



# PERSHING

## The Romance of a Barefoot Boy who Rose to Be the Leader of America's Army in France in the Great World War

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### CHAPTER I.

#### Little Johnny Sees the Soldiers.

LITTLE Johnny Pershing peered around the end of the work train. "Dad," he called, his shrill child's voice sounding above the "thud, thud, thud" of the picks wielded by the construction gang. "oh, dad, kin I stay from school today? Company II is goin' to have a drill, and I want to see them."

John Pershing, construction foreman, wiped the perspiration from his brow and climbed down from the embankment where the new side track was being laid. He approached the boy, laid his hand on his shoulder and asked, "What does mother say?"

"She told me to run over and ask you."

"Well, if mother don't say no, go ahead."

With a whoop of delight and evidently anticipating his mother's consent, little Johnny ran for home as fast as his little bare brown feet would carry him. His mother stood in the doorway of the neat little white cottage. She smiled, knowing that father had followed the usual plan of "leaving it to mother."

"Father says I kin stay if you don't care, mother. Please let me see the soldiers drill!"

"Well, I guess one afternoon from school won't make much difference, and you do love to watch the soldiers, don't you, Johnny?"

"I sure do, mother."

"Well, get your face and hands washed and come in to lunch."

After lunch Johnny hid to the village square of the little town of Laclede, Mo., and took up his post of vantage on the band stand, where he could see all operations.

The drill over, Captain Johnson, attracted by the keen interest with which the barefooted little urchin had followed every movement, said, "Well, sonny, what do you think of my soldiers?"

"They're pretty good drillers, captain, but they don't step out smart enough."

"By Jove! Right you are, boy! That's just what I was a-tellin' them. Are you going to be a soldier when you grow up?"

"That's what I want to be, but dad says he has other plans."

"Maybe he'll change his mind when you get big, sonny. Plans don't allus work out as expected."

But even little Johnny Pershing's plans, way back there in Missouri in the sixties, were not formed with posi-



LITTLE JOHNNY SEES THE SOLDIERS DRILL.

tiveness, as is the case with the plans of so many youngsters. True, he wanted to be a soldier. What live had in the years just after the civil war did not have his thoughts fired by the stories of fighting in the great struggle? In his dreams he saw himself leading desperate charges against the enemy? But he also had dreams of being a lawyer and standing, like Daniel Webster or Henry Clay, with one hand thrust into his coat, moving judges and juries with his eloquence. He and his mother and father just knew, of course, that Johnny would make a fine lawyer, because he always stood well in his studies in the town school.

"Mother," said the elder Pershing one day, "I feel I'm getting a bit too old to work on the road much longer. Old Brainard passed me on the street today and stopped to chat with me. He wants me to buy out his general store and thinks I could make it pay. What do you say?"

After much planning between Mr. Pershing and his wife and weighing of possibilities the step was decided upon, and Johnny Pershing's father became a merchant. Johnny's part in the matter was that of active partner—very active, indeed, for to him fell the work of assisting in the store after school and running on such errands as were not beyond his strength.

"Johnny's a good boy and helpful to

Military academy at West Point which had turned out so many famous soldiers. It was a narrow squeak for John, since he won the appointment by only one point. A difference almost too small to be measured would have sent another man to "the Point," and John would in all likelihood have become a city lawyer instead of a general.

### CHAPTER III.

#### An Officer in the Army.

WHETHER a man remains in the army long enough to win his general's stars or whether he leaves the service before he even finishes the course at the Military academy, he never forgets the day that sees him enrolled at "the Point." It is one of the "days of days" in his life. It is all so new and strange and there are so many rules to be observed and customs to be learned and things to be seen that it is like beginning a new life. Many a country lad enters the academy raw, green and untrained, and if he has the pluck and stamina, mental and physical, to finish the course he emerges a finished product—"an officer and a gentleman"—fit to command men.

So it was with John Pershing. But he did more than finish the course; he went through it with honor. He was graduated as senior cadet captain, which means that in military affairs he ranked above all his classmates. Others topped him in some of the studies which make up the curriculum at the United States Military academy, but it was his voice that rang out the commands for his classmates on



HE BECOMES ONE OF WEST POINT'S MOST DARING HORSEMEN.

the widespread and beautiful parade ground on the proud day when the cadets were reviewed by the secretary of war. This was in June, 1886, and John became Lieutenant Pershing, United States army. He was then twenty-six years old.

He had been home to visit the "folks" during his furlough after he had been at the academy two years. His friends turned out to greet him, of course, and the rest of the town flocked to see him arrive. It isn't every day that a man from West Point arrives at a little place in Missouri, and every one wanted to see as soon as possible what two years of Uncle Sam's training had done for Johnny Pershing. They were not disappointed. He had left Laclede a tall, wiry, young fellow, without any special distinction; he returned a well set up, strong chap, showing in his bearing the results of the rigid training of the gymnasium and fields. He had already the assured bearing of a military man. He had become a wonderful equestrian, riding anything that the academy held in the line of horseflesh. He was always first to get away when the bugles rang out the notes of the "Charge!"

Of course John's first day home was given to his folks. No one else could take the first happy hours of the young man on furlough. But the second day found him wandering in the fields and woods with his boyhood chum, Charley Spurgeon.

There was so much to tell about the life at the academy! "Tell me," said Charley, "what do you think about life in the army?"

"I don't think I'll stick to it," said John, "although I'll try to finish the course at the academy. I think I'll have to go back to my original idea of studying law. This country is at peace now, and it's going to stay at peace. There won't be a gun fired in the next hundred years. The army is no place for me in peace time. I'd start in as a second lieutenant and I'd get to be a first lieutenant only when the first lieutenant died, and so on through all the grades. I'm older now than most of the men at the academy, and perhaps I'd be no higher than a colonel when the time came for me to retire. I believe the world is going to be too peaceful in the future to make the army look very promising to me as a career."

