so glad to see you, and we can’t wait to see what you want to show us in Europe.” Drew paused. “Fishing been good?”

Mr. Pipes threw his head back and laughed. “You’re not one to beat around the proverbial bush.”

Before Mr. Pipes could answer, a loud and deliberate “Ahem!” came from a tall, dark-haired gentleman standing protectively close to Mr. Pipes.

Annie looked at the man and squealed, “Dr. Dudley! It’s so good to see you! And thanks for bringing Mr. Pipes to the airport.” She hesitated as he looked coolly down his long nose at her, then timidly extended her hand.

“Delighted, I’m sure,” he said with a rather stiff bow as he briskly took her hand. “It has been ever so long since last we ...” he broke off searching for words, “... since last we met.”

Mrs. Beccles’s letter was right. Dr. Dudley was clearly not pleased about Mr. Pipes taking them on another adventure, thought Annie, looking out of the corner of her eye at Drew. Dr. Dudley had never really gotten over them going with Mr. Pipes on the sailing voyage down the Great Ouse last summer. “But why did he have to always blame us?” she thought. Oh, well, Annie reminded herself that Dr. Dudley only wanted to take good care of Mr. Pipes. She’d do her best to cheer him up.

“And greetings to you, Drew,” said Dr. Dudley shortly, and with an impatient twitch of his mustache. “Now then, we must get your things together and into the boot if we are

ever to make it out of London and to the boat for your crossing of the channel—that is if you still intend on going through with this ridiculous notion. It’s not too late to come to your senses, my dear fellow,” he concluded with a sniff and a penetrating stare at Mr. Pipes.

“My dear friend,” began Mr. Pipes, “Annie and Drew have not come such a great distance merely to receive a lukewarm welcome from you.”

“Oh, mind you,” said Dr. Dudley looking more kindly at the children, “mind you, it is nothing, to be sure, of a personal nature toward you, not in the slightest. And I would never dream of interfering—I simply don’t approve of elderly gentlemen gallivanting around the countryside when hearth and home would be so much more conducive to—well—to their best interest, shall we say.”

Dr. Dudley, nevertheless, called a valet to wheel their belongings toward the exit of the airport, while Mr. Pipes walked ahead, an arm each around Annie and Drew’s shoulders. After the luggage was stored in the trunk, Dr. Dudley glanced at his watch and said, “We must be off at once.”

“Martin, my friend,” said Mr. Pipes after glancing at his watch, “if we departed now for Dover we would arrive hours before sailing time—may I remind you, our tickets are for the evening boat. We have time to see a little something of London, that is if you children are feeling well enough for a bit of sight-seeing?”

“We’d love to!” said Annie and Drew.

Dr. Dudley rolled his eyes, adjusted his lapels with a jerk, and said deliberately, “If we must, we must. But I propose we leave my car in the car park and take public transport to the heart of the city. That way I’ll not be required to scour the entire city for a place to park the car.”

Moments later Annie and Drew found themselves in the top front seat of a bright-red, double-decker bus weaving its way through the narrow, bustling streets of London. The driver steered the tall bus within inches of the black-iron lampposts lining the way. Drew plastered his face against the cool glass and felt his stomach leap into his throat as the bus careened into a round-about intersection—the on-coming traffic all driving on the wrong side of the road. Annie nearly jumped from her seat as a low-growing branch from a yew tree bordering the street slapped against the roof of the bus just above her face.

“Whoa! That was close,” said Annie. “I hope it didn’t scratch the paint. Doesn’t it seem like he’s going a little fast?”

“Chap’s been doing this for years, no doubt,” said Dr. Dudley. “We all have our place—this fellow’s place is clearly behind the wheel of one of her Majesty’s buses. It is all for society’s good when each person dutifully fulfills his role.” With this last comment he looked reprovingly at Mr. Pipes, who simply smiled and said:

“Indeed.”

“What river’s that?” asked Drew as the bus raced along a broad river lined with tall, stately, and, Drew thought, very *old* buildings.

“The Thames, my boy,” said Mr. Pipes, smiling at him, “and, yes, it does have fish!”

“But I’ve left my pole with our luggage,” Drew moaned.

“We’ll have plenty of time for fishing later,” said Mr. Pipes, chuckling. “Today, I want to show you where some of the great hymn writers I told you about last summer went to school.”

