

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

*Chapter One*

An Odd Meeting 1

*Chapter Two*

Word Across the Water 9

*Chapter Three*

John's First Fight 17

*Chapter Four*

Explanations 25

*Chapter Five*

Pursuit! 31

*Chapter Six*

"Mr. Whitefield is a Good Man" 39

*Chapter Seven*

Susan Creek 47

*Chapter Eight*

The Seat of Scoffers 55

*Chapter Nine*

Hanson the Fugitive 63

*Chapter Ten*

The Royal Governor 71

*Chapter Eleven*

Battle on Prince George's Avenue 79

*Chapter Twelve*

Church Across the Waters 87

*Chapter Thirteen*

James Gunn at Susan Creek 95

Chapter One  
AN ODD MEETING

John Monroe turned the Glasgow corner with a quick stride and walked straight into a *very* surprised woman who had been moving briskly the other way. John jumped back abruptly, startled, and then began picking up a few bundles that she had dropped, apologizing all the while.

The woman was not amused, or annoyed, or anything else that might pertain to John, but just kept looking over her shoulder. “Come on, mama. We need to hurry.” John looked over and was surprised to see a very pretty young girl, about his own age, plucking at her mother’s arm. The mother was very pale and white and was coughing a horrible, ragged cough. She was also a pretty woman, about forty years old.

“Yes, yes, we need to go.”

“Do you still have it?”

“Yes, right here. *The Golden Sextant* can’t be far.”

With that the mother and daughter resumed walking quickly down the street toward the harbor. John was mildly annoyed that they had not accepted his apologies—in fact, they had ignored his apologies entirely. But almost immediately, he began to hear his father begin a conversation with him somewhere in his mind, almost out of earshot. “John, a fool shows his annoyance at once. Don’t run headlong.” As his father’s voice faded away, John thought he was going to end the admonition with a characteristic joke, but by this time he was no longer listening. On an irritated whim, he turned and began to follow the women.

This was only the second time that John had been to Glasgow. He was apprenticed to the captain of a tobacco merchant ship and had served him very ably. His family had long experience with the sea, and John’s father was a prosperous merchant on the Chesapeake Bay in America. John could have been employed profitably in his father’s warehouses, but his father—a kindly man named Thomas Monroe—belonged to that school of thought which held that sons of prosperous merchants ought to have more than a small taste of what it was like to serve in unrewarding positions. “After you have been to sea, you will know what you are doing when you send others to sea in your name, and for the sake of your purse.” So John had been apprenticed when he turned sixteen—that had been a year and a half ago—and so it was that he was now walking the streets of Glasgow in search of some mutton and ale in the late spring of 1747. He was grateful for his experience at sea,

but he was also ready for something else. And sometimes he wondered if the length of his apprenticeship decided on by his father had not slowed down his ambitions too much. Still, as he had once thought to himself, he would do it again, but he would not do it over.

But now he was walking back toward his ship, not really wanting to, but keeping the two women in sight. He knew that what he was doing made no real sense, but he was an impulsive (and adventurous, romantic, and chivalrous) young man. He was not as impulsive as he had been several years before, but still enough to walk down a Glasgow street in a direction contrary to his earlier plans. Because the street was so crowded, John only had to stay about fifty feet back to keep from being noticed. He did not know why he was following them, but it seemed to him at the time to be a mixture of annoyance and a desire to make amends somehow. He was just about to give it up as a ridiculous venture and return to his search for an inn that kept better victuals than could be had back on the ship. But just as he started to turn back, looking over his shoulder as he did so, he stopped suddenly.

An officer in his majesty's service in a distinguished red coat had stepped quickly out of an alley that the two women were passing and took the mother firmly by the arm. There was no one else with him. John stopped, and he started to walk slowly back toward the confrontation. His mouth was suddenly dry, and he could feel his heart pounding in his ears. The officer was intently whispering to the woman, and she was replying and gesticulating with her free hand. The daughter looked as though she was imploring the man to let

them go, and as John came closer he heard the mother saying, “. . . but I don’t have it!” The officer hissed something in reply that John could not hear, and John, just like the officer, was sure that she *did* have it.

To the end of his life, John could never explain what he did next. He did not know these women, and he did not know if the officer was a good man or a wicked man. He did not know if he was trying to get something back that belonged to him, or if he was trying to rob the women of something that was theirs. He did not know anything except that he had bumped into a woman trying to get away from someone, and here, apparently, was that someone. How he chose between them, he never knew for certain. But he did admit to himself later that the girl was a lot prettier than the officer.

John was only about fifteen feet away by this time. He broke into a run, and by the time he reached them he was running at full speed, straight at the officer. He remembered few things about this later, but one of his vivid memories was the daughter’s eyes getting very round as she saw him careening toward the officer’s right shoulder. The man was a soldier, hard and massive, and John was surprised afterwards that he had been able to knock him over, sprawling on top of him. In his surprise, the officer had let go of the mother, and John shouted at them to run. “Go! Go!”

