The cover features a painting of Edith Cavell, a nurse, standing on a balcony with a red cross on the wall behind her. She is wearing a white dress and a blue shawl. In the foreground, a soldier in a dark uniform and helmet looks up at her. The background shows a snowy town with buildings and other figures in the distance.

THE STORY of
Edith
CAVELL



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

IRIS VINTON



Edith's brother Jack and sister Lilian appeared

CHAPTER I

Edith

EDITH finished dusting the books that lined one wall of the study. She stepped back to see if they were straight on the shelves. One book stuck out from the others.

“You are spoiling your row,” she scolded it kindly. And she gave it a gentle push into place.

Nothing annoyed her father, the Reverend Frederick Cavell, Vicar of Swardeston, so much as dust or any kind of disorder. He particularly disliked to have Ellen, who came each day to help Mrs. Cavell with the housework, tidy his study.

“She never puts things back in their proper places,” he grumbled. “And she moves things on my desk. Now, Edith puts everything back exactly the way she finds it.”

The vicar’s likes and dislikes were very important

to his family. Since she was ten years old, Edith had been cleaning her father's study. She was eleven going on twelve now. And it was still her daily chore while Papa took his early morning walk. It was during his morning exercise that he thought out problems.

To sweep and dust did not take Edith long. But today, it seemed to take twice as long as usual. It was always that way when she was in a hurry. Florence, her older sister, would have helped. But she was busy in the kitchen, helping their mother make strawberry jam.

Edith scowled at the bowl of roses on the reading table. The lamp almost hid them from anyone sitting at the desk. Her father loved flowers as he loved music, poetry, painting, and the old church among the trees where he preached. She moved the roses away from the lamp so that he could see them when he worked at his desk.

There was a polite knock, and the study door opened. Her brother Jack and sister Lilian appeared. Their round faces looked cross, and they were in a bad temper.

"We have been waiting and waiting and *waiting*," complained her brother.

"You aren't even ready to go *yet*," accused her sister, who was usually good natured.

Edith smiled at them cheerfully. "I'll be ready in three minutes," she promised. She untied her apron. At the same time, she gave a final glance round the room.

The breeze from the open window had scattered papers on the desk. She ran over, put them in a neat pile, and set a paperweight on top. Glancing down, she saw they were notes her father had made for his sermon on Sunday. The first note caught her eye, and, without thinking, she read it aloud.

"Sermon for next Sunday," she read. "Psalms 119, Verse 163: I hate and abhor lying."

"Oh, gloom, gloom, gloom!" exclaimed Lilian. "I wish Papa wouldn't preach on gloomy things all the time. I like to hear about cheerful subjects."

"Papa doesn't want to be gloomy," Edith said, "but some people lie and cheat and steal. And they are mean and cruel to one another. So Papa has to speak out against all this wrongdoing. Don't you understand?"

"I suppose," sighed Lilian.

"When are we going, Edith?" Jack asked irritably. "I want to go now."

"Go sit on the front step, and I'll be there in no time," Edith said. "While you wait, you can watch the people going by on their way to Norwich. It's always amusing to see people going to market."

She shooed them out the study door and down the hall. As she ran upstairs to her room, she could hear them grumbling to each other. They threatened to go off without her if she did not hurry.

In her room, Edith hung up her apron and got out her big straw hat. The August sun was very hot. She washed her face and brushed her shining light brown hair. Standing in front of the mirror, she put on her hat. Her blue eyes examined her reflection: cotton dress, spotless; stockings, unwrinkled; shoes, shined. Everything was neat and trim as always.

Today, she and the children, Lilian and Jack, were going blackberrying with some friends. For such a jaunt, many girls might wear a soiled dress or unpolished shoes—but not Edith. Her clothes might be mended and patched, but they were always as clean and fresh as if she were going to a party.

Of course, blackberrying was as much fun as a party. The work of picking berries was play when friends did it together. And she and Lilian and Jack would bring home lots of sweet, wild blackberries to be made into jam for the winter. The Cavells used a great deal of jam, and it was needed also to fill jars for the many baskets that the vicarage sent to poor people at Christmas.

Edith hurried downstairs and into the kitchen. Her mother and Florence were stirring big kettles

of bubbling strawberries. At Edith's entrance, they turned around.

"Are you and the children ready?" asked her mother.

"Yes, Mama, we're going now," Edith answered. She sniffed the spicy air. "Umm, smells good."

"That's your lunch basket on the table," Florence said. She brushed a strand of brown hair back from her forehead. "Oh, this heat does make me feel grubby! I put in an extra piece of saffron cake for each of you."