Just then the bus screeched to a halt in front of a gray stone building with two massive towers rising above. Annie and Drew followed Dr. Dudley and Mr. Pipes down the narrow, winding staircase from the upper deck of the bus and onto the pavement in front of the imposing structure. Drew looked up at the Gothic arches rising into the sky. He rocked back on his heels, and his neck began to ache.

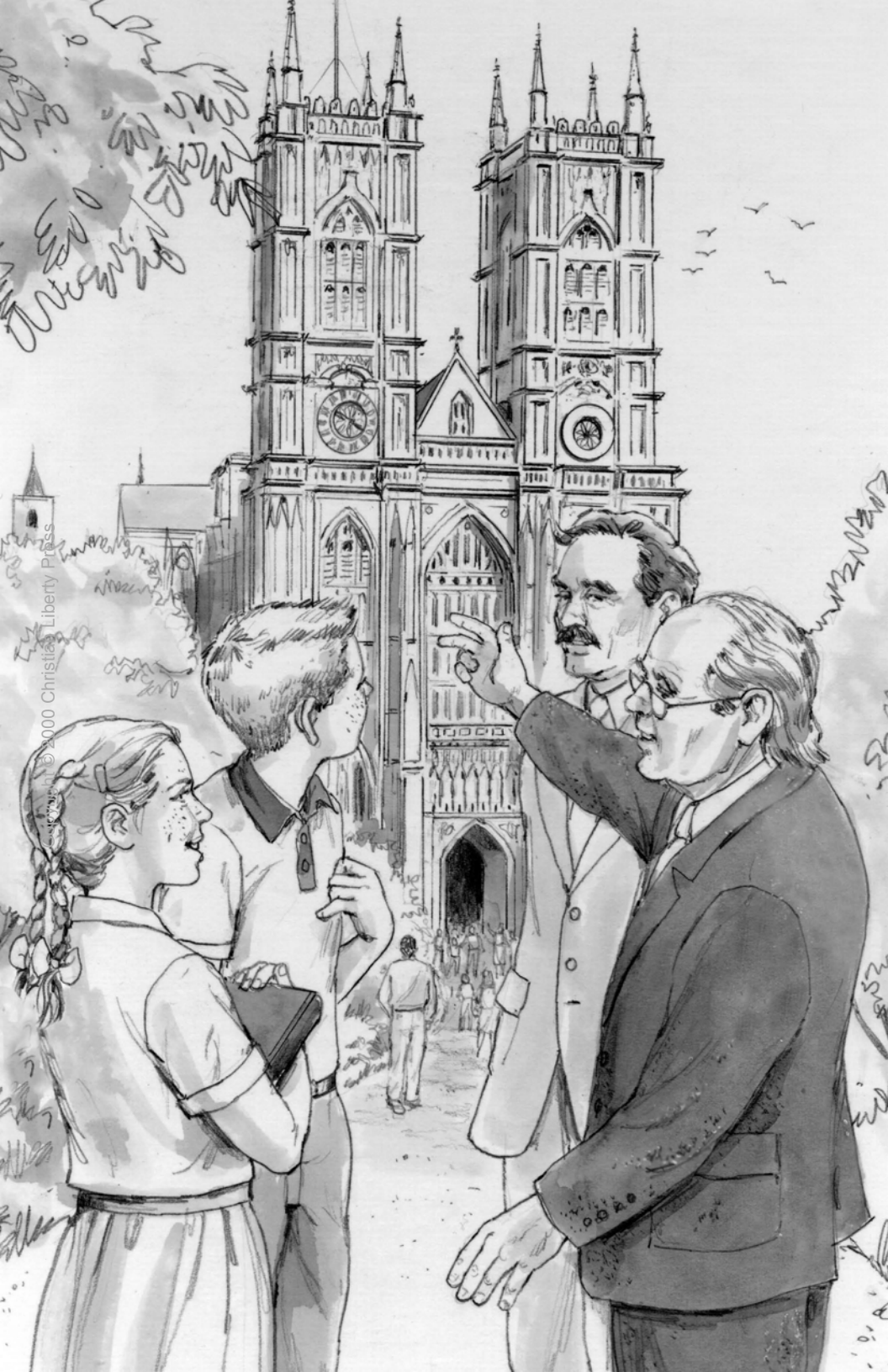
“This makes St. Peter and St. Paul’s back in Olney look pretty small,” said Drew.

“It is so—so—majestic,” said Annie, gazing at the intricate stone carvings adorning the church. “But *your* church back in Olney, Mr. Pipes, is still my favorite.”

