

BRIDE of BATTLE

A Romance of the American Army Fighting on the Battlefields of France

By VICTOR ROUSSEAU

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—Mark Wallace, a young officer in the United States army, is wounded at the battle of Santiago. While wandering alone in the jungle he comes across a dead man in a hut outside of which a little girl is playing. When he is rescued, he takes the girl to the hospital and announces his intention of adopting her.

CHAPTER II—His commanding officer, Major Howard, tells him that the dead man was Hampton, a traitor who sold war department secrets to an international gang in Washington, and was detected by himself and Kellerman while they were working in the same office with him. Howard pleads to be allowed to send the child home to his wife and they agree that she shall never know her father's name.

CHAPTER IV.

And the years passed, and Mark Wallace grew grayer and older, and more set and dispirited, with long alternating intervals of resignation, when he took life as he found it and was satisfied. But he always came out of these into brief periods of unrest, with the sense that he had awakened from some lethargy that was damping his soul as the alkali and the winds of the plains had seamed his face and taken the last particle of his youth away.

Now in Texas, now in Arizona, now in some lonely border post in the freezing Northwest, he remained a captain. He had no friends in Washington. In time—in long time he would reach his majority, no doubt, to be relieved soon after, and waddle, with stout old majors of his own age, into ornate clubs in army centers not quite so far removed from civilization. He looked upon this prospect with ironical patience, and now and then asked himself the unanswerable question why he had remained in the army.

Eleanor was grown up and domiciled permanently in Colonel Howard's town house, and her letters had grown more infrequent and perfunctory, until their arrival became a quarterly affair instead of a monthly event, and not always that, either.

And by and by the feeling came over Mark that if ever he were to see her again there would remain no common link between them. From doubting his future he had come to doubt himself. He doubted whether the desert life had not blunted him, blunted his finer instincts, and made him unfit for social life—certainly rendered him unfit for the guardianship of a young girl.

But that he had relinquished to Colonel Howard—grudgingly but uncompromisingly. Never in any of his letters did he put forward the shadow of his former claim.

Then, swiftly, and unexpectedly, chance turned and beckoned him.

It came in the form of a letter from Colonel Howard, the first in two years. Howard had, in the past, repeatedly tried to induce Mark to take advantage of opportunities that he had put before him, but Mark had refused stubbornly, until the Major had given him up in disgust. Howard did not know, and Mark did not himself understand, the underlying idea in his own mind, the sense of subdued rancor against the man who had robbed him of Eleanor, coupled with the sense of sacrifice, that he might withdraw all his claims on the child.

Now, however, Howard made one more attempt.

"I want you to think this proposition over as quickly as possible," he wrote, "not for my sake or yours, but because your duty is to take the job. With war with Germany in plain view to the initiated, there are great things doing in Washington, and I've been offered my old post at the mobilization department, which has been enlarged beyond all knowledge. Your work in the West is better known than you think, Wallace, and we want you here. Wire if you can, and come by the first train. This is official, so don't wait for divisional notification, which may take days."

The letter reached Mark in one of his periods of helpless despondency. Impulsively he wired back, accepting, regretted as soon as the message had been dispatched, but packed his suitcase, turned over the command to the senior lieutenant, and took the train for Washington.

As he went East the years seemed to fall from him like a dream. It was a frozen labyrinth in which he seemed to have been wandering; he seemed to come to himself with a consciousness of years wasted, but of years of action ahead.

Colonel Howard gazed curiously at him as he rose from his desk in the war office and grasped his hands.

"I should never have known you, Wallace," he said.

What he was thinking was, "Good, Lord, how the years have eaten into him!"

"Don't think that your work has been unrecognized," he said, after a few minutes of desultory chatting. "It has been, and I know that recognition is coming to you in the fullest measure. You are to work under me here; it's a big scheme that we are preparing, my boy, and only Kellerman and I, and yourself, will be acquainted with all the details, outside of the department head. You remember Kellerman?"

Mark nodded, trying to piece together the pictures of the past.

"We are working out the mobilization plans for the first contingent, after it reaches France," Howard continued. "It's a bigger scheme than anything we knew in the past. You'll act as my subordinate and have an intimate knowledge of the details—a sort of understudy, in fact, but with a good deal of initiative as well. And if war comes, as it is sure to come, we'll be sent over on the first transport, to prepare things for the troops. Ah, Kellerman, here's Wallace, newly arrived to take over his duties."

Mark saw not the slightest change in Kellerman since the days of the Cuban war. Kellerman was just as florid as ever, just as burly, with the same rather sinister way of glancing; his black hair was unthinned and untouched with gray. He had borne the years much better than Mark.

If Kellerman reciprocated Mark's feelings, he showed no sign of it in his cordial handgrip.

