

# A DOZEN YEARS AFTER

## A Story of West Point Flirtations

By EUNICE BLAKE

Captain Alexander Ainsworth, after a dozen years' absence from the United States Military academy at West Point, was ordered there as instructor in artillery. He was twenty when he was graduated. Now he was approaching middle life. The day after his arrival, not yet having entered upon his duties, he strolled about, recalling here and there scenes and incidents of his cadet life.

Mounting to old Fort Put, he mused: "What a day that was when I came up here with Jennie! How my heart warmed toward her! I can smell this minute the delicate perfume there was about her. I can feel the silken softness of her sleeve, the sweet touch of her fingers when mine came in contact with them. Those beautiful blue eyes! How confidingly, how lovingly they looked into mine!"

Descending, he crossed the plain and soon found himself on Flirtation walk. Again he mused: "It was right here in this little recess when with Belle I stopped to tell her that I loved her. She knew what was coming and looked out on the river and the hills beyond, waiting for me to speak. I told her that, though we had met but a week before, I had come to love her with an unquenchable flame. I remember that at the time the word unquenchable seemed to me very well chosen. I was then a yearling with nearly three years of study before me. What mattered it? We were in the summer encampment with little to do but make love to the girls who had sprung up all over the Point like daisies in the sweet springtime. In September they vanished, and we were again grinding away at our books."

He returned to the plain and strolled past the monument to the West Point graduates who had fallen in the war and, standing on the declivity directly north of it, looked out upon that view up the Hudson river, as beautiful if not more beautiful than any in America.

"It was right here that I stood with Alice Ward on that moonlight night of the day I graduated. My cadet days were over, and I was an officer in the army. But the boy had not yet all got out of me. I had been sitting on the porch of the hotel with Alice. There were a dozen other couples there, and to escape the clatter of tongues I proposed a walk in the moonlight. We came here and stood looking out on this very view, though then instead of flashing in the sun it was mellowed by moonlight. I should have known better this time. I was of age. I did know better, but I failed to act on that knowledge. I drew her to me and kissed her."

The blood of shame mounted to his cheek when he remembered that he had told her she was the only girl he had ever loved.

"But," he added, "though I did not know it at the time, it was the truth."

He turned away from the scene before him, taking the path that led around by the officers' quarters. On the way he met a lady with a boy five or six years old, the child running about chattering to his mother. The lady was the wife of one stationed at the Point and, recognizing an officer by his uniform, bowed to him. He doffed his hat and said:

"I presume, madam, you are one of our army family here?"

"I am."

"I have just arrived after an absence of twelve years."

"You are Captain Ainsworth?"

"I am."

"I have heard of your coming. We keep posted on the changes as they occur. You relieve Lieutenant Waters, I believe?"

"I do."

"Does the Point look the same to you as when you left it?"

"West Point can never change, though its buildings may. I have been visiting old haunts."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. I first visited Fort Put. I remembered being up there once with a very lovely girl."

"She was?"

"Her name was Jennie— Upon my word, my memory is getting shaky!"

"Was it Marston?"

"Marston? Certainly! How names so fall us when we try to recall them! Did you know her?"

"She has always been an intimate friend of mine."

"Is she married?" asked Ainsworth, assuming an anxious look.

"Oh, yes; she's married, but it required some time for her to get over that visit to Fort Put!"

"You don't mean it! That was the episode of my life. But—I was nothing but a plebe."

"Jennie was very young too. She is happily married now."

"She must be an intimate friend of yours."

"My husband accuses me of loving her more than him."

"You are?"

"I was Jennie Marston. I am now Mrs. Farnum."

There was a twinkle in her eye. A

shamefaced look came over Ainsworth, and he smiled feebly.

"Don't worry about it, captain. These cadets are doing the same thing you boys did a dozen years ago, and cadets will keep on doing it as long as the academy lasts. Come and dine with us this evening. I wish you to meet my husband."

A dance for the graduating class and their friends was in progress. Captain Ainsworth was among the on-lookers. He stood behind the chair of a lady. A young girl of perhaps sixteen came to her to ask some question and called her auntie. Later in the evening Captain Ainsworth was introduced to the aunt.

"You are not one of our army circle here at West Point, I believe?"

"No, I am a visitor from New York. I came to chaperon my niece. I know how girls enjoy West Point, for I was here when a girl myself. I remember my experiences here with great pleasure—that is, all except one. I met my first disappointment here. A cadet was attentive to me. I listened to his flattering words. One day he asked me to stroll down Flirtation walk with him. I was persuaded. He stopped at a little nook part way down. He told me—

"Don't go any further. I beg you," said the captain. "You are the second person I have met since I have returned to the Point whom I asked to be—"

"You are Fred Nolan?"

"No; I am Alec Ainsworth. Aren't you Edith Andrews?"

