

# THE MOLLIECODDLES

By FREDERICK WALWORTH BROWN



They needed a scapegoat and they pitched on us.

In the camp of the Molliecoddles, at the rear with the baggage-wagons, men sat about on the benches and avoided one another's eyes. Now and then one cursed bitterly and the others would turn his way for an instant and then come back to their vacant staring. Bewilderment seemed to be their attitude, utter blind bewilderment.

"We never had a chance," muttered one. "We never had a chance."

Another suddenly flung down a paper he had been reading in the red light, cursed like a drover for a moment, and fell silent again.

In his tent the colonel spoke bitterly to his adjutant.

"They needed a scapegoat, and they've pitched on us," he said.

A common sentiment ran from the head of the regiment to the meanest private in the ranks. It was, moreover, a perfectly legitimate, well-founded sentiment, and the fact upon which it was based was the Molliecoddles were a brand-new regiment. Most of them had been

clerks and small business men in a certain well-known city. Their hands were white and soft and their chests not astonishing either for length or breadth.

Therefore, because the spirit is less easily discerned than the flesh, their comrades-in-arms, veterans of two campaigns, dubbed them the Molliecoddles on their first appearance.

The regiment suffered the label with only a mild resentment. Individually, they knew they were not cowards, and they trusted confidently in the future to justify their presence in arms.

As a regiment they had not yet found themselves. They had no esprit de corps. They were a collection of units instead of the single and particular entity a regiment should be. Then came the catastrophe.

The army was firing the enemy with river in the rear, and it so happened that the Molliecoddles held the center-right wing. Here the general commanding made his initial mistake,

There being no natural defenses to protect this wing, it should in common prudence have been flung back to rest upon the river and thus present a line of fire in the event of a flanking movement by the enemy.

This was not done, and the Molliecoddles were left strung out in air. Not even the colonel, who had been a successful merchant, understood the perilous insecurity of their position, and the regiment calmly laid itself out to sleep that night, expecting battle on the morrow and confident of acquitting itself well, but feeling itself secure for the immediate future.

At once came a heavy column of the enemy, driving in the pickets, and itself arriving on their heels. The line of battle faced south. The attack fell from the west.

Two companies succeeded in forming, facing about on the new line, and firing a round or two before they were overwhelmed. Then the regiment, and after it the brigade, was rolled up, telescoped, crushed, with hardly a chance to fire a shot.

It was not their fault. The best and most seasoned regiment in the army could have done no better under the circumstances.

But when the major-general had collected the shattered remnant of his forces on the safe side of the river, he felt the need of a scapegoat, and the colonel had declined, and recognized the Molliecoddles as the logical and helpless candidates for the position.

He nominated them accordingly in his report, and the army, bitter over defeat and not at all understanding, instantly elected them unanimously. In two days the whole country knew beyond hope of refutation, that the Molliecoddles had brought disaster on the division by conspicuous cowardice in the face of the enemy.

The Molliecoddles, battered and still dazed, reviewed the situation with a sort of savage bewilderment. Individually, they knew they were not cowards. Collectively they were inarticulate, uncertain, perplexed.

Consequently they suffered many things, though by no means with meanness. They were black eyes and broken heads in neighboring regiments, and a lively lust for blood and slaughter in the minds of the Molliecoddles.

In the meantime they were detailed to the rear to guard the baggage-train, and the cup of their humiliation swelled in bitter murmuring against their lot. But Fate had her own purposes, and while they were at the rear to kick out viciously at the touch of a feather, she sent them a golden opportunity.

Having hurled his opponent back

across the river, the enemy proceeded to take the offensive. By a rapid march in the night a long column crossed the river some miles above, aiming by a wide detour to fall suddenly and unexpectedly upon the rear of the demoralized force.

So silently and swiftly was this maneuver accomplished that no word of it reached the rival general till his communications had been cut and a frightened crowd of tenamers and camp-followers came streaming up the road.

