

REBECCA
MARTIN

The
Brickmakers

A SEQUEL TO *A CAPTAIN FOR HANS*

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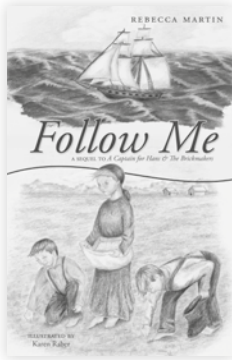
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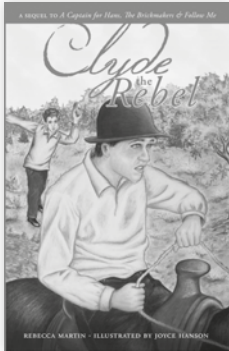
Follow Me (Third in the series)

A Sequel to: *A Captain for Hans* (Pathway) and *The Brickmakers*

Rebecca Martin – Illustrated by Karen Raber

Twelve-year-old Daniel Miller hardly knew how to feel about his parents' plans. Would they really cross the ocean to the land of William Penn? What an exciting idea!

Yet Daniel, grandson of the Hans Miller you first met in *A Captain for Hans*, and son of the Peter Miller you met in *The Brickmakers*, likes his snug home in the German Palatinate. An ocean voyage looks scary. And besides, what of his crippled friend, David Burkholder? He would never be able to go. And Daniel, along with his older brother Aaron, could not bear the thought of leaving him behind.



Clyde the Rebel

A Sequel to *Follow Me* and *The Brickmakers*

Rebecca Martin

Though the sun still shone, the grass still grew, and people were still planting their fields, the world as Peter Miller knew it had changed. 'War had come...' The time is spring 1775, and the first shots of the American Revolution have been fired. How will those respond whose ancestors gave their lives for Christ two centuries earlier? Young Peter Miller sees his parents' faith being tested by unreasonable officials. He watches the response of his Grandpa, Daniel, who still remembers the perilous trip across the ocean 60 years before. Peter meets testing too. When his friends make war sound glamorous—when his cherished colt is lost to the claims of war—when the family's possessions are confiscated—he is confronted with the question: Will you be a soldier of Christ?

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Preface

Writing historical fiction is like weaving a basket. First you need a solid framework of facts. In this story, these are the facts:

- a) The Bernese council made a huge effort to get rid of heretics in 1671, sending some into exile and banishing some to the galleys.
- b) About 700 brethren made the long journey on foot to the Palatinate province of Germany, whose Elector welcomed them as means of rebuilding a land devastated by the Thirty Years' War.
- c) The brethren were allowed to live in the Palatinate under restricted conditions; all the oppression described in the story is based on fact.

Just as you also need thin, pliable strips for weaving a basket, you need more than a framework to have a story that appeals to readers. So the author's imagination supplies people, along with their thoughts, feelings and actions, to build a true-to-life story.

The Brickmakers is a sequel to *A Captain for Hans*. If you have read the first book, which is set in the 1630s, you will find that the young men of that story now have gray hair. However, we tried to write in such a way that this story can be enjoyed without reading the other one first.

The Brickmakers Character Profile

Hans (minister) and **Kristina Miller**

Children:

Felix 28, married **Martha**

Children:

Hansli 5

Two little girls

Jakie 1

Liza 18

Peter 16

Heidi 11

Stefan and _____ **Egli**

Children:

Andrew (minister), married **Elma**

Werner Egli, older brother of Stefan

Paul Egli, older brother of Stefan, married **Mary**

Twin sons:

Jacob (minister)

Hans

Martin Miller (brother of Hans)(deacon), married to **Katie**

Daughter:

Barbara (also other children)

Rudolf Hess (minister)

Uli Brubach (single schoolteacher)

Hendrick and Greta Bergman

Son:

Johan 19

Gerhard Schmidt (blacksmith)

Daughter:

Maria

Count Kaspar von Hohenwald, wife **Anna**

Children:

Joanna 16

Leonart

David Bergman (cousin of Johan)

Olen

Adam (cousin of Olen)

Jason (son of Olen) age 16

Kurt Ramer (ex-convict)

Morning on the Mountain

Peter Miller rose early in the morning and stepped out of the hut. Serene and snow-crowned, the Alps circled the horizon. Sheer cliffs soared above the hut, while below the mountain fell away more gently, folding into snowy valleys and forests.

Up and down the slopes of the mountain snuggled other huts in convenient crevices. Though Peter could see none of them from his home, he knew exactly how many huts and how many families there were. And though he was only sixteen years old, Peter knew well the story of how the brethren had come to live in this mountainous wilderness thirty years ago.

Peter rounded the corner of the hut to the shed where their herd of goats awaited milking. At sight of him, the black, brown and white animals crowded forward, eager to mount the “milking blocks” and feast at the feed boxes in front.

“The goats don’t seem to miss Father at all,” thought Peter. A lump formed in his throat, as so often happened when he thought of his father, Hans Miller. Would he ever see him again?

When he and Father had worked side by side at the milking platforms, chores used to be fun. Father was a fast milker. Sometimes he’d manage to milk two goats while Peter did one. Often as he milked, Father would sing until the mountains rang with his full, rich voice. Peter used to sing too, even though his voice was at the inconvenient stage when he couldn’t fully trust it; without warning it would crack or split off into tenor notes.

