

GOOD ROADS,
GOOD HOMES,
BEST CHEESE

CLOVERDALE COURIER.

The Nestucca Valley First,
Last and all the
Time.

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PEARL of the ARMY

By GUY W. McCONNELL



A Story of "America First," Unmasking America's Secret Foes

Novelized From the Motion Picture Serial of the Same Name Released by Pathé

SYNOPSIS.

Capt. Ralph Payne, U. S. A., is given secret plans of defense to deliver to Panama. He attends a ball at the Granada embassy with Colonel Dare's daughter, Pearl. As a climax to a series of mysterious incidents he is arrested for treason. The ambassador of Granada is found dead and the plans missing from Payne's coat. Major Brent, Payne's rival, enters into suspicious negotiations with Bertha Bonn. Payne is sentenced to life imprisonment. A train carrying Pearl, Bertha Bonn and Payne on his way to prison is wrecked and Pearl sees Payne's lifeless body at her feet. She meets Adams, a mysterious stranger, who offers her his services to trace the traitors. She learns that he has the plans. Granadians capture Pearl and Adams to get the plans. Pearl begs Adams to let her take his belt which contains the defense plans. They escape and Adams steals the belt from her. Pearl is captured again by the Granadians. She is rescued by Adams. Disguised as his brother she accompanies him into the camp of the conspirators and poses as a chemist. They are recognized; in the fight Adams saves Pearl from harm. Colonel Dare arrives with American troops. The black scarf appears. Pearl and Toko follow Adams on his way for appointment at the Chemical building. All three fall into the hands of the "Alliance." Adams is arrested by counterfeit soldiers who also take Pearl with them. They carry her aboard ship and she is again saved by Adams and Toko. "Foreign alliance." The ship is blown up. They escape. Adams surprises Brent in Dare's home stealing the plans. They in turn are confronted by Toko. Adams finds a note which calls the Silent Army to arms at the Chemical building. Colonel Dare, with a regiment, appears at the spot. They find the building wrecked and rifled. Pearl is carried away by the Silent Flyer. She descends in a parachute and meets Adams who has destroyed the Flyer. During the progress of the defense board meeting at Dare's house Brent receives the locket from Bertha Bonn. The Silent Menace traps Adams and Toko and gets the war secretary's portfolio. Adams appears in Brent's room and demands the locket. Adams forces Brent to marry Bertha Bonn. He takes Pearl aboard ship to show her the Silent Menace and the "Alliance." The "Alliance" is destroyed and Adams and Pearl are carried on the way to Panama. Major Brent promises to marry Bertha and to unmask Adams. Pearl and Adams escape from their prison ship, which is mined. They proceed to the inner canal waters in time to intercept the planted mines. Adams meets a stranger in under-water combat. The man escapes—he is Brent.

FOURTEENTH EPISODE

The Flag Despoiler!

With his arm in a sling, Maj. Thornton Brent sat in a private court of inquiry in the general session chamber of the general army staff at Washington.

Practically every available member of the staff was present, together with witnesses, voluntary and otherwise, bent upon seeing justice done the ac-

cused officer. One of these was Miss Pearl Dare, the colonel's daughter. Another was the colonel, himself. Both came prepared to face any shock, yet in deep sympathy with the man.

Among the involuntary witnesses was T. O. Adams, the stranger from Monk's Corner, Neb., orderly to Colonel Dare, sometime hero, sometime under dire suspicion, but now openly acknowledged by Pearl Dare to be her fiance, much to the amazement of social Washington.

Another involuntary, though perhaps of all the most interested, witness was Miss Bertha Bonn, Pearl Dare's new friend and house guest.

The charge against Brent was, curiously enough, the same under which Capt. Ralph Payne, a brother officer, and Miss Dare's former sweetheart, had been convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment in a federal penitentiary, although he had been saved the latter disgrace by an untimely end in a railroad wreck.

It was treasonable conspiracy. But while in the case of Payne that officer was found guilty of disposing of an army secret—the canal defense plans—to an enemy, in Brent's case the charge was made that he was the personal representative of the enemy, that he was the Silent Menace so-called in government circles.

On the night Adams and Pearl Dare heroically risked their lives in order to discover the location of mines laid in the canal by the Silent Menace—and succeeded—Pearl, in rescuing the orderly from certain death due to her own impetuosity, shot the Silent Menace, wounding and breaking his arm. That same night Major Brent turned up at the commandant's quarters at the canal, in dripping wet garments, with a broken arm.

Immediately suspicion centered, and for the very first time, on him.

And so the inquiry started. After the usual preliminaries the first person called to the stand was Colonel Dare who upon being sworn and identified, was questioned closely on several points, the judge advocate-general of the army presiding.