Close on their heels appeared the van of the eager enemy. In their way stood only the despised and rejected Molliecoddles.

At the first sign of trouble the colonel of the regiment deployed his men across the road and prepared to hold that line "till the cows came home."

A stone fence afforded excellent protection and the Molliecoddles spread themselves along this breast-work with the hot blood humming in their veins. Cowards, eh?

They would show what sort of cowards they were. They ceased that moment to be a collection of units, and were in a way to become a regiment.

They were madmen, most of them, ready to go red-eyed and homicidal at a pin-prick. They had been goaded and buffeted with no chance to reply. They had read ironical newspaper comments by men who had never smelled powder till their nerves were strung like hair-triggers.

Almost to a man, they yearned for slaughter with the primitive thirst of savagery. They wanted to get square. They wanted to clear themselves. They wanted to show up their critics for the blatant liars they were.

Across a field in front of them came a line of hurrying men, followed by another and another. They were overlapped on either flank. What matter? An aide galloped up to the colonel.

"Hold them for twenty minutes!" was his cry, almost despairing. "Hold them 'till you lose every man."

"I'll hold 'em," said the colonel grimly.

He new the temper of his men. It was identical with his own.

Directly a volley whirled up and unlimb'd in the road. That was help. The staff officer had gone to hurry up the support. The colonel stalked along his line.

Across the open ground in front of the enemy moved rapidly. They came almost recklessly, expecting little opposition. The only task they saw before them was to drive the foe into the river.

They were not to be so well with a yell.

a shout of triumph broke out. These should be the first fruits of their victory. The colonel, crouching now behind the wall, surveyed them coming, only his head projecting above the coping.

The impatient privates fingered their weapons and cursed beneath their breath. Would they never get the word to fire? Were they to be run over again and trampled on without a chance?

A hundred yards away a compact line of men was toiling up the slope. In the road a column swung forward full in the face of the silent guns. Then when men's nerves were fairly snapping with the tension, the colonel gave the word.

The front of the stone wall burst into flame, and above the rattle of musketry came the hurrying roar of the guns in the road, as the gunners leaped from concealment. Out on the grassy slope the first line of hurrying, eager men melted into shapeless masses on the ground.

In the road the grape and canister tore great holes in the compact column. The surprisers were surprised. The front ranks recoiled, shattered out of all semblance to formation.

But the attack was delayed for only a moment. Behind that foremost rank was another which came steadily on, leaving a man now and then sprawling out or writhing in the grass, but driving straight forward notwithstanding. Down the line behind the stone wall went the command, "Close firing."

It almost caused a mutiny, but the officers persuaded the madmen to obey. The enemy came on with a yell then. Evidently it was but an insignificant force in their front. They were minded to run over them.

Yelling like fiends, they rushed across the open. It was Bunker Hill repeated. Again the colonel let them come within a hundred yards before he gave the command to fire, and again when the order came and the sheet of flame burst forth the advancing line withered as before the breath of a blazing blast-furnace.

Flesh and blood could not face it. They were men who would go unflinchingly where there was one chance of coming through.

Here there was none. It was death, bald and certain. Those who could recoiled down the slope. Many stayed silent in the grass.

Meanwhile the carnage in the road was fearful. The steady plying of the guns loaded with grape and canister had piled the advancing column in a mass of dead and dying till the order came to halt and deploy across the adjoining field.

This added to the labors of the devoted Molliecoddles. The next ad-

vance was in skirmish formation and far more difficult to stop.

Men began to fall behind the breast-work. Bullets sang over their heads and spat viciously into the wall in front of them.

But fifteen of the needed twenty minutes had elapsed. If they could hang on for five more!

They were firing at will now. The volleys had ceased, but there was a steady, continuous rattle of musketry. The colonel walked back and forth behind his line, fiercely chewing his mustache, pausing to glance at the cloud of skirmishers coming steadily on, or noting with a groan that his left was overlapped for a quarter of a mile and must speedily be turned.

