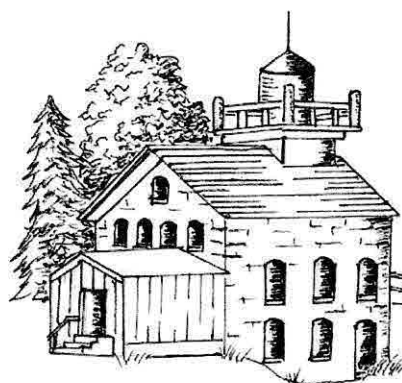


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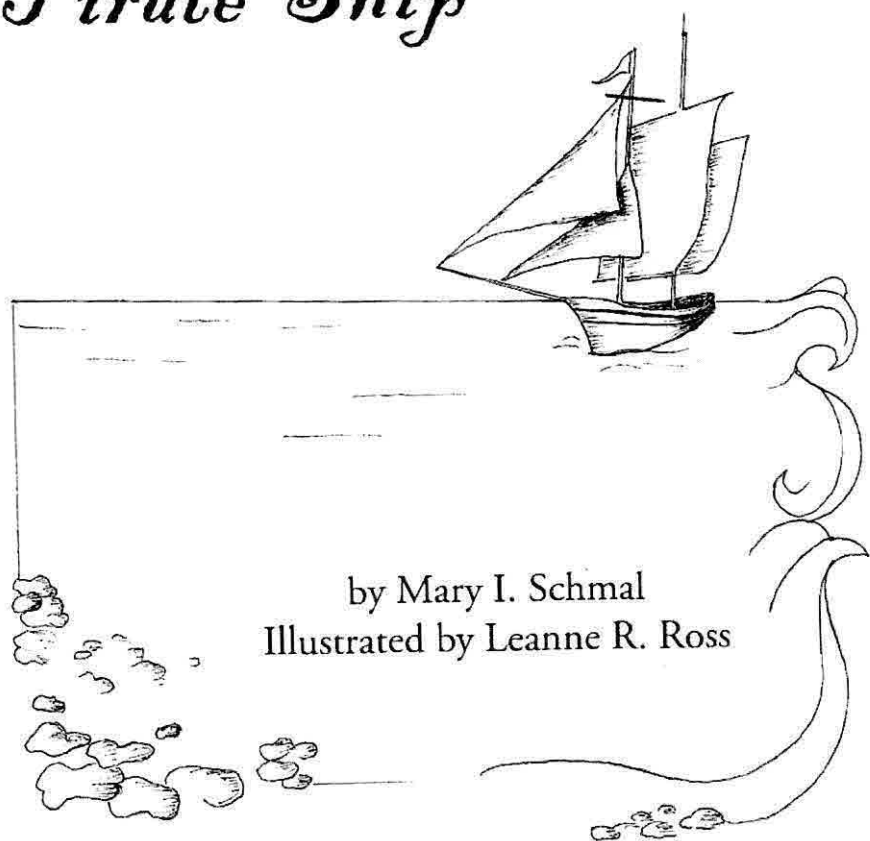
*Wandering*



*Children of the Light Series*®  
Book One



# Pirate Ship



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Lillian Elisabeth  
Bates (12)



Florence (Dessie) Delight  
Werde (10)



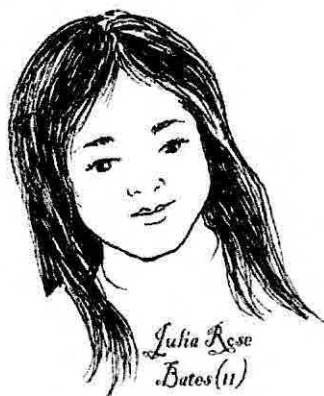
(-twins-)



Luke Stephen Paul  
Bates (12)

(-cousins-)  
of the Bates

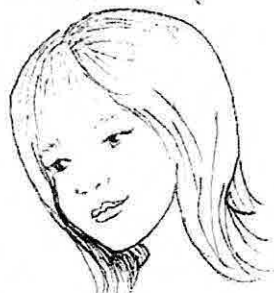
# The Children of the Light



Lulia Reese  
Bates (11)

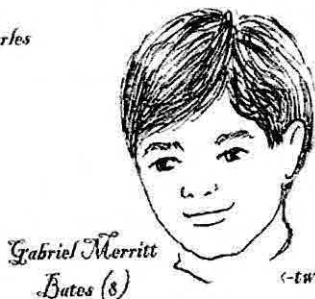


Garrett  
DeLbert  
Werde (12)



Paulina Anne Bates (10)

Thomas Silas Charles  
Bates (9)



Gabriel Merritt  
Bates (8)

(-twins-)



Madeleine Kathryn  
Bates (8)

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## Foreword

On the northernmost tip of an island in Wisconsin, seven children live together at Cobblestone Lighthouse. Two visiting cousins make the group nine. As with children everywhere, each is different and special. Each struggles. Each wishes to discover. And each has a particular need. To understand love. To find joy and peace. To learn long-suffering (patience) and gentleness. To know goodness and meekness (kindness). To exercise temperance (self-control) and to follow faith (faithfulness). In short, to understand God's free spiritual gifts.