"No; I'm Belle Harwood."

"Oh!"

"It is only a case of another cadet and another girl. Doubtless there are dozens of proposals on that walk every year. I wonder if any of them ever results in marriage?"

One bright moonlight night Captain Ainsworth and a party of his friends were trying by the uncertain light to read on the monument on the northern end of the plain at West Point the names of officers who were killed in the war between the states. Several others came up, and there was a general introduction.

"I am looking," said a lady to Captain Ainsworth, "for the name of my cousin who was killed at Antietam."

The captain started. He had heard that voice before and had never forgotten it. He told the lady that if she would give him the officer's name he would try to find it for her, but when she told him he exclaimed:

"He was in my class. You can't see the letters at night, for they are in shadow. Tomorrow you will find the name without any trouble."

When the others passed on Captain Ainsworth and this lady lingered.

"The view from a little farther this way," he said, moving northward, "is beautiful."

She went with him, and they stood side by side looking up the river.

"I remember," said the captain, showing emotion in his voice, "standing on this very spot twelve years ago, when I was a cadet, with a lovely girl who was a visitor here. The scenery was the same as it is now and was lighted, as now, by the moon. I had just passed from cadet to officer and was to leave West Point the next day."

"I had passed four years in the academy and every summer had taken on a new love. In passing from cadet to lieutenant I had my last affair of the heart, and though I was not aware of it I was taking on a love that I would never be able to throw off. Under the impression that it was a passing affair like the others I failed during the following few months even to write to the girl in question, assuming that she considered it, as I did, a mere West Point flirtation. When I learned that I had met the only girl I would ever love it was too late. I dared not reopen the matter seriously with one I had so shamefully neglected."

Doubtless this was the only truth the captain had ever spoken on the subject in question, though after his graduation he had told no more lies.

"I, too," said the lady beside him, "had a similar experience. My cousin being a cadet, I came with others of our family nearly every summer while he was at the academy. I soon learned what meaning to attach to an avowal of love from a cadet. What it is now I don't know; then it was one of his privileges which were not considered binding."

"The last summer I came here I received a proposal from one of the graduating class. At the time I considered it one of those West Point affairs of flirtation rather than of the heart. I never expected to hear again from the cadet, who went to a post in the far west, and I never did. But I admit that I found, like you, that for once in my West Point experience I had found too near the candle. My wings had been singed. I have never wed."

There was silence for a time, after which Captain Ainsworth spoke:

"Since it was the man's part, not yours, to make good his words you are in no way to blame. If he is excusable it is that, though he had no right to play with edged tools, he was living in a little world where they were played with. Being guilty myself, as he was, I would gladly atone for his fault. Let me stand in his stead and you will make me a happy man."

He not resisting, he drew her to him and kissed her as he had kissed her long before.

And there, a dozen years after a mock love affair on the part of two triflers, on the very same spot and under the same moon, they plighted their troth.

Later it was announced that Captain Ainsworth had met an old flame of his who was visiting West Point, and the couple were to be married in the autumn.

# FALLS CITY, OREGON

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Manufacturers and Home-seekers who want to know the facts concerning Falls City and its possibilities for future development are requested to read the information given in these two columns. For further and more particular information, address The News.

### The Name

The city derives its name from the falls of the Little Luckiamute River, which flows through the city from the West.

The first sale of town lots occurred in 1889, though donation land-claim settlers came here many years before that date. In 1900 the population was 269; in 1910, 969; 1914, about 1,250.

### The Location

Falls City is situated in the south central part of Polk County Oregon, in section 21, township 8 S., range 6 W., Willamette meridian, 27 rail miles southwest of Salem, and 73 rail miles southwest of Portland, in the narrow western end of the Little Luckiamute River valley, surrounded on the north, south, and west by the foothills of the Coast Range mountains. Elevation, 886.38 ft above sea level. Transportation—Salem, Falls City & Western Railroad, which extends from Salem to Black Rock, a rail distance of 30 miles, with S. P. main line connections at Dallas, Gerlinger, and Salem, and with the Oregon Electric at Salem.

Falls City is incorporated as a city, and contains 753.33 acres, valuation for taxation \$268,837. The city administration is composed of mayor, seven councilmen, auditor and police judge, marshal, treasurer, engineer, health officer. Salaries: Marshal and water superintendent, \$60; auditor, \$25; attorney, \$25.

### Water and Wood

The city of Falls City owns the gravity water system. Its first cost was \$30,000. Pure mountain water is piped from springs on Judge Teal's ranch, 3 miles away, at an elevation of about 300 feet above city level.

Oak and fir fire wood is plentiful and cheap.

### Lumber, Fruit, Vegetables and Berries

Electric-power planing and saw mill, log pond, dry kiln and lumber yard in the city, lumber flume, logging roads and logging outfits, all owned and operated by the Falls City Lumber Co.

