

The Maker of Bandages

Red Cross Workers Solve in One Minute the Mystery of the Stony Hearted Mrs. Britt.

By MAXIMILIAN FOSTER
Of the Vigilantes.

A diamond is not the hardest thing in the world. A diamond will cut glass and bore through case hardened, tempered chrome steel, but glass and steel—the diamond itself too—are soft compared to some things. The hardest thing in the world is a hard woman.

Mrs. Britt was such a woman. I have seen hard women in my time, but never one who was harder. She smiled seldom, and when she smiled it was like the glitter of ice. She spoke infrequently, and when she spoke her speech was the tinkle of hail on slate roofing. She did not look as if she had ever wept in her life.

Every morning Mrs. Britt appeared at the Red Cross auxiliary in upper Broadway. She was the first to arrive in the morning, the last to leave at night. No one knew much about her, though. She was not the sort that make confidences. But that she was a worker—a hard worker—no one would dispute. Efficiency, as you'd suppose, was a trait of Mrs. Britt's.

Are Efficient Women Hard?

Efficiency—dreadful word that! How often hard women are efficient! How often efficient woman are hard! She was both, Mrs. Britt. The moment she came in at the door she had her hat and jacket off. The next instant she was at her place, her mouth set, grim, austere and hard—hard at work. Probably she did her work only from a sense of duty. Hard women always profess that trait. Duty, duty! But, then, few women are as hard as Mrs. Britt.

In contrast to her was Mrs. Farlow. She was soft and womanly and gentle—the exact opposite. She was not very efficient, of course, though she tried. Day after day Mrs. Farlow sat at the work table, her mouth quivering, smiling wistfully, the tears starting in her eyes. The bandages that came from her were often soiled and rumpled, poorly sewn, too, by her poor little trembling fingers. It was a wonder she could even see to sew at all. Again and again what she turned in had to be thrown away.

But no one reprimanded her. No one even let fall a hint that she was more of a burden than a help. The hearts of all those women ached with womanly pity for the poor, stricken mother. Once in awhile, though, in her corner at the back of the room Mrs. Britt would turn around and throw a glance at her. The glance was as hard as rocks—harder, in fact.

Mrs. Farlow had a son in the Rainbow division. The son was the oldest of her four children, and until he went away the little mother had been the happiest woman in the world. Now any day he might be ordered off to France.

His picture was in the locket she wore. Every half hour she would stop her work to look at it. Sometimes, her face wistful, she would show it to the other workers, voicing the anguish that with every waking breath she drew twanged hollowly in her mother's heart. One afternoon Mrs. Farlow's oldest daughter came hurrying in. Her face was white. She had just learned that the Rainbow division had been ordered overseas.

Mrs. Farlow rose, her face tragic. One glance she gave about her, then she collapsed, sinking to the floor. In her fall she overturned a huge pile of antiseptic gauze just torn into squares for Triangulars No. 13.

The room instantly was in confusion. Instantly every one sprang to the mother's aid—that is, every one but Mrs. Britt. She rose and rescued the bandages under foot. Then, her face hard as nails, grimly Mrs. Britt went back to her work. When Mrs. Farlow, still stricken, was led away to her car outside the drab figure in the corner was plugging away as mechanically and methodically as ever. The one glance she threw over her shoulder at the weeping woman was almost contemptuous.

A hard woman, Mrs. Britt; a heartless one, too, it was agreed.

For days nothing was seen at the auxiliary of Mrs. Farlow. It was understood that in her grief and apprehension she was ill in bed. Then one afternoon, pallid and quivering, she came in at the door. She smiled wistfully when the others gathered about her. "Let me work," she appealed plaintively. "Work may help me not to think."

Her Bandages Worthless.

She took a bandage and tried to sew. She made poor work of it, however. Then her head sank on her breast and the bandage slipped from her hands. "I can't—oh, I can't!" she wept.

Once more she was led away. The same thing happened three or four days later. A week later the mother wandered in again. By now the first of the troops were in the trenches, and her pale, transparent face was like a wraith's. She took a bandage; she tried to sew, and for a third time Mrs. Farlow gave in.

"Oh, my boy, my boy!" she wailed. The next instant a face was thrust into hers. The face was Mrs. Britt's, and the hard, bony visage was quivering with ill concealed anger and contempt.