"You are a dear!" Edith cried. "I do love saffron cake." She hung the lunch basket on one arm. Then she took the three tin pails for berries from the sideboard and hung them over the other arm.

Mrs. Cavell watched her pretty, graceful daughter with a fond smile. Her eyes sparkled with amusement as Edith added to her load.

"Do you think you will need three pails?" Mrs. Cavell asked. "You know, Jack will probably eat all the berries he picks."

"Oh, it makes him feel grown up to have a pail," Edith told her with a grin. "Well, I'm off," she added. She started toward the door, with a clink and clatter.

"Be careful," Mrs. Cavell warned. "I'm sure that Miss Bab is a responsible young lady and will look after you girls and boys, but I depend on you to take care of your little brother and sister."

“Yes, Mama, I will,” Edith promised.

“And don’t be late for tea,” Florence called after her.
“You know it makes Papa cross for anyone to be late
for tea.”

“We’ll start back in plenty of time,” Edith
answered.



She found Jack and Lilian still waiting on the front step and gave each one a pail. Then all three set out from the vicarage for the old Gowthorpe Manor near the village green, where they were to meet the other berry pickers.

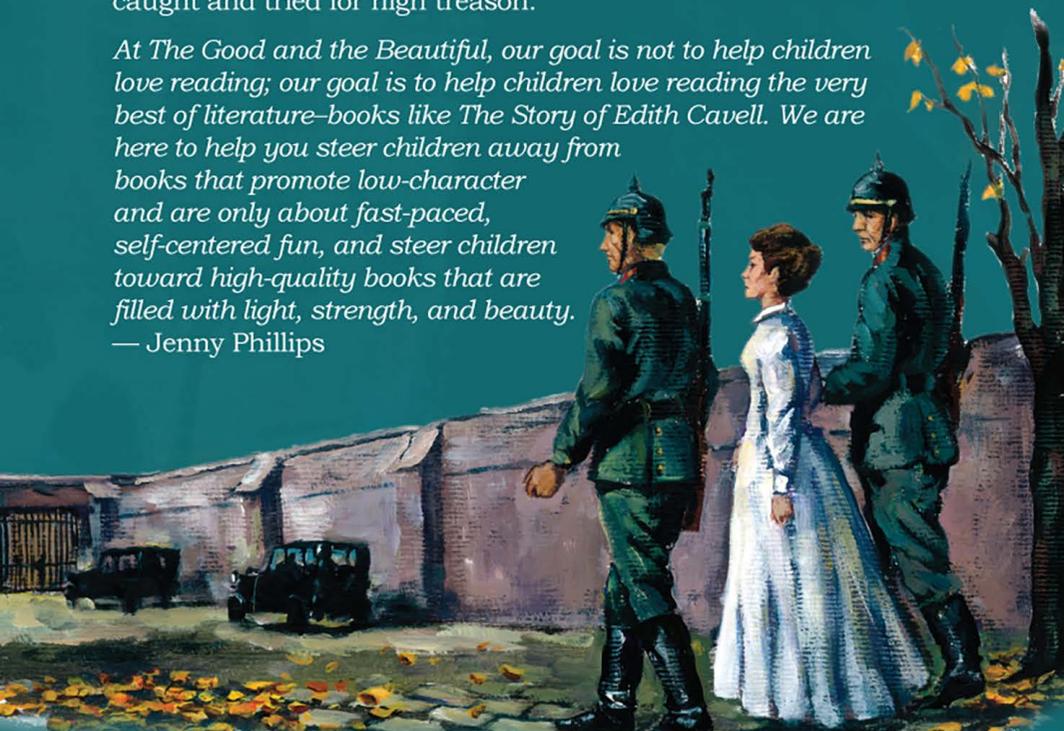


THE STORY of *Edith* CAVELL

Beautifully written and based on the life of the real, inspiring heroine, *The Story of Edith Cavell* sweeps readers through Edith's character-building childhood and into World War I, as she creates and operates Belgium's first school of nursing despite the country being ruthlessly occupied. Edith becomes a key figure in the dangerous Belgian Underground, and is subsequently caught and tried for high treason.

At The Good and the Beautiful, our goal is not to help children love reading; our goal is to help children love reading the very best of literature—books like The Story of Edith Cavell. We are here to help you steer children away from books that promote low-character and are only about fast-paced, self-centered fun, and steer children toward high-quality books that are filled with light, strength, and beauty.

— Jenny Phillips




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