"How long have you known the defendant?"

"I have been his commanding officer for five years, prior to which he was unknown to me."

"Have you always regarded him as the soul of honor, truth and integrity?"

"Always."

"Even now?"

"Even now."

"Has the question of the identity of the Silent Menace ever been discussed between the defendant and yourself?"

"Very frequently."

"Has he ever specifically named any person in this connection?"

The colonel hesitated. "One person," he finally admitted.

"Have you concurred in his opinion?"

"Never entirely. Certainly not now!"

"Then you believe the defendant to be the Silent Menace?"

"I do not," replied the colonel quickly and emphatically.

"Who was the person discussed between Major Brent and yourself?"

"The major without reason named my orderly, T. O. Adams," Colonel Dare slowly stated.

"Was there to your knowledge anything personal between your major and your orderly?"

For the third time Colonel Dare hesitated. "I had reason to believe that the defendant was attached to my daughter," he answered with embarrassment after a painful pause.

"Adams, it seems, has also been a suitor—successfully?"

"To which you have no objection?"

"No material one," stammered the colonel; at which every person except Pearl and Adams smiled. The colonel was then excused.

Inquisition now fell upon Miss Dare, the heroine of the hour. She rose with queenly dignity and amid a hushed admiration, took her seat quietly in the witness box.

But the first question brought the scarlet into her face. "You knew Capt. Ralph Payne?"

"He was my fiance," replied Pearl in a low voice.

"Was Major Brent ever discussed between you and Captain Payne?"

"Only as we would talk of one whose friendship was dear to us. They were brother officers."

"Was Captain Payne ever discussed between Major Brent and yourself?"

"Occasionally," was Pearl's evasive reply.

"Do you recall the nature of Major Brent's remarks about Captain Payne?"

"They were guarded, though not unfriendly. To be perfectly truthful, I always thought that the major was jealous of the captain's place in my affections."

"Has Major Brent ever mentioned to you this opinion that T. O. Adams was the Silent Menace?"

"Often."

"You have not agreed with him?"

"I intend to marry T. O. Adams," Pearl replied with telling directness. "I would not marry a traitor to my country!"

"Your answer is sufficient and admirable, Miss Dare," commented the judge advocate-general. "Do you believe Major Brent to be the Silent Menace?"

Pearl's hesitation was barely noticeable. "I cannot believe that, in spite of everything."

"You are excused, Miss Dare." And Pearl stepped down, returning to her seat by the colonel's side, making way for Miss Bertha Bonn.

When she took the place vacated by Pearl, Brent for the first time raised his bowed head and appraised her closely; and for the first time he realized that after all it was Bertha Bonn whom he loved, the girl of his youth, sitting there now pale, composed and determined woman of the world whose momentary glance in his direction answered every silent question and satisfied him completely.

Adams, alert and watchful, eying the two between half-closed lids, leaned back in his chair with an audible sigh. He also was satisfied. In that passing second it came to all three—Brent, Adams and Bertha—that fate was playing strange pranks with their personal affairs; with Bertha possibly holding the reins.

"You are a member of Colonel Dare's household?"

"I am Miss Dare's honored guest."

"You knew Capt. Ralph Payne?"

"I did not."

"Yet, you were the messenger sent by the Silent Menace to the Granadian frontier with the secret canal defense plans after they left Captain Payne's hands?"

"I was."

"You also acted as his messenger when he returned the stolen national

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preparedness budget to Senator Warfield in the committee rooms?"

"I was—not."

Even Major Brent opened his eyes wide upon hearing this statement so apparently contradictory with the facts.

The judge advocate-general again repeated his question. Bertha again replied in the negative.

"Did you not deliver a packet to T. O. Adams in Senator Warfield's committee room in the evening the national preparedness budget was stolen?"

"I did."

"Do you know what the packet contained?"

"I do."

"What did it contain if not the national preparedness data?"

"The stolen secret canal defense plans," replied Bertha in a calm and distinct voice, not losing her composure an instant.

"Excused!" roared the judge advocate-general.

Colonel Dare, Major Brent and Pearl Dare half started from their seats gazing in unbelief from Bertha as she left the witness box, bowing smilingly up at the judge, to Adams whose name being called was in the act of rising deliberately to answer the summons.

"Did the packet you received from Miss Bonn contain the stolen secret canal defense plans?" queried the judge advocate-general coming to the point as soon as Adams took the stand.

"It did," responded Adams almost insolently, boldly facing the battery of accusing eyes.

Miss Pearl Dare and her father were rendered speechless.

"Did you know the packet contained the stolen secret canal defense plans?"