Over the course of approximately a year, these nine children have learned to understand who *they* are as "Children of the Light." They long to be loved, to find contentment, to experience approval, and to have fun—as children of lighthouse keepers in 1884 to 1885. They also learn their importance as children of an even greater Light.

*The Wandering Pirate Ship* shows the struggle and discovery of Lillian Bates. She is twelve years old at the time of her adventure. She is guided in her journey against the darkness of hatred to understand love. Guided by family and friends and us. This is her story.

E. C., A. C., S. C.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love . . .*

—Galatians 5:22

## Prologue

With quick feverish strokes, Lillian swam toward the small boat. Her long skirt and high cloth boots slowed her down, but she had neither time nor strength to remove them. At the very least, they kept her warm in the chilled waters of Lake Michigan. *Will I make it? Swim faster, faster!* Through blurred vision, Lillian forced her eyes to close and her body to push ahead.

Her conscience tormented her. *It's all your fault, Lillian. This horrible situation is because of you!* "Hold on!" she shouted although no one heard.

*One more stroke.* Lillian's thoughts raced faster than her arms could propel her forward. *Then one more. A few more and I'll be there!* Finding herself far from land in the middle of Lake Michigan, she felt destined to finish what she had begun. *I have to do this!* The vessel from which she had jumped lagged in the distance as she swam closer to the rowboat. If her rescue failed, no one could save her, but she didn't care. Her body felt numb as she struggled to fight against the cold. Then suddenly, her shivering limbs relaxed.

Warm water, its color looking distinctly red, seemed to surround her as she felt an instant thaw. Lifting herself from the mysterious surrounding warmth, the contrasting cool air blowing against her body, she shivered without losing a second of focus.

She threw one arm, then another over the weathered sides of the tiny craft, her momentary joy turning to rage.

"Leave him alone, you monster! Pick on someone your own size, you big brute!" Then without warning, long hateful arms grabbed Lillian's chilled flesh, pulled her upward, and slammed her to the floor of the rocking boat.

# Chapter 1

## *The Very Beginning*

*Three weeks earlier on a Sunday in May 1884*

*Late evening on Cobblestone Island in Lake Michigan, Lakeshore County, Wisconsin*

As always, Lillian had a plan. And Lillian was determined to win. The smart, quick-thinking, cunning girl of twelve was not to be outwitted by her pesky little brother. He was nine. Nine. Earlier in the day, Thomas had insisted on helping her lug water up from the lake. She was happy with his offer to help, but trouble was, he also insisted on doing the job *his* way, which he said was far better than *her* way. He even called her clumsy. Lillian never claimed to be perfect, but one thing she was sure of: she was *not* the least bit clumsy. In fact, her father continually praised her for being quick and athletic about her help with lighthouse duties. *Thomas* was the clumsy one, not her.

What did Thomas know . . . about life . . . or anything? Had she been honest, she would have said the same about herself. *She* knew nothing about life . . . or anything because she knew nothing of love. All she knew was her present mission: to rid her *talented* little brother of his assorted annoying antics. His bothersome behavior needed to be unwound, unstrung, and uncovered, for in Lillian's eyes and certainly in her heart, Thomas was *not* the brilliant child everyone seemed to think he was. And she was *done* with him pointing out his cleverness to everyone in the family, and especially to *her*, the oldest of the Bates children.

## THE WANDERING PIRATE SHIP

Lillian peeked around the corner, survival fixed in her mind. *Her* survival. Not his. Her eyes glowed with madness caused by burning sibling rivalry. Her father was up in the lantern room, so she and her mother would have to determine how to straighten out Thomas. When it came to disputes among the children, *she*, Lillian Elisabeth Bates, should be the one in charge, *not* Thomas. Perhaps her demand could be put into writing. Her mother could record the fate of Thomas in the lighthouse logbook. That would certainly make the necessary Who Is To Be In Charge law a lasting record for now and the future. Certainly, her mother would side with her, the firstborn.

As she thought about how to get her point across quickly, she fought another annoyance. Her long thick tresses would not stay in place. With a grunt, she swept her long hair to the back of her neck but then stopped suddenly, letting one strand dangle in her face. She smiled as a new thought formulated in her steaming brain. *If I state the situation simply, then Mother will agree with my plan. Either Thomas will be put in his place or . . . or . . .* She had trouble coming up with the "or else."

