

BRIDE OF BATTLE

A Romance of the
AMERICAN ARMY
Fighting on the Battlefields of
FRANCE



Copyright, 1916, by W. G. Chapman

"Well, Uncle Mark, my first connected memories are of Major Howard's home, of course. And I have a very vivid impression of being brought into the dining room and toasted at that dinner which the Major gave to the officers after the war. But before all that I seem to have memories, as if they were pictures."

"What is the first thing you remember?"

"I see a woman lying in a bed in a strange room. Her face is whiter than any face I have known; a man sits beside her, with his head in his hand, and, though death has no meaning for me, I am afraid, for I know that she was my mother."

"Was this in Cuba, Eleanor?"

"I don't know, but I think so, Uncle Mark, because I remember running to the window and seeing a great palm tree outside, with spreading branches. And there are other cities, and we seem to go from place to place, always watching for somebody, and yet, as it were, hiding from people. I know we avoid people, but it is an instinct only that tells me so."

"And again I am with my father in the jungle. I don't know how we got there, but I see the trees all around me, and I am afraid. We walk on and on, and sometimes he carries me, and we sleep under the trees and are drenched with rain. I am so tired and thirsty. But we go on and on, and when we stop we find a little hut, and I am afraid no longer."

"And then?" asked Mark in agitation.

"I remember nothing. I suppose the bullet that killed my father must have struck him while he was in the hut, but I have no picture in my mind at all."

Mark mumbled something to conceal his agitation. "And do you remember me coming and picking you up?" he asked.

She shook her head regretfully. "I don't remember anything else," she answered. "Nothing until that dinner in the major's house."

She linked her arm through his and looked at him earnestly. "Uncle Mark, it makes me unhappy sometimes to think that I have no memory, no clear memory of my parents. I am sure that some day all this mystery will be cleared up. Don't you hope so?"

"Yes," answered Mark, miserably.

He had always wondered what the child would be like. Howard's half-yearly letters had always assumed too much for granted. Mark had practically relinquished Eleanor to the Major, and he had never learned anything about her that he had really wanted to know. He had not imagined the precocious, high-strung, idealistic girl whom he now saw. He knew that the disclosure of her father's dishonor, if ever it came about, would shock her into a revulsion of feeling that would be fatal to the true development of her character.

He had often wished that he had not pressed that idea of the regimental mascot upon the major. It had been born in a mind attuned to the victory of that bloody day; in normal moments he would never have entertained it. Yet Major Howard had been more impressed than he had admitted to Mark. The idea had spread through the minds of the other officers. There was never a Guard dinner, though Eleanor was solemnly toasted, but she was not permitted to be present, and somehow the child had become a symbol in the minds of these plain men in business and professional life who spent two weeks in camp each year.

After the war Mark had gone to the regulars; but he was still in touch with the officers of the Seventh, and he knew that, if ever war came, he could obtain an appointment to it.

"I am sure that my father will prove to have been a brave soldier," said Eleanor, clasping her hands eagerly. "And sometimes," she continued, "I think that there must have been a great mystery about him."

"Why?" demanded Mark, startled.

"Because of the man who watches for me."

"Watches for you? It is imagination, Eleanor."

She shook her head. "I've seen him three or four times," answered the girl. "He waits at places that we pass when we go out together. And he watches me then, though he never attempts to speak to me."

"And you've told Miss Harper?"

"No, Uncle Mark. She would think I was hysterical," answered the girl, shrewdly.

Mark could see that, but he was certain that it was hysteria, that the idea had come to the child as the result of brooding over the mystery of her parentage. The entrance of the lady principal put an end to their conversation. Mark rose reluctantly. His visit had been all too brief, and it

might be years before he saw the girl again.

"Well, Eleanor, this is an revoir," he said. "Perhaps for years."

She looked at him in sudden alarm. "You are not coming back before you leave for the West, Uncle Mark?" she asked.

"They won't allow me the time. I have to go to Washington tomorrow, and then back to Texas."

She returned no answer, but went with him to the house door, and turned and faced him there, pulling at the lapels of his coat.

"Send me a new photograph, Captain Mark," she said. "I'm not going to call you Uncle Mark any more."

"An older one?" asked Mark, laughing, though he had a strange sinking at his heart. This child epitomized home to him, and he had been homeless since boyhood.

"You must forgive me," she said, a little wistfully. "Captain Mark, there's something I want awfully to say to you, but it takes a lot of courage," she added.

"Tell me just the same," answered Mark. "You know, my dear, I want you to have everything you wish for. And if Major Howard won't give it to you, you just let me know. He has assumed the responsibility for your upbringing, and I'm going to have the fun of giving you pleasure."

