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MARY'S SOLDIER

By MARGUERITE I. BLUE.

In one of our Northern states where the mountains rise highest and streams flow swiftest, there lies securely hidden from the world a tiny hamlet.

On the last, most graceful curve of the road leading from the town, on slightly raised ground, stood with quiet superiority, a long, low comfortably modern bungalow.

Behind the guardians, Mrs. Marden, mistress of the house and mother of four healthy grown children, sat in a low wicker rocker, knitting. Not quite forty, plump, and with a sense of humor, Mrs. Marden surveyed life from a safe and sane altitude. Now as she sat, her face suddenly lighted and she smiled as she rose in greeting to her partner, who was equally plump, a little over forty, and with the same sense of humor.

"Supper ready, mother?" he asked, with that intimacy which needs no acknowledgment of meeting.

"Yes, we'll sit right down. Come, Mary and Dot," she called to her first and last born. "Come, boys," this last to two boys just turned into serious young manhood, recognized by carefully tied neckties and perfectly creased trousers. "Supper is ready."

How could they know, quietly eating their evening meal, that the great god Mars had sent his dark cloud to hang over America. That Clotho, the distaff holder, had snarled her golden threads and only by breaking them could her sister go on spinning.

"Mother, mother, someone's coming up the drive!" cried Dot, simultaneously pushing back her chair, the rest following her. "Why, it's Burt," from father. "How do you do, Burt? You're just in time. We were just having supper."

"Oh, no," protested Burt; "don't put yourselves out for me."

"No fear of that," laughed Mrs. Marden. Hastily another place was set, and the joviality increased.

"I'm sorry folks, but I've something to tell you people. You know my coming up here tonight is rather unexpected. But you see, it's this way. I've—I've," he looked at Mary who was waiting breathlessly, her fork poised in the air. "I've enlisted and I've got to leave tomorrow at four."

Mary lowered her fork to her plate. What was this he said? Could it be true? He going. Actually going. Her Burt. Mr. Marden and the boys flooded him with questions. Would they never stop? And finally, when the supper was over, they carted him off to the cool piazza to ask more.

Mary wandered through the house aimlessly, looking first through a window at some distant scenery, then at her flowers, which she loved and always tried to keep in the house. Always through her mind the phrases repeated themselves, "Can it be possible? He is really going." Finally she seated herself at the piano and played. She played well, but it made her feel infinitely lonely.

It was there that he found her. He came in quietly and stood beside her. It seemed as if there was nothing to be said.

"Mary, it is very late. You will wait till I come back, Mary? You must wait."

"Yes," she replied, "I shall always wait." He kissed her very gently.

* * * * * * *

Mary Marden walked slowly home from the Red Cross club, knitting as she walked. She had been rolling bandages most of the day and now she was tired. The outlook on life had changed very much for her.

"Mary, Mary, a telegram!" shouted Dot, racing toward her.

"A telegram," repeated Mary weakly. "Where?"

"Bill's got it," said Dot, as if she had imparted some important information.

"Billie, do hurry," from Mary. But Billie, with exasperating slowness, handed her all the rest of the mail before he got to the telegram.

Mary tore off one end of the envelope, not heeding in her haste how she got it off. Her hands trembled so that she could hardly unfold it.

"Why, why!" she exclaimed. "He's in this country and I never knew. He'll probably be up here in a couple of weeks. Come quick. Let's tell mother and father."

She was tired no longer. The birds sang sweeter, the sky looked bluer, the sun shone brighter as she hurried toward the house.

The two weeks passed very quickly, but it was nearer four weeks, late one afternoon, while Mrs. Marden was bustling about setting the table with thin china and sparkling glass for supper, that Mr. Marden came up the drive with a tall, young soldier in overseas uniform. The aroma of newly made biscuits filled the house. Dot was interpreting the latest music by a one-finger method, and Mary, enveloped in a huge apron, was cutting cake. Suddenly she turned and there he stood laughing at her. For just a moment she was startled, but a second later she flew toward him, knife, apron and all.

"My, but I'm glad to see you!" she exclaimed.

But there was to be no more peace for them that evening. Already the rest of the family had closed in and commenced a bombardment of questions that it would take weeks to answer.

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BERMUDAS HAD HISTORY LIKE U. S.

But Revolution Failed to Gain for Them Their Independence.

PEOPLE HELPED WASHINGTON

Supplied Ammunition With Which Continental Army Forced British to Evacuate Boston—Islands Discovered as Result of Shipwreck.