"We were glad to get you, Wallace," he said. "You'll excuse me for a moment, I'm sure."

He drew Colonel Howard aside in conversation, while Mark twirled his fingers and looked out of the window into the busy hive of the capital, and tried to make himself believe that it was all true.

When Kellerman had gone the Colonel invited Mark to sit down, and launched into business.

"I must tell you that it's a pretty stiff job that we're tackling, Mark," he said. "To begin with, we're a sort of nucleus of the whole organization. We're in touch with every division. We have to have the whole thing at our fingers' ends—and it's mainly a matter of ships, animals, and transport. And, to cap the climax, you can imagine what a nest of intrigue and espionage Washington has become in these days. And, as neutrals—ostensibly neutrals—we can do nothing to put an end to it."

He stretched out his finger and pointed toward the big safe between the windows.

"Any one of some two hundred papers there, Mark, would give a valuable clue," he said. "Every night, when work is finished, your task will be to open the safe, take out the inner case containing these documents, add those on which you have been working, including every waste sheet and every scrap of the day's blotting paper, and have the day porter convey them, under your personal supervision, to the strong room, where you and either the General, myself, or Kellerman, will place them in the safety vault. In the morning the same procedure is reversed. And that is why I insisted on our getting you, Mark. I knew you, and I don't know the hundred of other officers of impeccable character whom we could have secured. We can't run risks—we simply can't. That's why it has to be just you and Kellerman and I. We had our lesson in the old days, you know."

He frowned at the remembrance, and then answered Mark's unspoken question with another.

"Where are you staying, Wallace?"

"At the Congressional."

"Well, I want you to come and stay with us as soon as we're settled. We've rented a house in Massachusetts circle, and move in on the first of the month. Eleanor and Mrs. Howard are still in New York, but they're coming here in about ten days' time—just as soon as I can get the house ready for them. Eleanor is dying to see you, and Mrs. Howard has the pleasantest remembrances, of course. And now I'm going to take you to the Brigadier."

The short interview with the head of the department confirmed Mark's impressions as to the businesslike nature of the plans of the war office. Mark went home. He was resolved, although he had not told the Colonel, not to become his guest—at least not unless he found that he could take up his life again where he had dropped it, years before. And then—but what was the use of speculating? He went home to his hotel.

He was surprised to find how easily he seemed to fit into his environment when he donned his long-neglected evening clothes and went down to the dining room of the Congressional. Almost the first face he saw was that of a man of his class; within a few minutes Mark Wallace was seated at the dinner table with a merry party of old friends and new acquaintances. And the years had slipped away from him.

On the next morning, when he took up his duties, it was with the sense that he was no longer a stranger. Washington was ready to extend her welcome to him. At the Army club, to which he was posted by Colonel Howard, he found himself, much to his surprise, often the center of a respectful audience, eager to hear of the work of the army in the forlorn outposts of the West. He discovered, too, with surprise, that he was by no means as unknown as he had imagined himself to be.

Then there were invitations that had to be accepted, receptions and dinners; yet through it all Mark waited for the charmed day when the house in Massachusetts circle was to be opened, displaying the princess of his imagination, the little child of the hillside, the schoolgirl, grown into the image of his dreams.

(Continued next week.)

To the Patriotic Citizens of Lane County

We, the undersigned veterans of the Spanish-American war, irrespective of party affiliations, are sending this communication in behalf of our comrade, D. A. Elkins, present Sheriff of Lane County, Oregon, and candidate for re-election.

Sheriff Elkins responded to the call of his country in 1898 and, along with many others was sent for service to the Philippine Islands.

Some twenty years have intervened between that date and the present, yet we have not forgotten that campaign and the Comrades with whom, side by side, we fought.

Sheriff Elkins has made a good and efficient officer; he is fearless in the discharge of every duty; courteous in his treatment of the public. He is thoroughly competent within the office and, for five years, served as chief deputy in the legal department of the office; he is likewise thoroughly capable and competent as a sheriff, outside the office work, and with him as sheriff, it will not be necessary for Lane County to employ a Deputy Sheriff to do the Sheriff's work.

Sheriff Elkins is a native Oregonian, and 100 per cent American, three of his brothers now being in the military service of the United States.

In addition to this, he is Chairman of the Lane County Local Draft Board, by virtue of his office as Sheriff, and in this capacity has rendered and is rendering valuable service to his country, while performing his other duties, which occupy all of his time and leaves him practically none to devote to his election campaign.

In handling the pro-German element of the community, he has ever been vigilant and has been instrumental in rounding up such alien enemies as were found within the bounds of Lane County, and in the investigation of the slacker element.