It could not be helped. He was holding what he could, but his line was woefully thin and every moment becoming thinner. The singing bullets took a steady toll.

Down the slope before the stone wall a mass of men pressed forward yelling. The thin line behind the wall concentrated all its fire upon them, but it no longer availed. On they came, dogged, determined.

Men dropped steadily, but still they came on. The twenty minutes were up. Where were the reinforcements?

The colonel glanced about. Woods behind him shut out all view of the regiments and brigades hurrying breakneck to the rear that had become the front.

All he knew was that he was alone, protecting the army from overwhelming defeat. Cowards, were they?

Even in that red, fiery moment he had time for an instant of bitter pride and exultation as he viewed his dead behind the stone wall.

The rushing mass in front was close up now. He knew he could not stop them. He lacked the men. He had held them back for more than the time demanded of him.

Should he order his men to fall back? The regiment had done its work. More could not reasonably be asked of them.

They were outflanked on either hand, and about to be overwhelmed. Should he order them back?

There came to him another thought. "They called us cowards," and with that he hurried along the line with the command, "Fix bayonets."

He would stay there and meet them, if it cost him every man. "They called us cowards, boys," he shouted. "This is our chance."

On came that yelling wave in front. Loading and firing as fast as they could, the remnant of the regiment could not stop it. Put not a man behind the stone wall flung before it.

The inevitable wave was there in every regiment had long since poured its full force upon those who stayed would stay, it was said.

They were lamentably few, but those few were bad men to face. At their colonel's call they rose, gripping their weapons, whole men, men with bleeding heads, men with limp arms, men who rose only to fall again and again struggling to rise.

With a yell the wave broke over the stone wall, and in an instant the Molliecoddles were overwhelmed. Fighting like demons, madmen, or heroes, they went down before superior numbers, but not before they had taken full toll for their defeat.

Through his glasses the general in command saw their heroic stand. The regiments breaking from the woods behind saw it and burst into cheers. A sudden wave of firing broke out on either flank, and then the conquering enemy reeled before the charge of the advancing regiments.

A moment of fighting had to hand, bayonet to bayonet, and then the fresh troops dropped behind the stone wall and poured a galling fire into the retreating foe. The day was won, the army was saved, and it was the Molliecoddles who had done it.

In the camp of the Molliecoddles that evening men sat weary and dejected about the fires. Their attitude seemed much the same as on that other evening. There were gaps in every group, and men's voices were low and awestricken.

They discussed their casualties with an appearance of wonderment. "Fucker's gone, eh?" "Billy Aken got it in the head." "They've took off Morton's leg," and so forth.

"How's the Old Man tonight?" asked one. "Heard anything?"

"They say he's doin' well. If he pulls through, I reckon they'll make him a brigadier."

"Too bad they got him. He hadn't ought to have got up."

"Well, anyway, we hold 'em."

"That was the fluke always. No matter what had come to pass, no matter who had died, or who was wounded, or who was missing; 'Well, we held 'em.'"

A battery came past, the trace-chains rattling, the wheels clanking in the ruts.

"What regiment is that?" called an officer.

"The Molliecoddles," came the defiant answer.

"Oh!" said the officer, and the battery moved on.

But every gunner's eyes turned suddenly toward the camp-fires, and the Molliecoddles returned the gaze with erect heads. It was as though they asked: "If it wasn't for us, where would you be?"

And from the faces of the gunners one understood that they had no adequate answer.

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## Lumbering Industry and Effect of Underwood Tariff

That British Columbia Lumber. Portland, Oct. 16.—To the editor of the Journal.—I have seen Judge Burke's statement in the Journal stating that records of the custom house of Portland show for the past 10 years that no lumber or shingles have been shipped into Oregon from British Columbia, and I have also read many statements in republican papers, and speeches by republican congressmen and stump speakers, that the placing of shingles on the free list has permitted British Columbia shingles to come into the United States free and has in some instances closed down shingle mills and ruined our shingle industries because of the cheaper timber and labor obtainable on the British Columbia side.