“I do love our parish church,” said Mr. Pipes, gazing upward at the row-upon-row of flying buttresses supporting the walls and heavy stone ceiling. “But, my dear, it is not *my* church, it is the Lord’s. This church, though really not a church but an abbey—Westminster Abbey—is very important, indeed, to English history. Let’s go inside and I’ll explain why.”

They passed through a massive Gothic door surrounded by sober, saintly-looking statues peering down on them.

“Oh, it’s more lovely than I could have ever imagined,” said Annie breathlessly, halting just inside the doorway. The nave was lined with dark-ribbed columns, looking more like a cluster of smaller columns than one single one, each holding up enormous Gothic arches shaped from lighter stone. Further up, smaller arches stood pointing to rows of stained glass windows, the light filtering through, illuminating delicate crisscrossing ribs supporting the highest ceiling Annie or Drew had ever seen. Light from rows of sparkling chandeliers reflected on paving stones worn smooth by the feet of centuries of worshipers.



Drew looked around at other visitors gazing about the great abbey; an occasional door shut with a thud that reechoed throughout the massive interior.

“Why does everyone look up in English churches?” asked Drew, almost losing his balance as he tried calculating the weight of the fan-vaulted ceiling.

“The Medieval designers of Gothic cathedrals,” said Mr. Pipes, ushering them down the central aisle and past the ornate, gilded quire screen, “wanted everything about the building to point upwards. The narrow nave and magnificent one-hundred-and-three-foot-high, fan-vaulted ceiling compel our eyes, and with them our hearts, to God above—from whence all our blessings flow....”

“Ken! Thomas Ken, the fisherman!” said Drew.

“From the doxology, that’s right,” chimed in Annie. “Remember singing it around your organ last summer the day we arrived in Olney? I’ll never forget that first day we met you, Mr. Pipes.”

Mr. Pipes laughed softly. “Of course, I remember that day, my dear, and I’m so very glad you remember my little stories.”

They moved down the south transept and into a side chamber surrounded with statues and monuments. Drew studied the many names carved into the paving stones at their feet.

“Who are all these guys?” asked Drew.

“Westminster Abbey is, in actuality, an enormous tomb,” said Mr. Pipes. “Nearly all of our great men and kings and queens are buried here. The entire history of England could be told merely by walking through these sacred halls. Ah, yes, and this is the Poets’ Corner, where many of our great writers are remembered.”

“Great writers,” said Annie, “like hymn writers?”

“No, my dear, I’m afraid that most of the hymn writers’ bodies rest elsewhere,” said Mr. Pipes, “though centuries after their death, their hymns continue to rise in this grand place.”

Drew chewed the side of his mouth in thought. “Bunhill Fields had some of them,” he said.

“Watts and Bunyan,” said Annie, getting their names out before Drew.

“Yes,” said Mr. Pipes. “Bunyan is commemorated in stained glass in the north transept—just over there.” He pointed off to the left. “And at least three great hymn writers actually studied here at Westminster School—do you remember which ones?”

“Ah, let me see,” said Annie. “‘The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower’—Cowper—William Cowper!”

“Indeed,” said Mr. Pipes with a smile.

“And Charles Wesley—I love his organ!” added Drew.

“Now let me see,” said Dr. Dudley, pulling on his ear, his eyes searching the shadows above, “It’s coming to me now. Yes, if my memory serves, was not Charles Wesley the King’s Scholar at Westminster School?” He looked smugly at Mr. Pipes. “And you thought I never listened to your stories.”

“And didn’t Augustus Toplady study here, too?” asked Drew.

“He did,” replied Mr. Pipes.

“Say, how is *Toplady*?” Drew continued, referring to Mr. Pipes’s little sailboat on which he and Annie learned to row, fish, and sail last summer.

“Oh, I’m afraid the other *Toplady* will be rather lonely with us away. Perhaps you, Martin, will keep her company with an occasional fishing or sailing excursion?”

“I beg your pardon, sir,” said Dr. Dudley, “but I do not *do* boating—it simply is not the thing—why, man, people drown when boating, you see, and, I say, a considerable number don’t live to tell about it either. Taking care of Lord Underfoot, your over-indulged cat, now that I can manage.”

“That’s quite all right, my friend,” said Mr. Pipes. “*Toplady* is resting snugly on the staithe out of harm’s way.”