"It's something that Major Howard can't give me, Captain Mark."

"Can I?"

"Yes," she said in a low voice, pulling at his coat, and suddenly raising her eyes to his. Mark Wallace saw the soul of a mature woman look out of the eyes of the child. "When I'm older and have put my hair up, and wear long dresses—when I'm eighteen, say, I—I want you to marry me, Captain Mark."

She was gone in a flash, running along the corridor, while Mark Wallace stood dumfounded at the door, hearing her footsteps grow fainter as she hurried into the recesses of the Misses Harpers' School for Select Young Ladies.

Mark went down the walk like a man dreaming. It was absurd; it was, perhaps, characteristic of the girl's age and temperament; and yet, in spite of the absurdity, Captain Mark Wallace felt as if he had suddenly regained the grimy little child whom he had found upon the hillside in front of Santiago, and lost again.

As he reached the gate he saw a man watching him from the bend of the road. Something of furtiveness in the man's posture made him wheel sharply round; then he remembered Eleanor's words and started in haste toward him. But the man shambled off at a quick gait and when Mark reached the bend he could see no body.

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 going 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 departmental 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 handshake.

"We were glad to get you, Wallace."



"You'll Excuse Me For a Moment,"

he said. "You'll excuse me for a moment, I'm sure."

He drew Colonel Howard aside in conversation, while Mark twisted his fingers and looked out of the window into the busy life 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 foreign outposts of the West. He discovered, too, with surprise, that he was by no means 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.

CHAPTER V.

When at last he alighted at the door, and was shown into the reception room, he felt that he was almost trembling with eagerness.

He looked uncertainly about him, at the group of young officers, the ladies, at Mrs. Howard, and then at the stylishly dressed young woman at her side.

And, forgetting his manners, he approached her in stupefaction, ignoring his hostess for the moment.

"Eleanor!"

"Uncle Mark! It's never you; Uncle Mark!" cried the girl. "Why, I should never, never have known you!"

But would he have known her, had he not looked closely into the clear eyes to discern the face of the little wisp beneath the beauty of the woman? He had often and often imagined her, grown to womanhood, and dressed as he would have dressed her, but somehow she had always had the look and aspect of the child, blended with the schoolgirl. A sudden chill went through his heart at her self-mastery, the well-bred welcome that had in it little of real eagerness. And he realized that, though he had always looked on her as lost, at the bottom of his heart he must have hoped to find her again.

He stood, a graying-haired, uncomfortable, almost middle-aged man, trying to feel at home. He saw Kellerman looking at him across the room, as if there was some message in his eyes. "I hope I haven't changed so much as all that," said Mark, trying to smile.

"No," she answered, looking at him with a searching, direct gaze. "Not really—only at first appearance. Why, Uncle Mark, your hair is turning gray. What have you been doing with yourself?"

He felt that the unconscious shuff had gone well home. He only answered vaguely. There was a little informal dancing, and, as he felt befuddled by his age, he was turned with Eleanor and sat back with Mrs. Howard, surveying the gay crowd, and recalling memories—about the most disheartening thing that he could have done.

"What do you think of Eleanor?" asked Mrs. Howard. "You didn't ex-

pect to see the little schoolgirl grown up like this, did you?"

"Nor she me—like this," answered Mark humbly. But the Colonel's wife missed the allusion.

"She has been crazy to see you," Mrs. Howard continued. "She gave the Colonel no rest after he told us that he was trying to get you for the war office. I believe she had always had a sort of romantic recollection of you, and looked upon you as a sort of guardian, although, of course, it was a fortunate thing for her and us—and you, too—that Colonel Howard did succeed in inducing you to let us take her. She has been everything to us."

"Of course," said Mark mechanically.

"It would have been a terrible life for her out in the desert," sighed Mrs. Howard. "I think that you were very wise, Captain Wallace. And what a dreadful burden and responsibility you would have had!"

This time Mark did not attempt to answer.

"She has been a daughter to both of us," pursued his hostess. "And now I'm afraid—we're both afraid, Captain Wallace, that we cannot hope to have her for long. She was quite the rage in New York last season."

Wallace followed the girl with his eyes. She had just been dancing with a young officer; it had been a two-step, and as the band of three pieces broke into the wildest and merriest part of the piece he saw her, with flushed face and laughing eyes, accept Kellerman's arm and surrender herself to the dance.

Kellerman caught Mark's eyes across the room. He looked straight back with a meaning challenge which was unmistakable. Mark knew at that moment that his antipathy to Kellerman had returned, although he was inclined to believe the other was not aware it had ever existed.