The Timberman, published at Portland and an authority on west coast lumber products, at pages 55 and 56 in its September issue, gives the prices of cedar shingles at Vancouver, B. C., ranging from \$2.95 to \$2.70 per thousand, to the wholesale trade according to grade, and at Seattle from \$1.50 to \$1.80, and at Portland from \$1.55 to \$1.85 per 1000 according to grade. The prices given

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for cedar logs at Vancouver are \$10.50 per 1000 feet for shingle cedar and \$12.25 to \$12.50 per 1000 feet for logs suitable for cedar lumber, while at \$9 to \$10 per thousand feet and at Grays Harbor, Washington, \$11 was the highest No. 1 price was given at Seattle for cedar logs.

About the time the law went into effect admitting free shingles, the West Coast Lumberman, published at Seattle contained an article from its Everett, Wash., correspondent that the admission of free shingles would be the best thing that could happen to shingle manufacturers in Washington, because it would compel them to make as good shingles as British Columbia. The item stated that the British Columbia manufacturers used the best part of the log in producing shingles, while in Washington as a general rule they used the best part for cedar siding and other high priced lumber and used the portions of the log which do not make well into high priced lumber, thereby realizing more money.

There are not many shingles made in Oregon, on account of the scarcity of cedar.

I have no information as to the difference of the cost of labor here or in British Columbia, but doubt if it is any less there. I have read statements by shingle manufacturers from British Columbia that we can make about a thousand shingles more per day on this side with the same machines as they use, because of the greater efficiency of our men.

I am at a loss to understand how the admission of British Columbia shingles free of duty can hurt the sale of our shingles, when, according to the quotations given, the cheapest or lowest priced shingles in British Columbia are 20 cents higher than the best or highest priced ones in Portland, and 25 cents higher than Seattle.

As to British Columbia lumber entering this country, will say that anybody who is interested can ascertain that when there was a demand for lumber in the western provinces of Canada, we shipped lumber by trainloads to them. I venture to say that there is as much misrepresentation regarding the effect of the tariff on all products of the Northwest as I have shown exists in the shingle industries.

THOMAS KISSANE, Timber Broker.

## More About Lumber.

On the first page of the Eugene Morning Register the following Associated Press dispatch was printed this morning:

Portland, Or., Oct. 17.—Ten million feet of lumber will be exported to foreign ports from Portland and other lower Columbia points during the next week or two, according to announcements of lumber mills here today. This is the most extensive offshore lumber trade recorded here in many months. The shipments include 3,500,000 feet to the United Kingdom, 2,500,000 to Balboa and 4,000,000 feet of Hawaii and Australia.

On the editorial page, the editor accuses the Guard and other newspapers which have challenged republican campaign statements regarding the lumber market before and since the passage of the Underwood bill with misrepresentation. Read the Portland dispatch carefully. Ten million feet of lumber within two weeks. This is not campaign material. It is a news item. Oregon is shipping lumber to the United Kingdom and Australia. Yet the editor of the Register insists Canadian lumber is being shipped into the United States and "competition is being severely felt in loss of orders." The truth is revealed by the news as printed in the Register puts a damper on the editor's campaign assertions. We are exporting to

## land and the flocking here of thousands of unemployed men—unemployed because the mills shut down. This is a fact which has been repeatedly stated during the present campaign.

Surely, that "fact" and many more of its kind, have been put before the public repeatedly, but I would like to know if it was really the absence of the tariff that caused Oregon lumber combine, at a meeting some months ago, to advance the price of all grades of lumber and explain the increase was caused by a demand which was in excess of the supply.

I would also inquire if the fact that I have to pay several dollars a thousand more for all except the cheapest grades of lumber, than I did a few years ago, is due to the absence of the tariff.

The millmen are telling us that they cannot get cars to carry their product to fill their orders, and that mill after mill has shut down for want of storage room for the lumber they are unable to ship and for which orders are pouring in. Of course, the Wilson administration is to blame for this, too.