The surrounding bench and hill lands are as well adapted to the production of fruits and berries as any other section of the Pacific Northwest, and development on these lines is going on.

Vegetables and berries of many kinds grow to perfection in and adjoining Falls City, and many acres are planted to strawberries and loganberries. Market conditions are improving steadily, as production is increased.

### Schools, Churches, Societies, Clubs

Falls City has a 12-grade school with a four-year high school course, with principal, assistant, and eight grade teachers. Its diplomas are accepted by the higher schools in lieu of examinations. The entire community is justly proud of the school.

The Religious organizations are: Adventist, Catholic, Christian, Free Methodist, Methodist Episcopal, German Lutheran.

The Fraternal societies: Ind. Order of Oddfellows, Rebekahs, Masons, Knights of Pythias, Pythian Sisters, Modern Woodmen of America, Royal Neighbors of America, Woodmen of the World, Women of Woodcraft.

Free reading room. Gem theatre, photoplay.

Hydro-electric light generated by the power of the falls; owned by the Falls City Electric Co., W. B. Stevens president, H. C. Brown vice-president and manager, A. W. Stevens secretary and treasurer.

Telephone system, with long-distance connections. C. J. Pugh local manager.

### Business Enterprises

Falls City is well provided with the usual business enterprises. The News contains the announcements of the following business and professional men of the city:

- Bakery, D. Toller,
- Bank of Falls City, W. F. Nichols cashier.
- Barber shops, Wm. Bohle.
- Carpenters and Builders, Elle & Elle, S. Ouderkirck.
- Clothier, Tailor and gents' furnisher, Chas. Hartung.
- Confectionery stores: B. L. Ellis, R. B. Harrington.
- Drug store, M. L. Thompson.
- Dentist, Dr. A. G. Atwood.
- Department store, N. Selig.
- Funeral director, R. L. Chapman.
- Furniture, J. C. Talbott & Co.
- General stores, N. Selig, F. C. Lumber Co., F. C. Merc. Co.
- Hardware store, J. C. Talbott & Co.
- Hotels: Falls City Hotel, Fritz Droegge, owner and manager; The Madena, Mrs. Mae Nichols, Mrs. Dennis, managers
- Jewelry store, W. A. Persey.
- Newspaper, the Falls City News, D. L. Wood & Son.
- Photoplay theatre, the Gem, C. J. Pugh.
- Physicians, Dr. W. B. Officer; Dr. F. M. Hellwarth.
- Pressing and cleaning parlor, I. A. Johnston.
- Railroads, Salem, Falls City & Western, Southern Pacific.
- Real estate agent, F. K. Hubbard Realty Co.
- Restaurant, The Madena, Wm. Finley, owner.
- Saloons: The Oregon, C. W. Matthews; The Idaho, Chas. Mix.

## Boost for a Gymnasium for the School

## REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

- 1 Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 14, block E.
- 2 Two fine building lots in block G, East View add.
- 3 For rent, house, barn, 3 lots; \$0; Ellis street. Property for sale.
- 4 For Sale, 2 good lots, on Pine street in block K, cultivated.
- 5 Lots 13, 14, 15, 16, block O, at a bargain; \$100 cash, bal. on terms at 8%.
- 6 Two lots, 6 r. house; fruit, berries, city water, electric light; close in, bargain.
- 7 For sale, One acre, adjoining city limits, with 5-room house. A bargain at \$425, terms. House to rent.
- 8 For sale—9 acres, partially improved; house, timber; spring and living stream; near western city limits; price, \$1000, half cash.
- 9 For sale, one acre, cultivated, fruit, berries; 6-r. house insured for \$1400; elec. light, city water, cesspool; price \$3050; all cash, or \$700 cash, terms on balance.
- 10 For sale, 7 lots (all of block A) in Montgomery's addition to Falls City; good garden ground, fenced; city water; price \$1100 if bought within the next 30 days.
- 11 For sale, fine home in city, with 25 acres, 10 cultivated.
- 12 For sale, lots 7, 8, 14, 23 block K, and lots 11 and 12 block E. Will trade for Portland property.
- 13 For sale, lot 2 block M, M. ad.
- 14 For sale, 80 a. 1 1/4 mi. north of city 20 a. improved; 25 a. good timber; plenty of pasture and water.
- 15 To rent, 12-r. house.
- 16 Two acres, cultivated, fruit, berries; 6-r. house, sheds; water, electric light; will divide.
- 17 Three acres, adjoining city.
- 18 Five acres, in city.
- 19 Six lots, no improvements; cheap
- 20 Lot 5 and 20 ft. of lot 4 blk D, 70 feet front, on North Main street, is for sale at a bargain; best building lot in town. See F. K. Hubbard.

F. K. Hubbard Realty Company  
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