Not once in the two months since Father was taken had Peter felt like singing. But the chores still needed to be done. “Come, Hipke,” he commanded. The first goat leaped lightly onto the platform, and Peter sent the milk foaming into his bucket.

“I see you’re at it bright and early,” said his sister’s voice behind him. In minutes she had a goat on the second platform and was milking away. Though her full name was Elizabeth, everyone called her Liza. At eighteen years of age, she had the blond-haired, pink-cheeked good looks of a Swiss mountain lass. And what a talker she was! Felix, their married brother, had once remarked that Liza could talk the ears off a donkey.

This morning she started in about milking cows. “I’ve often wondered what it would be like to milk great big animals like cows,” Liza mused as her first goat hopped down and was nimbly replaced by a second. “Stefan Egli says that’s what he was used to when he was growing up. Then when he and his family moved here, it was a real adjustment to switch from milking cows to milking goats. And Father says it was an adjustment for his family too, switching from making cows’ milk cheese to making goats’ milk cheese.”

The lump in Peter's throat pushed upward. How could Liza speak so easily about Father? Peter still found it easier not to mention him. But the girls were always talking about him, as if they expected him back one day, toiling up the mountain slope toward home.

"From what Father says," Liza chattered on, "the Miller family had a pretty grand cheese factory. A far cry from our little shack where we make our cheese."

"They processed milk from a lot of farms, I guess," said Peter. "I've heard Stefan Egli say that he used to take the milk down to the Millers' cheese house."

Liza sighed. "Sometimes I try to picture those days when Father and Stefan and Rudolf Hess were young. Father makes it sound like the three of them were pretty good friends—until the Millers and the Eglis joined the brethren. Then Rudolf turned into their persecutor."

"Mm-hm," murmured Peter, since she'd paused as if expecting a response. In his mind's eye he pictured Rudolf Hess as he knew him—tall, with iron-gray hair, standing to preach to the congregation. Though as a boy Rudolf had been Hans Miller's worst enemy, they were now co-workers in the ministry.

Thinking about that made Peter feel sad again, because it reminded him of the Sunday last December when Father was taken. Two church meetings had been held in the mountain community that day, and it was to the one in the cave that the constables came. The whole congregation had been apprehensive at sight of the constables. But it was only Father they were after, because Father was preaching. If the authorities had happened upon the other meeting, Rudolf Hess would probably have been arrested.

Liza's mind must have been on Rudolf too, because she was talking about him again. "Choosing to be baptized must have been quite a decision for Rudolf. Compared to him, I had it easy. I knew I wanted to be part of my family's church. But Rudolf made a choice against his family's wishes."

Peter shifted uncomfortably. Why had Liza started on the subject of baptism? Lately it seemed everyone threw gentle hints, trying to find out whether he was considering baptism. His voice was gruff with feeling as he said, "You make it sound as if we young people today should find it easy to—to be baptized."

"Sorry," she responded. "That's not really what I meant. It can never be easy to join a persecuted church."

"Things aren't getting any better," Peter pointed out. "Why, just this year down in Bern they've published an edict against us. It seems they want to wipe us out, as if we're a plague of rats, and they want to rid the country of us." Surprised at his own outburst, Peter fell silent again.

Liza agreed softly, "It's a horrible feeling. Sometimes I wonder whether there's really no safe place for us on earth?"

"So do I," Peter admitted, slapping the rump of a tardy goat.

"Our parents fled to the mountains of Bern in hopes we'd be safe. But we haven't really been. Two of our ministers died in prison," Liza recalled. "Father has talked about them. Were their names Kurt Meyli and Heinrich Groff?"

Peter nodded. His throat had choked up again. With his own father in prison, the last thing he wanted to talk about was ministers dying in prison.

It didn't seem to bother Liza, for she went on. "I still remember Kurt, a little bit, but Heinrich must have died when I was very young."

“That’s the last goat,” Peter said abruptly. Picking up the milk, he carried it to the cheese house and poured it into the vat. Then he entered the house for breakfast. There it lay on the windowsill, as it had ever since it arrived two weeks ago—the letter from Father. Through friends who had visited him at the prison in Bern, he had managed to smuggle this letter to his family. It had been read and reread until it nearly fell apart.

Almost against his will, Peter picked up the letter now. He practically knew the contents by heart. Those last few sentences seemed to leap toward his eyes. “I am not being treated unkindly. They are trying hard to make me recant. But how can I deny my Lord, who bled and died for me? Oh, dearly beloved, stand fast in the faith. From your loving Father.”

“Breakfast is ready.” His mother’s cheerful voice cut into Peter’s thoughts. Kristina Miller, though only fifty years old, had snowy-white hair. Peter knew that these last two months had taken their toll on Mother.

Last to appear for the meal was eleven-year-old Heidi, her blond hair disheveled as she hastened down the ladder from the loft. “I’m sorry to be late, Mother,” she said contritely as she took her place at the rough plank table.

Mother gave her a forgiving smile before leading the family in prayer. From Peter’s heart went up an oft-repeated plea: “Please, God, let Father come back safely.”