“You will be sure Lord Underfoot gets plenty of warm milk,” said Annie. “He especially likes it in a tea saucer—and warm to the touch. Oh, Mr. Pipes, it must be awful leaving Lord Underfoot for the summer. Couldn’t you bring him along?”

“No, I’m afraid that would never do with the various countries we will pass through,” said Mr. Pipes. “Customs agents, curiously, don’t appreciate tourists bearing all their household pets with them.”

“Too bad,” said Annie.

The sound of chattering voices and shuffling feet caught Drew’s attention. Turning, he watched a procession of boys, some his own age, each wearing a suit, white shirt, and tie, filing through the gates into the quire, a sort of sub-chapel in front of the nave.

“What’s going on?” he asked.

“It looks as if the students are assembling for a service,” said Mr. Pipes.

A clergyman in a blue robe closed the gates after the last boy, and Mr. Pipes, Dr. Dudley, and the children crept closer to watch through the ornate lace-work of the gates.

Annie and Drew pressed their faces against the cold metal, watching the boys settle—some restlessly—into rows of elaborately carved wooden seats lining either side of the room. Gold-gilded spires rose above the seats, and brass candles with little red shades cast a warm glow on the boys' faces.

"I've never seen anything like it," said Drew in hushed tones.

"Like what?" whispered Annie.

Before Drew could reply, the rumbling of a pipe organ filled the sanctuary and rose beyond to the heraldic symbols adorning the vaulting above. He continued gazing back and forth at the rank-upon-rank of gilded pipes lining both sides above the seating in the quire.

"Ah, lovely," said Mr. Pipes, his face glowing as he listened to the organist play.

Drew shook his head in wonder. "It's huge!"

"Indeed," said Mr. Pipes. "Eight thousand pipes does make this one of the largest organs."

"He's playing another tune," said Annie. "Wait! It sounds like—"

The boys suddenly began singing with the organ, "Who would true valor see...."

"It's Bunyan!" cried Drew.

The singing continued: "No lion can him fright, he'll with a giant fight...." The boys' voices echoed off the high-vaulted ceiling; Annie desperately wanted to join them.

“Aren’t these guys Anglicans?” asked Drew. “Why are they singing Bunyan’s ‘Pilgrim Hymn’? I mean, didn’t Anglicans throw Mr. Bunyan in jail?”

“Indeed they did,” said Mr. Pipes, smiling. “Ah, but nowhere is Christ’s church so united as she is in her hymnal. It is glorious testimony to the power of ‘psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,’ which God calls us to raise to Him in worship, that the Christian church meets in her hymnal.” He stooped and peeked through the gate again.

“Do you think they would mind if we joined them?” asked Annie, her eyes wide.

“Splendid idea!” said Mr. Pipes.

Inside the same ancient walls wherein long ago Wesley, Toplady, and Cowper sang, Annie and Drew joined Mr. Pipes, Dr. Dudley (who sang only after some considerable throat clearing), and the Westminster School boys in:

Hobgoblin nor foul fiend
Can daunt his spirit,
He knows he at the end,
Shall life inherit.
Then fancies fly away,
He’ll fear not what men say,
He’ll labor night and day
To be a Pilgrim.

The last chord faded into silence ... when suddenly they heard, from outside the abbey, Big Ben begin its ponderous gonging of the hour. Mr. Pipes glanced at his watch. “I say! We must away! We’ve a boat to catch in Dover in less than three hours!”

“An absolute—most dashed absolute—impossibility,” said Dr. Dudley with a sniff and a hopeful glint in his eye. But he fell in behind the children as they scurried to keep up with Mr. Pipes.

How could someone be so old—Drew wondered, with a backward glance at the nave—and be so hard for a kid to keep up with?

He Who Would Valiant Be

Anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Matt. 10:38

1. Who would true val - our see; Let him come hi - ther
 2. Who so be - set him round with dis - mal sto - ries
 3. Hob gob - lin nor foul fiend can daunt his spi - rit

One here will con - stant be, Come wind come wea - ther.
 do but them - selves con - found, his strength the more is;
 he knows he at the end shall life in - he - rit.

There's no dis - cour - age - ment Shall make him once re - lent
 No li - on can him fright, he'll with a gi - ant fight;
 Then fan - cies fly a - way, he'll fear not what men say;

His first a - vow'd in - tent to be a pil - grim.
 but he will have a right to be a pil - grim.
 he'll la - bour night and day to be a pil - grim.