John jumped back to his feet, turned on his heel, and ran as fast as he could back up the street and away from the harbor, hoping that the officer would change his mind and think that *he* had it—whatever it was. He stopped at a corner, just before he turned it, and looked back down the street. He

could see flashes of red through the crowd, and he laughed out loud. The soldier was following him and not the women. John was light on his feet, and very confident about his ability to outrun the officer. And so that is what he did, running up the street for about half a mile. Before he turned another corner in order to circle back toward the harbor, he stopped again and looked back down the street. No sign of red at all.

Now all he had to do was find *The Golden Sextant*. He briefly played with the idea of just heading back to his ship in case the officer had gotten a good glimpse of him, but by now the spirit of adventure was on him completely. He needed to find what he supposed was an inn. It was certainly *named* like an inn.

Darkness was approaching as John walked slowly back toward the harbor. Every time he came to a cross street, he would stop at the corner and look to the right toward the street where the confrontation had happened. Occasionally he saw red-coated soldiers, but this was not at all unusual, and they did not appear to be looking for anyone.

When he had made his way about a mile toward the water, he began asking for directions to *The Golden Sextant*. The first three people he asked had no idea, and the fourth thought it was somewhere near the “old Presbyterian church.” Every block or so John would ask again, and finally he found someone who gave him some clear directions, somewhat confidently.

John caught a glimpse of a golden sextant hanging above the street before he could make out the words. As he walked up to the front door of the tavern—for it was a tavern—he

naively thought that he would meet the women, receive their proper thanks, and then make his way back to the ship, his small adventure concluded. He had never been so completely wrong in his life.

It took a moment for his eyes to adjust to the candlelight, and when they did, he saw the daughter sitting at a table against the back wall. Apart from her table, the tavern was empty. A man was sitting with her, apparently the proprietor of the tavern, holding her hand and obviously comforting her. She saw John and dully waved him over. As he approached, he saw that her eyes were red from crying, and he pulled up a bench, puzzled.

“Her mother has died,” the proprietor said. “She had a coughing fit just after she got here.”

John sat bolt upright, surprised and shocked, and stammered out his condolences. The girl nodded, miserably.

The proprietor of the inn—his name was James Gunn—continued to talk with the girl. “I dinna think your circumstances are changed at all. Or if they are, it’s all to the worse. The men after you are *still* after you, and you must still leave the country immediately. I will see that your mother gets a decent Christian burial. You have to leave and take all that your mother had.”

“I am here on a ship from America,” John volunteered. “We sail for home tomorrow, at high tide. We have some berths for passengers.”

“What is the ship?” Mr. Gunn asked.

“The *Sea Breeze*,” John said.

“She has a good captain,” Mr. Gunn said. “A Mr. Wainwright, is that correct?”

John nodded, impressed.

Mr. Gunn looked across the table at the daughter, who thought for a moment, and then nodded reluctantly. “I was ready for mama to die,” she said. “She had consumption bad. But I was not expecting it so soon, or so suddenly.”

“But what do we know about you, young man?” Mr. Gunn looked gruffly across the table at John with a thick Scots stare. “Why should I entrust this young lass to you?”

“You know of me about what I know of you. But it appears that providence has thrown us together. I am willing to help, provided you are doing nothing wicked or unlawful.”

Mr. Gunn chuckled and said, “Aye. Well said.” He got up and disappeared into a back room and came back out a moment later with a brace of pistols and some gold coins. He dropped them all on the table in front of John, who stared at them in consternation. It was one thing to run into an officer and knock him down—without knowing why—but it was quite another to be armed for a conflict about which he knew nothing. “What are the coins for?” he asked.

“For her passage. The *Sea Breeze* is not carrying passengers free, are they?”

John shook his head.

“Do you have everything with you?” Mr. Gunn asked the young woman. She nodded. He turned to John. “Are you willing to take her back to your ship now?” He said *yes*, and they all stood up slowly.

When they were outside in the gloaming, she turned to John and said, "Thank you for what you did. My name is Jenny. Jenny Geddes."

"My name is John," John said. "You're welcome. I am very sorry about your mother. The ship is this way."

## Chapter Two

# WORD ACROSS THE WATER

**T**hey arrived at the ship safely that evening, and Jenny had no problem acquiring a berth. The captain looked at John curiously when they arrived, and John had to put up with some raucous teasing from some of the crew. But once she had secured her passage, John had disappeared below decks and did not see her again until they had been out to sea for a day.

A brisk spring wind kept their sails full, and the bow pointed eagerly west. After they had been out at sea for three days, the lookout shouted out that he saw three sets of masts, all sails furled, out on the horizon. It was early on a Sunday, and the *Sea Breeze* rapidly overtook them.

Captain Wainwright paced up and down the deck nervously, and periodically he would raise his glass, trying to calculate what the three ships were doing. There did not appear to be any danger, but it was still strange to find three