"I did."

The silence in the inquiry room became more profound and accusing.

"Where and how then did you obtain possession of the national preparedness budget which you returned to Senator Warfield?"

"I got it away from that there

canal defense plans which Miss Bonn brought to you? What did you do with them?"

"Put them in Captain Payne's army belt, after I went into service," confessed the dumbfounding orderly.

"On a former occasion you swore on your oath that you found these plans in Captain Payne's army belt. You now acknowledge that you lied?"

"I didn't exactly lie. Couldn't I find them after I put them there?"

"Excused!" vociferated the judge advocate-general. "Miss Bertha Bonn again, please."

As Adams resealed himself, two guards at a sign from the presiding officer stepped forward and stood behind his chair.

With Bertha again on the stand the judge advocate-general took a new tack, causing another and equally confusing diversion.

"Who gave you the packet to be delivered to T. O. Adams?" was his first question.

"The Silent Menace sent it to me. It was brought to me at my hotel by a uniformed man resembling a senate building guard."

"You, of course, refer to Major Brent as the Silence Menace?"

"I do not. Major Brent is not the Silent Menace."

Here the presiding officer introduced his new sensation. "How long have you known Major Brent?"

"Since girlhood," was the soft response.

"Since girlhood!" ejaculated the presiding officer, himself taken by surprise, with an involuntary glance in Brent's direction. "How is that?"

"We were sweethearts, once upon a time," the girl answered in tremulous accents. She ventured a timid glance at the major and instantly all inward fears fled; for he was smiling in manly corroboration to the surprise of everyone, Adams most of all.

"Are you sweethearts no longer?"

Again the words fell softly from her lips. "I have recently consented

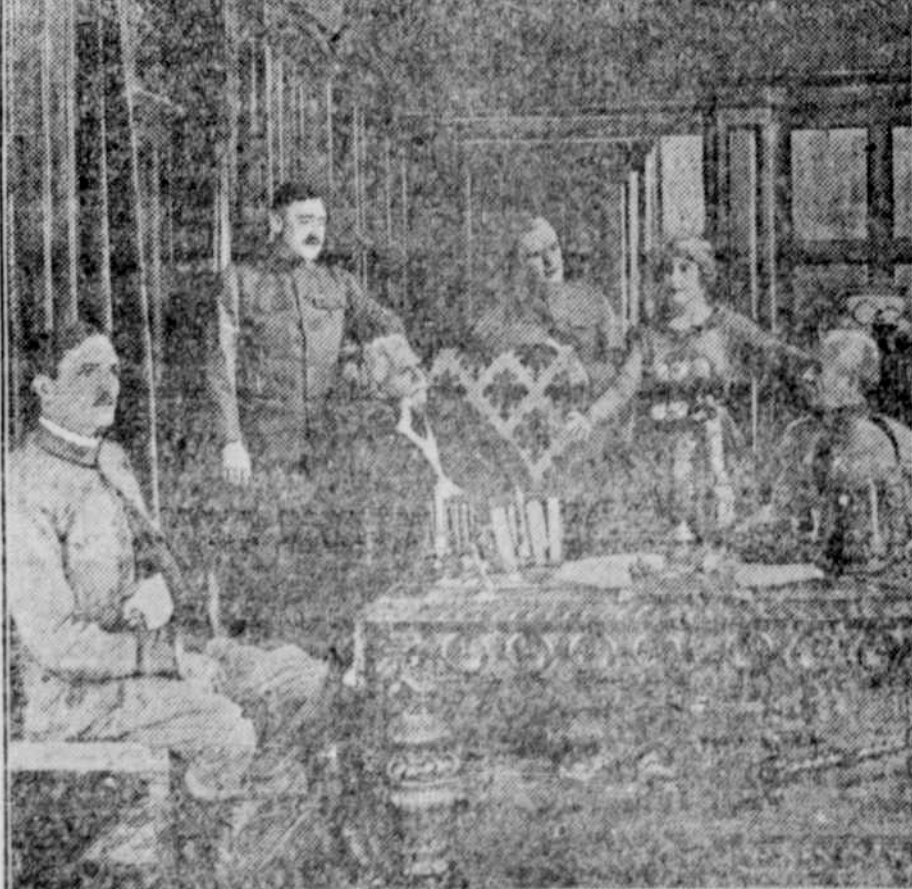
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"I intend to marry T. O. Adams!" Pearl replied.

Silent Menace d-d-down in the basement of the senate building just as he finished making a press e-copy and knocked me flat."

"Knocked you flat?"

"Biffed m-me on the head, knocking me out long enough to escape."

"Then you kept the stolen secret

Continued on last page.