Kellerman was a splendid figure, even in his civilian evening clothes. Fully six feet tall, with the chest and limbs of an athlete, florid, with crisp black hair and a sense of the possession of power, he looked at least five years Mark's junior, though they had been born in the same year. "Handsome Kellerman" had been his sobriquet in Cuba. Mark remembered it across the lapse of years, and into his mind there began to filter, too, stray stories about him.

Mark did not judge him by these, but by the intuition which sent a cold wave to his heart as he saw him with Eleanor. It seemed to him that Kellerman's look, as he turned to the girl, was one of intentional conquest—in another man it might have been called infatuation; and the girl knew it and was happy in it.

The bitterness of that moment was like a sword thrust. Had he come three thousand miles for this? But what had been his thoughts for Eleanor, his vague wishes as to her future?

He did not know. He had dreamed—dreamed of her, and never pictured her as she was.

There was an informal, stand-up supper about eleven. Eleanor came to Mark and asked him to take her to the buffet. Mark was conscious of a coldness, or hurt resentment in the girl's manner, as if he had neglected her.

He brought her a plate and sat beside her in an alcove. They were alone, measurably, for the first time that evening.

"Uncle Mark, you are disappointing me," said Eleanor.

"I know it, and I'm sorry for it," said Mark. "I suppose it's—because I am not a bit like what you expected me to be."

"You are not the least bit like what I expected, or remembered, Captain Mark," she answered.

In his jealousy he was conscious of the altered prefix. And, as Eleanor looked at him with hurt in her eyes she broke off to smile at a young officer across the room, who returned an ardent gaze across the rubicund shoulders of a very homely, but most important dame whom he was helping to champagne.

"Most of us experience disappointments in people whom we have idealized," said Mark lamely.

"You mean—Oh, I'm sure I thank you, Captain Wallace," answered the girl acidly. "Shall we go back?"

But Mark had a moment of inspiration.

"Before we go, Eleanor," he said, "don't you think we might get to understand each other a little? I suppose I have been rude—but, you see, I have been conscious of your disappointment all the evening, and—"

He stopped in bewilderment, for Eleanor was—laughing.

(To be continued)

Germany will be a wizard of finance if she can foot the bills for indemnity and reconstruction which will be brought vigorously to her attention.



LATTICE OF BRAID ON SPRING SUITS



The checks in spring suits are a bit different than in other years. They are quite large, and made by using braid as a trimming—squared off almost like lattice work. This new suit is belted with a narrow strip of self material over a coat of loose lines. The up-standing collar is still with us.

Do your Christmas shopping early.

For Croup, "Flu" and "Grip" Coughs

M. T. Davis, leading merchant of Bearsville, W. Va., writes: "A few nights ago one of my patrons had a small child taken with croup about midnight. Came to my store and got Foley's Honey and Tar Compound. Before morning the child entirely recovered. Parents can't say enough for Foley's Honey and Tar."—Sold by Reed Bros.

HOLY FAMILY CHURCH
(Catholic)

Cor Miller and C. Sts.
Sunday High Mass at 10:30 o'clock
Week days Mass at 7 o'clock.
Instructions for children Saturdays at 9 A. M.
Rev. Father Francis, O. F. M.
Rector



Sumpter Valley Railway Co.

Arrival and Departure Of Trains

Departs
No. 2, Prairie 1:15 A. M.
Sumpter 2:35 P. M.
Arrives Baker 4:15 P. M.

Departs
No. 1, Baker 8:3 A. M.
Sumpter 1:05 A. M.
Arrives Prairie 2:1 P. M.

No. 1 Makes good connection with O.-W. R. & N. Co. No. 4 (Fast Mail) leaving Portland 6:15 P. M., arriving at Baker 7:55 A. M. and No. 17 from east arriving Baker 6:50 A. M.

No. 2 connects with No. 5 (Fast Mail) arriving at Baker 7:55 P. M. which picks up Pullman at Baker, arriving at Portland 7:00 A. M. Also with No. 18, at 0:45 P. M. for points East.

\$1500 Reward!

The Oregon, California and Nevada Live Stock Protection Association of which the undersigned is a member, will give \$1,000 reward for evidence leading to the arrest and conviction of any party or parties stealing horses, cattle or mules belonging to any of its members.

In addition to the above, the undersigned offers the same condition \$500.00 for all horses branded horse-shod her on both or either jaw. Brand recorded in eight counties. Range Harney, Lake and Crook counties. Mares veiled when sold.
Name but grown horses sold and only in large bunches.
W. W. BROWN File Oreson.