

GREAT ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS

**THE HOUSE
OF THE SEVEN
GABLES**

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The House of the Seven Gables

CHAPTER 1

The Old Pyncheon Family

For two hundred years, the old wooden house stood on a side street in a coastal New England town. The house was unusual; it had seven gables that extended in seven directions. So it was called The House of the Seven Gables. Some called it Pyncheon House.

A large elm tree had been growing for one hundred of those two hundred years between the front door and the street. The Pyncheon Elm, Pyncheon Street and Pyncheon House were all named for the Pyncheon family who had built the house and had been living there for two centuries.

A short history of the house and the

THE HOUSE OF THE SEVEN GABLES

Pyncheon family will help to explain what happened before this story actually begins. It is a history of deception, of scheming... and of murder!

Pyncheon Street was once called Maule's Lane, and the land where The House of the Seven Gables now stands was once owned by Matthew Maule, who had built his log hut on the two acres. Originally the land was far from the center of town and had a fresh, clear spring of water on it. As years passed, the town spread out and reached Maule's land.

It was then that a well-known, wealthy and powerful man in the county, Colonel Pyncheon, became interested in the Maule property. He claimed that it was his, that it was part of a larger parcel of land that the government had given to him. It was the custom in colonial times for important, wealthy people with political connections to be given large land grants by the king.

Matthew Maule was a nobody; he was even considered a rather strange man. But when it came to defending his land, he was



Colonel Pyncheon Became Interested.