As Spanish-American War Veterans, we view the past as well as the present and fully realize that sacrifice is the proof of devotion. This sacrifice our boys are making today on the blood-stained fields of France. We realize that the Spanish-American War was of small moment when compared with the present struggle, however, then as now, we made the same offer of sacrifice and many of our boys paid the price of devotion with their lives on the fields of battle, in the Philippines.

(Paid Adv.)—Democratic County Central Committee, J. A. McLean, Chairman, Eugene, Oregon

Are the boys who make this offer of sacrifice, soon to be forgotten? Are we to sing their praises today, while they are fighting our battles and forget their noble sacrifice when they return to peaceful pursuits?

We Spanish-American Veterans believe that the boys that fight for us, are entitled to our kindest consideration, not only today, but even twenty years after, and that our gratitude should not vanish with the passing of time, but should endure as long as life itself.

D. A. Elkins did his part in the war of twenty years ago, he offered his service and his life upon the altar of his country, and while his life was spared, he took the chance along with the less fortunate, but his reward should be just as great, and we would be devoid of gratitude, if we neglected, in this hour of his activity, to withhold from him our support, or if we remained silent at this time.

We feel that Sheriff Elkins is entitled to our undivided support in this campaign, and to the support of all loyal hearted, patriotic citizens of Lane County, and we hereby pledge him our hearty, united support, relying upon his service as a soldier and his faithful service as a public official of Lane County.

We call upon our comrades and all other patriotic citizens of the County to come to the support of D. A. Elkins in this, his first campaign for a public office, and we feel assured, if he has the support to which he is justly entitled, he will be the next Sheriff of Lane County.

Dated at Eugene, Oregon, October 15th, 1918.

FRANK WOODRUFF,

R. A. BABB,

ROBERT S. HUSTON,

M. V. ENDICOTT,

H. D. RYAN,

E. S. HAWKER,

C. H. RICH,

JNO. F. MITCHELL,

CLAIR ELLMAKER,

J. N. LINDSAY,

ELMER ROBERTS,

C. F. EGGIMAN,

T. O. RUSSELL,

MILO J. HARBAUGH,

J. N. BYRAM,

W. F. CROWE,

F. W. WEGNERS.

Jackson Scheme Is Repudiated

Home Chamber of Commerce Rejects Journal Measure

Sam Jackson, self-appointed guardian of the public weal, has decreed through the columns of the Portland Journal that the delinquent tax publication law and the statute defining legal rates shall be cast in the discard at the coming election. This is in effect the mandate published each day in the Journal, and in place of the present statutes Mr. Jackson will substitute a couple of pet measures of his own.

Citizens of Oregon, as a consequence, are debating whether to follow Mr. Jackson's injunction or whether it

would be safe to figure out their voting privilege in accordance with mandates of their own consciences. If they are at all hesitant to comply with the Jackson edict, it is probably because they realize Mr. Jackson is an old hand at telling folks how to cast their ballots and that his desires in the matter do not always coincide with the views of the citizens. This was noticeably the case a few years ago when Mr. Jackson attempted to foist single tax upon Oregon and when he fattened a measure to confiscate millions of dollars' worth of private property.

The two measures in question are now being considered by the voters of the state and it seems to be the well defined consensus of opinion in every section that the present laws are equitable. It is further conceded that the delinquent tax law is more than a mere administrative law in that it specifically renders a public service which cannot be overlooked by any fair-minded citizen—and the taxpayer in particular.

The present tax publication law provides that mail notice be sent to the taxpayer. This fact you do not see mentioned in the columns of the Journal. Then, after failure of mail notice, the tax lists are to be published. Thus is the delinquent taxpayer protected as far as possible.

Jackson's law would abolish the publication altogether, and leave the delinquent at the mercy of the tax title grabber. Such is the practical working of the Jackson amendment. His other bill is to cut down the present legal rate of five cents per line—now in force in practically every state in the union.

Unfortunately for Mr. Jackson the voters of the state are able to reason things out for themselves. They love suggestions but not mandates as to how they are to cast their ballots.

For weeks Jackson's Journal has been giving orders to the Oregon electorate on the Jackson pet measures. Strange to relate, however, the Portland chamber of commerce, at its weekly luncheon last week, unanimously turned down both schemes. They evidently figured that there was no justifiable reason at this time for punishing either the taxpayers or the press, so they went on record as unqualifiedly rejecting the Jackson bills.

It must have been a sorry day for Mr. Jackson and his Portland Journal, when the "home town" folks turned against him. Incidentally no mention of the action was made in the Journal.

Our reporter says: "When folks traveled by train, I could keep track of 'em, but since these dogged autos are leaving town by every road every hour, I've got a fat chance. When folks go visiting or have visitors, I wish they'd tell me about it." 025tf

Classy job printing. The Sentinel. ••



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