Washington, D. C.—"The Bermuda islands suggest the adventures of Robinson Crusoe in their colonization and present in their later chronology a curious parallel to United States history, with the events consistently predated by a number of years."

With this statement the National Geographic society prefaces a bulletin on the Bermudas, a principal group of the British West Indies, which some Englishmen suggest should be ceded to the United States in part payment of the American war loans to Great Britain.

"The Robinson Crusoe comparison obtrudes because the islands were discovered and later settled as the direct result of shipwrecks, and the settlers had to build themselves a bark to set sail again," the bulletin continues.

"As for the anticipation of American history, on a miniature scale, it may be noted that the colonization took place seven years before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, Mass.; that witches were burned, Quakers were persecuted and miscreants were ducked before similar occurrences are recorded in New England, and that slavery was abolished in 1834. The Bermudians protested long before 1776 against the mother country's rule, until the island prisons were over full, but relief came, in their case, not through a declaration of freedom but by the accession of Cromwell.

Helped to Start Revolution.

"But the essential point of contact of the American with the Bermudian arises from the all-but-forgotten fact that while the immortal Lafayette gallantly helped the colonies conclude their war of independence, the Bermudians supplied the ammunition to begin it.

"So acute was the need for powder in 1775 that George Washington wrote to the governor of Rhode Island that 'no quantity of powder, however small, is beneath notice.' Learning that there was a store in Bermuda, and that the islanders were anxious to have the embargo lifted upon shipment of food supplies from the colonies, Washington addressed a letter to the people of the island, who had shown themselves sympathetic with the American Revolution, promising them ample supply of provisions and 'every other mark of affection and friendship which the grateful citizens of a free country can bestow upon its brethren and benefactors if they would make this ammunition available for the Continental army.

"It so happened that the powder had been procured before the letter was delivered, and with it the Continental army compelled the British to evacuate Boston.

A Winthrop Joined Tories.

"Not only the sale of powder but the fact that Bermuda allowed the colonies to have salt, so incensed the governor of Bermuda that he upbraided the citizens for treason, and feeling ran so high that he was removed. His successor was a native of Salem, Mass., whose loyalty to the mother country was such that he gave up large estates in the colonies rather than join the revolutionists. He was connected, both by blood and by marriage, with the Winthrop family. Under his rule the island's full allegiance to England was restored.

"Browne was succeeded by Henry Hamilton, during whose administration the town of Hamilton was founded and named for him. This town today is the seat of the island government. It has a population of less than 3,000.

"Hamilton is on Main island, or Bermuda, while St. George, the former capital, is on the island of the same name. There are more than 300 small islands in the Bermuda group, of which only a score are inhabited. The total population of the islands in 1916 was little over 20,000, of whom about one-third were white. Bermuda suffered during the war by the cessation of the American tourist patronage, which had doubled the entire island population in preceding seasons.

"The Bermudas attracted visitors because of their mild climate, which knew no frosts, and by their scenic beauty.

"Juan Bermudez, sailing from Spain to Cuba in 1515 with a cargo of hogs, discovered the islands when a storm blew him to their shores. Apparently he left some of the hogs there, for later visitors found the animals on the island. From him the islands were named, and thus originated the 'hog money,' coins stamped with a hog on one side and a ship on the other, which still are preserved in various collections.

"The islands were settled through the efforts of Sir George Somers, who became impressed with their fertility and beauty during a sojourn enforced by the wrecking of the ship which was carrying him to Virginia."

For hundreds of years the Nile floods have not varied ten days in their arrival.

Do It Now!

The doors of opportunity remain open for years, but they close with a bang, and they never reopen. We are responsible for the good we might do, and the world is poorer for our neglect, as no one can do our work. If there is something that needs doing, don't wait till tomorrow! Do it now!

Wrongs That Harm.

Not the wrongs done us harm us, only those we do to others.—Longfellow.

THE HOME GUARD

By ELLEN L. KENNEDY.

The early spring dusk was falling as Hugh Standish dropped from the suburban car and splashed through the icy slush and mud toward home. It had been a hard day and he was tired. His shoulders sagged a trifle and his limp was more perceptible than usual. But more depressing than any mere physical weariness was the dull heaviness that oppressed his spirits. He had felt it ever since his soldier brother's return from France.