Lillian frowned, not pleased as her plans were disrupted by what she saw around the corner. *Mother should be putting away dishes or sweeping the floor or doing something I can more easily interrupt. I am not used to seeing Mother like this. After her kitchen tasks, before going to bed, Mother always goes upstairs to check whether Father needs help with lighthouse duties. What on earth is she doing?*

The flickering light from a kerosene lamp cast eerie shadows about the room. Lillian's percolating anger subsided just a bit as she saw strain painted across her mother's face. Thoughts of their recent disagreement washed over her. *Maybe I should just apologize for laying into Thomas earlier today and hope she then lays into Thomas tomorrow. That might be the better plan.* Lillian bit her lip, wondering what to do. She leaned forward but was stopped short. *She's praying! Mother is praying at the kitchen table. She usually does that in bed before she turns down the light of her bedside lamp.*

Lillian's mother pushed back stray strands of hair from a weary face. The strong and capable woman looked unusually pale. Iona Bates was the wife of Cobblestone Island Lighthouse Keeper Curtis

## THE VERY BEGINNING

William Bates, the mother of seven, their schoolteacher, and the assistant lighthouse keeper besides. *Mother never looks pale. She can't afford to look pale. She's simply too busy! But Mother looks weak!*

Lillian sighed as she again drew back long strands of her thick dark locks she had just brushed during her bedtime ritual. As she bent over, her curls fell forward into her face, blinding her attempt to get a closer glance into the kitchen. She fumbled in her pocket for hairpins, finally managing to tie her mop back.

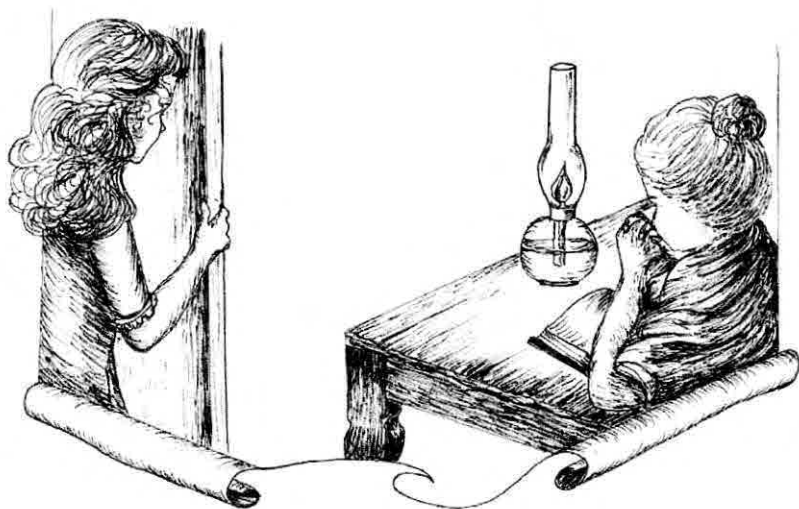
"And guard and keep the children," she heard her mother whisper. "Especially watch over Lillian."

*Of course. Single me out, Mother.*

Her mother sat transfixed at the large kitchen table of the lighthouse. *What is she doing?*

"Keep all nine of them in your loving care."

*Nine? Oh, of course. Nine. With my two cousins, there are nine of us here at the lighthouse this summer.* Suddenly, Lillian realized that additional members of the household meant her mother had more work to do. A blanket of guilt smothered her thoughts. *I shouldn't have argued with her. She was not happy with how I treated Thomas. But he was treating me worse!*



"Keep them out of danger and help Lillian be more understanding of the children from Village Galena . . ."

Lillian's teeth clamped shut as she sighed. *The kids from Galena are truly mean and senseless and wicked. Especially to us Bates kids. And especially Lucinda Lynda Pinda Schma-linda. I hate her—I hate them all.* Another sigh, this one openmouthed, replaced Lillian's furrowed brow—for sure, a distinct longing. *But I want what they have. I want to do what they do.* She stomped one foot in fury, but her mother seemed too absorbed to notice.

On the great oaken table lay the well-worn leather-covered book that her father and mother kept in their room. The huge volume, clasped with brass, was fun to open when they brought it out for family devotions in the parlor. Lillian had never seen her mother read it at the kitchen table.

Lillian watched slender fingers flip open the tarnished hinge as her mother shuffled through the Book's many pages. She seemed to search for something in particular. Lillian jumped back and out of sight as her mother suddenly picked up the Book and pressed it close to her heart, reciting from memory, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." She managed to smile faintly before finishing, "and delivereth them."

*She's crying! Mother is crying!*

"I do believe this," Lillian's mother spoke again, this time barely above a whisper. Brushing away heartfelt tears, she finished with a soft pleading, "I *ask* for this. Thank you in advance, Lord. Thank you. Amen."

Ditching plans to present her demand or even apologize, which Lillian didn't *want* to do but felt she *should* do, the young girl took a totally different course of action. As determined as she had been to make her mother stop her little brother from being so aggravating, she now made up her mind not to interrupt. The arrest warrant to stop the taunts and tones of Chieftain Thomas could wait until morning.

Lillian tiptoed down the hallway from the kitchen to the stairway leading to her upstairs bedroom. As she climbed, she tossed a thick strand of hair that had once again fallen into her face. She

## THE VERY BEGINNING

glanced down toward the kitchen. *Mother was praying and asked for something. Something special. I could sense it. I'm sure of it. She believes in prayer—and knows she'll get an answer. I wonder what she asked for.*

*But most of all, I wonder if I'll get to do what I want! They all do it in Galena, so why can't I do it too!*