"Sit down! Stop it!" said Mrs. Britt. With one hand she thrust Mrs.

Farlow back on her chair; with the other she thrust at her the half finished bandage. Her tone as grim as her face, she spoke, and again the sound of it was like hail pattering on slate. "You're not thinking of your son," she said. "You're just thinking of yourself!"

There was a murmur of remonstrance. Mrs. Britt heard it, and she flashed a look about her. But when she spoke again it was to Mrs. Farlow she spoke.

Think of Your Son.

"You're not the only mother in this war," she said. "If you thought a little more about them and a little less about yourself you'd be doing something. You'd be helping your son, for one thing!"

"Why, what do you mean?" gasped Mrs. Farlow.

Mrs. Britt smiled another adamant, icy smile.

"Your son wouldn't die for want of care. Any one of those bandages I've seen you ruin might save his life. Any one of them might save the life of some other mother's son!"

Mrs. Farlow shrank as if she had been struck. She'd never thought of it that way before.

The silence, the grim reserve, which had cloaked Mrs. Britt seemed for a moment to quit her. "I have no son," she said, her flinty voice biting out the words. "I had one, but he died at Guantanamo. It was in the Spanish war," snapped Mrs. Britt, "and there were no bandages—nothing. That's why he died. That's why I'm here now. It's to keep other women—mothers—from becoming the sort of woman I am." A harsh, brittle laugh escaped her. "Oh, I know what you think of me. I've heard what you said. Well," said Mrs. Britt, "my son wouldn't have died like that maybe if I hadn't sat around sniffing and snuffing, never doing a thing."

Then, her lips drawn into a bony smile, she glanced about her once more and stalked back to her place in the corner.

That night Mrs. Farlow rose from her place at the bandage table and sought the table at the back. For the first time that day Mrs. Farlow had managed to create half a dozen bandages, none of which had to be thrown away. Timidly she held out a hand to the drab, dingy figure in the corner.

"I—I've done better today," she said timidly.

Mrs. Britt looked up at her. Out of the corner of one glassy eye something welled, then fell, running slowly down her cheek.

"He was only twenty. He was all I had," said Mrs. Britt.

Most Hated of Men

"Gentlemen," said his Satanic majesty, addressing a group of lounge lizards in the Gehenna lobby, "meet my friend the emperor, late of Berlin."

"Nothing doing!" chorused the indignant Shades.

"You have heard of him, of course?"

"We have, your majesty."

"He tried to claim kinship with me," growled Attila the Hun.

"But my barbarians never used poison gas to defeat the enemy."

"I'm better known in history as a baby killer," said Herod the Great.

"but I never killed babies with Zeppelin bombs!"

"Don't bring him over here!" cried Nero, the toughest Roman of them all.

"I'm trying to live down a wicked past myself."

"Belay there, you submarine pirate!" bellowed old Captain Kidd.

"Bad as I am, I'd never have sunk the Lusitania without saving the women and children."

"Wilhelm" said his host, "you're certainly in bad with the men. Let's go over and meet the ladies."

But after Jezebel and Lucretia Borgia and Lady Macbeth had sniffed the sulphurous air, and switched away their asbestos robes, the devil gave it up.

"Even down here," sighed his majesty, "the evil that men do lives after them, just as Shakespeare said. Boy, page Judas Iscariot, and tell him he has lost his title of the most hated man that ever lived."—Modern Woodman.

War Work Report

War Savings are climbing. Last report is \$109,860.27 to the credit of Washington county.

The amount required for the year is \$20 per capita on Dec. 31, 1918. This means an investment of \$1.66 per month per capita. The average family must save and invest \$8.33 per month. Each family doing less compels some other to do more. We are a little over one month behind in our allotment. Everyone who has not started buying W. S. S. should get in now and help boost. Everyone who has bought should keep it up regularly.

Everybody should be a member of a War Savings society pledged to save and lend to Uncle Sam regularly. If there is no War Savings society in your reach organize one.

The Gale Grange at its meeting Saturday, voted unanimously to organize a War Savings society.

The scholars are organizing. The County Officials have organized at the court house.

N. A. FROST,

Chairman of War Savings.

