

## CHAPTER II.

### YOUNG MANHOOD



Interior of North Petherwin  
Church of England.

The organ seen between the pillars  
at the right occupies a portion of the  
former choir bay, which in John's youth  
held the choir and orchestra.

Somewhere along the road to manhood, John joined the choir of North Petherwin Church; whether as singer or as violinist, I do not know. It was probably as both, for the players often sang as they played. Even in his 80's grandfather had a clear voice of tenor range. And in his youth, his voice so pleased his father, that the latter insisted John sing a certain favorite hymn as a solo at his funeral, on pain of disinheritance for disobedience. I remember

grandfather's saying that it "most killed me, but ah darsent refuse". In time John came to be the leader of this choir and at that time it had an orchestra; organs were not yet common. There is now a good pipe organ in the choir bay of the church; but at that time the voices were accompanied by a first violin, played by John, a viola ("Second viddle", he called it) a flute and a bass viol. Grandfather often spoke admiringly of Blewett and his handling of the bass viol.

Grandfather's music led to the romance of his life.

This is how I got the story.

He and I were sitting around the stove one winter's afternoon when he mentioned grandmother, then in her grave for more than a year. "Since she came from Cornwall and you from Devon, how did you happen to meet" I asked.

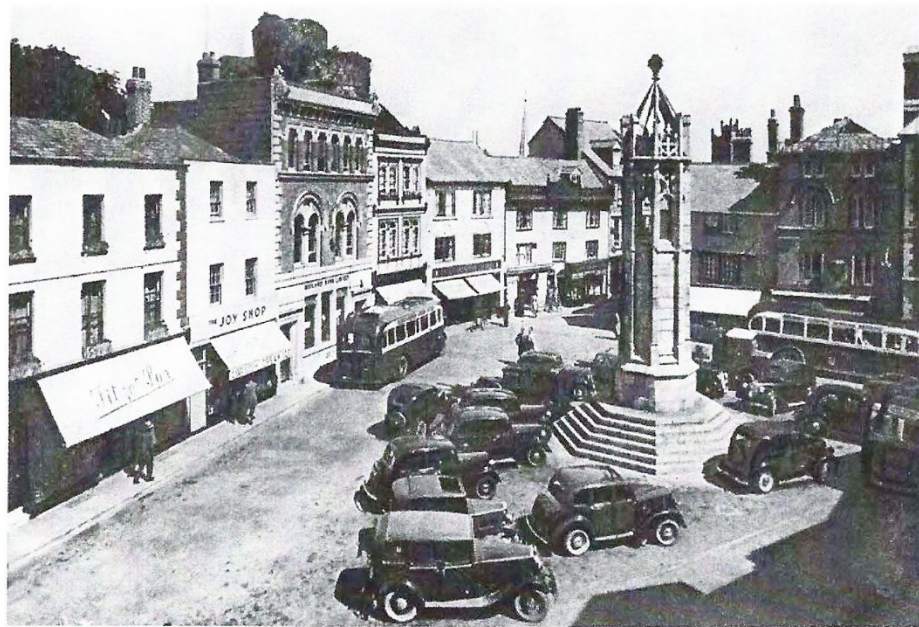
"Well, 'tas like this", he answered cheerfully. "I was in Lawnston (Launceston) market y'en I seed a maid riding too'oasback, 'er was 'oldin' a crock of butter on each 'ip and 'er 'ad the purtiest, rounded vore-h'arm did h'I n'ever a-zee.

And 'er 'ad the w'itest brown and pink chucks (cheeks). Zo I watched w'ere 'er went h'in to zell un. h'I darsent vollow, but w'en 'er a-comed h'out ah went h' into the stoor and looked h'at the butter 'ee 'ad. V'en ah saw the crocks 'er 'ad brought, ah smelled of an and h'asked the clerk 'w'ere be this made?" 'Ee smiled and zaid 'ah reckon thee's more h' interested in the maid wat brought un then thee is in buying butter". Me vace flushed h'up vit to burn and ah couldn't h'answer un, but 'ee told me 'er was farmer Bone's daughter out Treludick."

Treludick was only four or five miles from Pattacott, as the crow flies. But it was in a different parish and a different county. These were the days of foot transportation, with no good roads and the better paths leading only to market towns or to the parish church. So, these young folks had never met and special preparations had to be made if they were ever to meet. And John made plans.

In those days the "waits" would wander about the country at Christmas time, singing carols outside the better homes. If these sang well, the custom was to invite them in for a "bit to h'ate and drink". So John determined to lead his choir Christmas "zinging" as far as Treludick, even though it was outside his parish. I gathered that they were out a few days and nights before they reached the Bone home. I can't believe that this time interval was due to distance, although it was some seven or eight miles by road. Undoubtedly, the chorister procrastinated because of the timidity with which most young men are tormented in similar case; possibly some of it was an attempted cunning with the thought of avoiding competition from other lads in the choir. But John persisted: they finally arrived, they sang and were invited in.

Once in, grandfather must have been a fast worker. Before he left he had permission to call again. Then began a series of long walks on Sundays - seven or eight miles to Treludick and certainly as many back to Pattacott--to have a few hours with Grace Bone. It will shed some light on the temperament of John Baker to know something of the household which he thus invaded. There is a legend, passed to me by Uncle Alf, that they were first placed on the property by the Duke of Buckingham. The Duke was Prime Minister of James I and was engaged in an intrigue with the Queen of France.