On the first column of page 2 of the same paper we are told of the formation of a combine of "48 out of 59 of the leading cargo mills of the Pacific coast" to develop foreign trade. Is it because they maintain the tariff protection against Canadian competition that they make this venture? If the absence of a tariff should reduce lumber prices to the Oregon farmers and merchants to the figure that prevailed a few years ago, I think we could all stand it.

## WILLIAM H. WHEELER.

(The above letters are reprinted from the Portland Daily Journal.)

More About Lumber. (Eugene Daily Guard.)

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## British possessions.

Several days ago a Lane county farmer who is a republican and who is supporting President Wilson, came into the Guard office. Before the passage of the Underwood tariff bill he said he built a house and that he paid \$7 per thousand for the lumber. Recently he stated he had built another house and paid \$15 for the lumber.

The editor of the Guard yesterday following this statement made an investigation of the lumber market in Eugene. The dealer stated that the farmer did not buy this lumber from the same class of dealer at such a great variance in prices. That the first purchase must have been made from a small country mill and the last from a jobber, he stated.

The farmer's figures, so far as they affect conditions before and after the passage of the Underwood tariff, however, were sustained by the dealer. Taking figures from his books for 1912 and 1916, increase in the price of lumber are shown as follows: common lumber, 25 to 35 per cent higher; dressed lumber, 45 per cent higher; shingles, 85 per cent higher.

Following a statement sent out from the republican campaign headquarters and published in many Oregon standpat republican papers to the effect that "under the Underwood law Canada is selling in Oregon and Washington annually about \$25,000,000 worth of lumber and shingles," Thomas C. Burke, collector of customs for Portland, issued a statement to the effect that "no lumber of any kind, or shingles, has been imported into Oregon from Canada at any time during the past 10 years."

As an official of the United States government, not as a democratic campaigner, he denied a falsehood spread about this state for the purpose of deceiving Oregon people.

"It has been a very conspicuous word throughout the republican campaign. It has been repeatedly asserted that 'if the war should end we would need a higher protective tariff on lumber.' The news item as taken from the Register and published in connection with this editorial sheds some light on conditions which will prevail on the Pacific coast after the war comes to an end. While the war is in progress we are exporting 10,000,000 feet of lumber to various parts of the world. After the war, the Pacific coast will enjoy the most prosperous era in its history. Europe is going to rebuild its cities. The lumber supply of the world is very limited. The Pacific coast is going to be in the export business. Its mills will run with industry as never before. No high tariff on lumber is going to bring about this condition. It is going to come, because we have the lumber and the facilities to supply it. Under the circumstances a high tariff on lumber would bring about but one condition. It would permit the mills to sell to the American

## people at one price to the people of Europe at another.

WEDDED AT WOODBURN.

One of the most beautiful and elaborate weddings ever in this city took place at St. Luke's Catholic Church last Monday morning at 9 o'clock, when Miss Della Beck, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. X. Beck of this city, was united in marriage to Mr. George Harry Lenox, Rev. C. A. Maher officiating. The ushers were Mr. Oscar Beck, Mr. J. C. Scollard. The church had been tastefully decorated in autumn leaves and ferns by the Misses Mary and Madge Scollard.

Following a vocal selection, "Oh, Promise Me," by Mrs. Don C. Cowles, and to the strains of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March," played by Sister Clementine, the wedding party entered the church and proceeded up the main aisle to the altar. The lovely bride, upon her father's arm, was preceded by six members of the B-Natural Octet, Misses Mary and Madge Scollard, Mrs. T. C. Poorman, Mrs. Don Cowles, Mrs. Homer Alleman and Mrs. H. M. Austin, who acted as bridesmaids, and the maid of honor, her sister, Miss Nora Beck. The groom with the best man, Mr. A. J. Beck, met the party at the altar and the six bridesmaids returned to the choir.