Dried Fruit Regulation

Portland, Ore., May 7.—Under a new regulation just announced by Assistant Federal Food Administrator W. K. Newell, all dealers in dried fruits are prohibited from entering into any contract of sale or any commitment of new crop fruits until after June 1. Dealers are also notified that

they must not sell their products for more than a reasonable advance over the cost of same and that a full report of all sales made in carload lots must be made to the Dried Fruits Division of the U. S. Food Administration at Washington, D. C. Any dealer in dried fruits desiring details of the new regulations are referred by Mr. Newell to the County Administrator for the county in which his business is being carried on.

COUNTY SCHOOL NEWS

The eighth grade examination will be held at the various schools having candidates, on May 16 and 17. The program is:

Thursday A. M., Arithmetic, Writing and History

Thursday P. M., Agriculture, Spelling.

Friday A. M., Physiology, Language

Friday P. M., Geography, Civil Government and Reading.

The following is a summary of the War Work report of the Washington county schools for the school month ending April 19:

Washington county teachers own \$8,500 worth of Liberty Bonds. Of these the teachers of Forest Grove own \$2,450 and the teachers of Hillsboro \$1,000; of the \$17,375 of these bonds owned by Washington county pupils, Forest Grove is credited with \$4,300 and Hillsboro \$4,250. There are 605 \$5 War Savings

What's the Matter with Oregon?



R. N. Stanfield.

R. N. STANFIELD

(Republican)

For United States Senator

"I have a very strong conviction that Oregon has been discriminated against by the National Government in many ways. Mr. Stanfield shares this feeling and promises, if elected, to correct it as far as it lies in his power to do so. Senator McNary denies that any such discrimination exists. He was quoted in a dispatch from Washington to the Oregon Journal as saying that he took no stock in the statement that there had been discrimination against Oregon. Of course, if he believes there has been no discrimination he will make no effort to remove it."—S. B. Huston, who withdrew from the Senatorial contest and is supporting Stanfield.

Why do the Telegram and Journal complain that Seattle is always taking payrolls away from Portland, then attack Stanfield because he has built up an industry which benefits Oregon and Portland, creates a payroll and adds thousands of dollars to the tax list? Why has Portland lost so much to Seattle—is it because there are elements in Portland always ready to knock anyone who tries to help the community?

Five lawyers comprise the Oregon delegation at Washington; there has not been a business man, farmer or toiler in the delegation in a generation.

Why has the Chamber of Commerce felt it necessary to hire a special representative at a senator's salary of \$7,500 a year to look after Oregon's interests?

Stanfield never represented a corporation at Salem. Stanfield is no man's man.

Stanfield will not be dictated to and controlled by a political boss, by corporations or by newspapers, but he will serve all the people of his state, playing no favorites and giving a square deal.

No one has ever said that Bob Stanfield is a double-crosser, or that he is selfish or not liberal with his resources or his friendship. There isn't a lazy bone in his body. He has been a toiler all his life and never had a cushy job.

Raised on the range, he is no silk-stocking. Stanfield has built up from nothing through constructive labor until today he is one of the genuine assets of Oregon. He did not marry his money nor did he inherit it. He worked for it.

Republicans know that Stanfield is 100 per cent. Republican. He is not a 50-50 Democrat-Republican.

(Paid Adv., by Stanfield Senatorial League, 203 Northwestern Bank Building)

Certificates owned by teachers in the county, of which the Forest Grove teachers own 104 and those of Hillsboro 120; county pupils own 2396 of these certificates, with 401 owned in Forest Grove and 326 in Hillsboro; of the 259 Thrift Stamps owned by county teachers, those of Forest Grove have 4 and Hillsboro none; 4727 Thrift Stamps are owned by pupils in the county, with 1053 in Forest Grove and 159 in Hillsboro. Forest Grove has 32 pupils belonging to Industrial clubs, Hillsboro 14; county 635. Forest Grove has thirteen pupils in the Rainbow Regiment, as follows:

Gretta Ross, Thelma Mills, Elizabeth Whitehouse, Lois Allen, Elizabeth Tucker, Elizabeth Joss, Martha Schuh, Maude Graham, Irvin Thomas, Mabel Allen, Elizabeth Todd, Donald Randall, Fred Patton.

Wanted—Fire-proof office safe, must be cheap, for cash. Inquire at Express office. tf