Probably on this square John Baker first saw Grace Bone.  
At that time this parking space was used as the cattle market.

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Richelieu who occupied a similar position in France was reputed to be similarly engaged and, at any rate, seriously resented Buckingham's pretensions. Those who have read the Three Musketeers or seen the picture will recognize some of the story. Finally, exasperated by his inability to catch the daring Duke in France, he instigated an attempt by Buckingham's rivals to destroy him by accusing him of "traffick with the enemy". The Duke's position was vulnerable if any of his personal attendants with a knowledge of his affair in France were to be seized and forced to confess on the rack. Bone was one of these and so to hide him as far from London as he could, and reward him well enough to keep his mouth shut, Buckingham placed his on Treludick. I had some trouble in finding Treludick. I had remembered it as "Trelithick from grandfather's tale some sixty years ago. But there was no "Trelithick" on the map. At the suggestion of the Launceston librarian I had looked at some properties with names having similar sound, but in vain. Finally, a schoolmaster who overheard me telling my troubles, suggested Treludick and offered to drive me there. We found a stately home a half-mile off the highway.

As we drove into the yard, we saw carved in the arched doorway of an out-building "I & M B 1642". Explaining my errand to the owner, Mr. Percy Uglow, he produced an old auction bill dated 1842 offering the last fourteen years of a leasehold and stating that the property was then occupied by "Mr. Bone". Among the properties was included a thrashing-machine. of this I had heard grandfather speak and it was one of the features by which I could identify the "Trelithick" of his tale. I asked Mr. Uglow about it and was told that it now reposed in his hay loft. Later I climbed into the loft and saw the machine, about twice the size of a fanning mill. Its cylinder was perhaps two feet wide, with shallow, hardwood carved teeth working against similar teeth carved in the concave.

Treludick house is a Tudor structure of stone, contains ten bedrooms upstairs and in the drawing-room has an authentic Adams ceiling. It has been declared by the government to be an historic monument, which means that the owner can make no alterations, not even repairs, without the permission of the appropriate bureau of the Home Office. The farm, as advertised in the bill, and confirmed by Mr. Uglow, contained 220 acres.

Such a farm and such a house two hundred years ago undoubtedly involved several servants. It is notorious that in all countries with a primitive agriculture, the tenants of large farms live at a higher standard than the owners of small farms. So it is not unlikely that the Bones looked down their noses at this country musician who presumed to woo one of them. And Grace had a sister Jane; and Jane was a bit of a tease; as what sister is not under such circumstances? She called attention to John's long nose, his prominent Adam's apple, his red hair and other features.

"Thee's the ghaftliest man did h'ever a-zee", grandfather quoted her many a time as saying. I don't think grandfather ever considered himself an Apollo, although in his old age I considered him as rather distinguished looking. He was six feet tall, never weighed as much as 160 pounds, had sloping shoulders and was inclined to stoop, either because in his boyhood he was so slender or because he carried such loads and did so much stooping work. But Jane's caustic comment on his appearance succeeded in arousing John's ire in such a fashion that even in his old age he always referred to her as "thicky h'ol'Jane Bone". As will be seen later, Jane also reciprocated with a bit of antagonism.



**GRACE BONE BAKER**  
at about sixty years of age.

It is quite possible that Jane's attitude helped John's suit rather than hindered it. Not unlikely, Grace felt that Jane was overdoing matters and was moved to defend her swain. It often happens that way. In any case, John was given full opportunity to demonstrate his constancy, and what maiden is not affected by such persistent wooing? So, they married, probably in 1836. (The register in Egloskerry Church begins in 1837, so I have not been able to verify the date). John was 27;



Grace was a year older. This was rather late in life for both of them, judged by the customs of those days. Bakers of that and later generations have generally shown the same conservativeness in this respect as did Grace and John. John's courage in going after what he wanted regardless of the difficulties should serve as an example for his descendants. But after all, he had a basis for a certain self-respect. He owned his land; the Bones had only a leasehold. Socially he ranked as a yeoman; the elder Bone was of the same rank and six years later gave up his leasehold.

I never learned much about the Bones except that they were a numerous family John, William, Julius, Richard among the sons; Jane, Mary and Sarah in addition to Grace among the daughters. There may have been more. You see, grandmother died before grandfather came to live with us; so I got nothing from her. While in England I wrote to four Bones out of the nine whose names appeared in the telephone directory. The widow of one and the wife of another responded but their spouses were all of a line that stemmed back of Treludick several generations. The others did not reply. But from letters found among the effects of Uncle Alf, I gather that some made a success similar to that of John Baker while others made out so illy that they did not hesitate to ask their American relatives for money "no matter how little". John Bone was reputed to be worth 30,000, equivalent in those days to \$150,000. It was his daughter, I believe, who married a nephew of Lord John Russell, Civil War prime minister of England. Mrs. Russell visited her Aunt Grace in the early 1870's while her husband served as a civil engineer in constructing some portion of the Canadian Pacific Railway. She was a tactful, gracious lady and her visit was the great event in Baker conversation for many years.