As he turned in at the gate of the little cottage the bright light from the living room windows streamed out across the path and he stopped in the shade of the syringa bush to look in on the familiar, comfortable old room. Several people were sitting there. He could see Aunt Caroline, dignified and elegant in her best black silk; Uncle Charles, portly and smiling; Cousin Gertrude in her stylish prettiness, twelve-year-old Tom, in his boyish face looking serious and intent; over in the corner his mother with an immaculate white apron over her afternoon gown. And every pair of eyes was bent in admiration upon the tall, soldierly figure that stood by the piano, his lieutenant brother, irreproachable in every detail, from the top of his smoothly brushed head to the square tips of his tan shoes. As he bent forward to arrange the music the light flashed on the medal that adorned his breast. Hugh could see the face of the girl who sat at the piano, but the light glinted softly on the brown coils of her hair.

"Hero-worshiping," muttered the solitary figure by the syringa bush.

With an exclamation of impatience Hugh moved on; but still that stirring voice pursued him. Quietly he let himself in at the side door and tip-toed softly about the dimly lit kitchen. He had no desire to attract the attention of the jolly group in the living room.

"He can trail around in the moonlight with the nightingales," ran his thoughts; "it seems to be up to me to keep the home fires burning." Out in the woodshed he filled his arms with firewood and turned once more kitchenward, but paused at the sound of voices in the room.

"Now, Molly, child, you run right back and help entertain all those people. I can manage alone," said his mother's voice.

"But I would so much rather help here," was the reply in the girlish voice the listener loved.

"Let me tell you one thing, Molly." The elder woman's tone was low and impressive. "The heroes of this war did not all get over to France. Some of the bravest of them never even saw a training camp or wore the khaki. Oh, I'm not belittling what Dick did. I know he was a good soldier, and I am proud of him. It was always easy for Dick to do spectacular things. But if he could have been accepted Hugh would have made just as good a soldier, while Dick's courage is not the kind that would have kept him cheerful and faithful with only one old woman for a witness."

"Don't you suppose I have seen, too?" Molly replied. "Don't you think I know that Hugh has worn his old overcoat all winter because the price of a new one went to the Liberty loan? And the patches on it are just as much a badge of honor as a medal. And he has not only given his money but his time and strength to every worthy movement."

The eavesdropper thrilled at the trembling earnestness of the girl's voice; and now, as they slightly changed their positions, he saw his mother take the girl by the shoulders and look keenly into her flushed face. "Child," she said, "I have thought Hugh's lameness was his only infirmity. Now I believe he is hopelessly blind."

The color flamed higher in the girl's cheeks.

"You must not be the one to open his eyes," she replied.

"He must see for himself, or I must remain a spinster schoolma'am the rest of my days."

Hugh dropped his armful of wood with a crash and then deliberately began picking it up again.

"Who is that?" demanded a startled voice, and in the doorway appeared his mother, with Molly's bright face peering over her shoulder.

"Only the home guard, mother. Don't be frightened."

And all through the evening that followed those same eyes beamed behind their spectacles with a grinning satisfaction, for Hugh, generally so quiet, was the life of the little party. His rich baritone joined with Dick's tenor, Molly's contralto and Cousin Gertrude's soprano, in all the popular war songs. He discussed the league of nations with Uncle Charles in a way that made that worthy man's broad face beam with approval. He was quietly deferential to Aunt Caroline and teased Cousin Gertrude. To Molly he said but little until Uncle Charles, consulting his watch, declared that "the women folks must hustle if they intended to get that last car to town. Then, finding Dick helping Molly into her wraps, he coolly took them from him, saying:

"You take Gertrude to the car—the home guard will look after Molly."

"Come, Molly," he said, and obediently Molly came, as she had long known she would come whenever that voice should summon her.

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Two Famous Brogues.

Broken English, Professor Beers says, is merely the imperfect English of an individual foreigner. Pidgin English, the English of Hans Breitmann's ballads and of the comedy Frenchman, are of that class. Creole English and Pennsylvania Dutch are brogues.

Come to Think of It, It Is.

"It's better," said Uncle Eben, "to go up like a skyrocket an' come down like a stick dan to be jes' plain stick all de time."

SHOW YANKS AROUND

Y. M. C. A. Conducts Sightseeing Tours Through France.

Battlefields and Castles of Leading Interest After Paris Has Been Seen.