At the Beck home there were 18 covers at the fine wedding breakfast, served by Mrs. J. B. Kennedy and Mrs. Robt. H. Scott. Among those who sat down to the elaborate spread were the bride and groom, maid of honor, bridesmaids, groomsmen, Mr. and Mrs. Beck and daughter Margaret, ushers, the Misses Bitney and Miss Helen Scollard.

The bride was the recipient of many beautiful and costly presents. She was one of Woodburn's most popular young ladies, a valued member of the B. Natural Octet, and will be missed much in the social and church circles. She has hosts of friends and admirers in Woodburn who wish her much happiness in her new home and congratulate Mr. Lenox upon securing such a matrimonial prize. The fortunate man is a pharmacist and had been employed in this city for the past two months. A good position awaits him upon his arrival at Sioux City. He is a young man of splendid business qualifications, upright, and made many friends here.

In the afternoon the happy couple escorted by the Octet and other friends and the bride's parents, motored to Woodburn, where they boarded an Oregon Electric train for Portland, to which city they were accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Beck. They left Portland on an evening train for their home at Sioux City, Iowa, after a farewell dinner given them in that city by Mr. and Mrs. Beck.—Woodburn Lad.

DEO FOR SORE, SWOLLEN, TIRED FEET

Dennis Eucalyptus Ointment

AT ALL DRUG STORES

TUBES 25c JARS 50c

## MARRIAGES AT STAYTON

Thursday, at Albany, occurred the marriage of John H. Blakely, of this city, to Miss Lena Swink, of Berlin, Ore. The ceremony was held at the Hotel Albany, at 10:45, performed by

## WHO AM I?

I am more powerful than the combined armies of the world.  
I have destroyed more than all the wars of the world.  
I am more deadly than bullets, and I have wrecked more homes than the mightiest of siege guns.  
I steal in the United States alone over \$300,000,000 each year.  
I spare no one, and find my victims among the rich and poor alike; the old and the young; the strong and the weak. Widows and orphans know me.  
I loom up to such proportions that I cast my shadow over every field of labor from the turning of the grindstone to the moving of every train.  
I massacre thousands upon thousands of wage earners in a year.  
I lurk in unseen places, and do most of my work silently; you are warned against me, but you heed not.  
I am relentless, I am everywhere; in the home, on the street, in the factory, at the railroad crossings and on the sea.  
I bring sickness, degradation and death, and yet few seek to avoid me.  
I destroy, crush or maim; I give nothing but take all.  
I am your worst enemy.  
I am CARELESSNESS—beware of This Great Power.

## PROPOSALS FOR WOOD FOR STATE INSTITUTIONS

On the 24th day of October, 1916, at 2:00 o'clock p. m., the Oregon State Board of Control will receive sealed bids for furnishing wood for the various state institutions, as follows:

Oregon State Hospital, main building, 250 cords first growth fir; Cottage Farm, 1,200 cords second growth fir.

Oregon State Penitentiary, 400 cords large second growth fir, 50 cords grub oak, none smaller than four inches in diameter.

State Institution for Feeble Minded, 1,000 cords second growth fir, 800 cords round slab.

Oregon State Training School, 700 cords second growth fir, 100 cords ash.

Oregon State Tuberculosis Hospital, 700 cords second growth fir.

Oregon State School for the Blind, 200 cords first growth fir, 25 cords of which should be free from knots.

Oregon State School for the Deaf, 50 cords first growth fir, 25 cords round slab.

Oregon State Industrial School for Girls, 150 cords second growth fir.

Specifications will be furnished upon application to the secretary.

All bids to be accompanied by certified check in the sum of 10 per cent of the whole amount of bid, payable to the Oregon State Board of Control, which sum so deposited by the successful bidder shall be held by the board as a guarantee that the bidder will enter into a contract to furnish the amount awarded. All bids are to be enclosed in a sealed envelope and marked "Bids for Wood," and to be addressed to the undersigned.

The board reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to accept any part of a bid.

R. B. GOODIN, Secretary, Oregon State Board of Control, Oct. 10-14-17-21.

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