Chantilly, France.—The progress of the sightseeing doughboy through France, after he gets through with battle fronts, is from one beautiful spot to another. Of course, the battle fronts come first, and the Y. M. C. A. trips to Chateau-Thierry, Belleau Wood, Rheims, Soissons and the Chemin-des-Dames are so popular that the boys have to draw lots every day for the coveted free tickets, as only 100 persons can be taken on each trip. But all the other trips the Y. M. C. A. has arranged for American soldiers and sailors are studies in beauty and art and history amid pleasures and palaces, and the eagerness and intelligence with which the boys go on these expeditions is plain evidence of their essential soundness of heart and mind.

The first day, as a rule, the boys get aboard the big "Y" sightseeing automobiles and see Paris. Then they go by special train to the palaces of Versailles, Fontainebleau, Malmaison and St. Germain. Next they come back to Paris and spend a day in the Louvre. And then those still keen for palaces are invited to take another trip to the jewel of them all, the famous chateau of the Condes and Montmorencys at Chantilly.

Thousands of American soldiers have visited Chantilly this year and have learned something of a place which many wealthy tourists overlooked. Indeed, though many Americans visited Chantilly in years before the war, a large percentage of them saw only the race course and never visited the chateau. Yet many experts hold that though a number of other museums outrank it in size, nowhere in the world—not excepting the Louvre—is there a more exquisite collection of objects of art.

WHISKERS AS OLD AS HE IS

And Former County Auditor in California Is Hovering Near the Eighty Mark.

Santa Ana, Cal.—Who's got the oldest whiskers?

Other towns have entered contestants in the race for oldest hirsute adornments, but Santa Ana only now jumps into the fray with a set of whiskers sixty-one years old. If anybody can beat that, let them come forward or forever hold their peace.

The proud possessor of the aged beard is J. H. Hall, former auditor of Orange county, who is now dividing his time between Santa Ana and the East. Captain Hall, a G. A. R. man, never has shaved, and the whiskers which now adorn his face are on the roots of the "fuzz" which showed up when he was in his teens.

BLIND, HANDS GONE, WRITES

Crippled Soldier Becomes Competent Typist Through Patient Training.

London.—Blind and deprived of both hands, Sergt. Alan M. Nichols of the Second Durham light infantry refused to be classed as an "unemployable," and today can write letters as proficiently as any normal stenographer. Nichols' restoration to a self-supporting basis was accomplished through patient training, a specially constructed typewriter, a pair of artificial aluminum hands and his own indomitable spirit. Recently he passed a writing test of two hours and fifteen minutes, his "copy" necessitating only two corrections.

Wants to Change Absurd Name.

New York.—Justice Callahan, in the supreme court, has reserved decision in the application of Leon Abouta Beekh to change his name to Leon Atallah. Abouta Beekh said he was born in Damascus, Syria, February 10, 1877, and has three children. The name Abouta Beekh, he said, means "father of cooking," and is so absurd that it has all his life subjected him to ridicule. He said he wanted to prevent his children from enduring the same ridicule.

Bathes in Well; Regains Sight.

London.—Almost blind since September, 1915, Joseph Culshaw, ex-soldier, bathed several times in St. Winifred's well, North Wales, and has recovered his sight, he says.

The Knightly Pledge.

"W'ats this Knights Commander of the Bath decoration they're hanging onto our generals over in England?" asked one wounded doughboy of another.

"Huh!" exclaimed his companion from Tennessee. "Reckon that must be th' prohibition division of the British service. All they gets to drink is the two well-known waters—hot and cold."

Poppies.

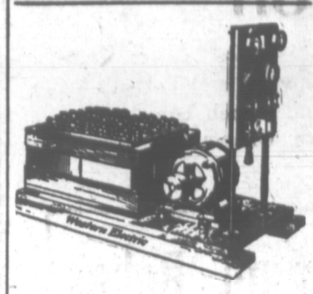
A characteristic of the corn poppy, beside its brilliant scarlet coloring, is the large size of its two outer petals, which hide the lesser pair until the bower has opened. Poppies of Flanders, be they corn poppies or other varieties, are not of the oriental species from which opium is derived. The corn poppy, when cultivated, is known as the Shirley poppy. The flower is perennial or annual, according to the variety.

Ways of Young Sparrows.

After the young sparrows leave the nest, they gather in flocks, which with other flocks return every night to the same roosting place, writes Frank W. Chapman, in "Our Winter Birds." Sometimes this is in a densely-foliaged tree, at others in ivy or other vines. The birds all seem to have much to say as they retire, and chatter together in a chorus which is fortunately hushed by the approach of darkness.

When He Weakened.

"I see Newpop at the club quite often since his baby came. I thought he was anchored to a home life." "He was, but at the first squall he began to drag his anchor."



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