But Lieutenant Pershing found plenty of work to do as a soldier and that, too, soon after his graduation. The Apaches and other wild western tribes were often on the rampage, and the soldier ordered to the western plains and mountains and mesas had his work cut out for him. Pershing in the cavalry, the branch of the service most often used against the redskins, got his share of the hard work. It did not always mean fighting, however. Often there were palavers with the chiefs and matters could be settled without bloodshed.

Even in those early days Pershing showed the quick thought that distinguished him in fields far removed from the western states. Army men tell with delight how one day Pershing was sent by his commanding officer to attend a council of Navaho braves. It was a holiday, and the redskins were

amusing themselves with games and athletic contests.

One of the braves spied the tall, athletic figure of Lieutenant Pershing.

He walked up to the soldier.

"Huh!" he said, following it with a long string of Indian gutturals.

"He says he wants to wrestle with the big white man," said the interpreter.

"Tell him," said Pershing, "nothing doing. He's too dirty."

"All right," was the Indian's retort.

"If I'm too dirty to wrestle with I'll run him a foot race. All he'll have to do is keep ahead of me."

"Race him, Jack," said Lieutenant Grayson. "It's up to you to uphold the honor of the white race."

"Can't be done. You know my ankle is still weak from that sprain."

"They won't believe it. You can beat the big buck anyway."

So the race was run and was nearly lost by Pershing. About ten feet from the finish line his ankle gave way and he rolled over in a heap. But his presence of mind remained upright, and with a mighty effort he gathered himself up into a ball, turned a somersault and landed across the line a winner.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### Fighting and Studying.

SO the years go for Pershing in the west. There is some fighting, much marching and drilling, with official commendation for duty well performed. But promotion lags. The call of Blackstone and Kent still tries to lure him from the profession of arms, but it is not until 1893, when he has just completed a year's term as military instructor at the University of Nebraska, that he wins his degree of bachelor of laws. He has put in all his spare time in the study of the law. He will make a good lawyer, for his keen mind is used to reasoning out closely the problems that confront him. But he has spent eleven years in the army, including the four years as the Military academy, and it is hard to break away from long associations. He will remain in the service, for awhile at least, he thinks. His men think well of him, especially the colored troopers of the Tenth cavalry, in command of whom he has acquired the sobriquet of "Black Jack." He has also served as an instructor at the military academy.

In the meantime his belief that the United States will never become involved in another war is in a fair way to be disproved. For a century or more the black cloud of revolt has hung over Cuba and the Philippines, and the severity of the Spanish government in the "Pearl of the Antilles" has evoked protests from the United States. Then come the destruction of the Maine, the fevered debates in congress, the declaration of war, and every regular army officer is burning to get into the scrap in Cuba. Of course "Black Jack" Pershing was one.

It is on the day of El Caney, one of the hottest fights of the short war, that the colonel of the Tenth cavalry turns to his orderly, "Who commands those troopers there on the right?" he asks.

"That's Pershing, sir."

"By Jove, I thought so! He's the man! See him go up that hill! I've been through the civil war and I've seen men under fire many a time, but on my word, he's the bravest and coolest man under fire I ever saw in my life! Washington shall hear of this, sir!"

And Washington did hear of it, to such good effect that Lieutenant Pershing, now major of volunteers, went to the Philippines when that bunch of unruly islands needed cleaning up. In the meantime he had shown his fine administrative abilities as organizer and first chief of the bureau on insular affairs. It was hard work, almost like setting up a new department of the



HE FIGHTS AND DEFEATS THE SAVAGE MOROS.

government, and many a time Pershing could be seen nights in Washington stretching his walks for miles and miles toward the outskirts of the city while he wrestled with the problems that confronted him. But he "made good," as he had done in everything he undertook since his boyhood days.

"I have heard of these new white men who have come to our lands to take the place of the Spaniards," said Datto Bangbang of the Moros to his most intimate friend. "They are better fighters than the Spaniards, it is said. But they cannot prevail against us. Are not our kris and barongs sharp enough to cut them up? Have we not the great prophet with us, who promises us everlasting bliss hereafter if we die killing the dogs of unbelievers? Let them come!"

"I have heard of these Moros," said "Black Jack" Pershing. "They're tough customers. But they've got to obey the laws and stop their fighting

now that our Uncle Sam is their new 'overlord.' I think we can clean them up, eh, Bill?" And Lieutenant Brewster, his friend, nodded and said, "You bet!"

The days were very full now for Pershing and Brewster and their men and all the other Americans who were trying to instill lawabiding ways into the fierce Moros. It was a hard task. Some said that it was impossible. They had to fight not only against the savage Moros, but against a treacherous climate, ill suited to the white man, even though he is able to take all possible care of himself. But when the white man has to do his fighting, now in swamp and jungle, now on the sides of steep mountains, now in the hot tropical sunshine and now in the cool of the evening and the deep tropical midnight against a brave, wily, fanatical enemy it is not to be wondered at that the fight dragged on for years. Even men like Pershing, backed by soldiers brave as any the world ever produced, could not be expected to complete the job in a short time.

The smoking room of the Army and Navy club in Washington was well filled when the news came that "Pershing had done it again." "What do you think of 'Black Jack' Pershing?" asked one member of another. "Jefferson's been up at the secretary's today, and the old man told him that Pershing's not only cleaned up the Moros, but has got the blooming heathen to elect him one of their chiefs. What d'ye call those chiefs? Say, Brown, you've been up against the Moros. What do they call those chiefs of theirs? Oh, yes; dattos. Much obliged. We've got a datto among us now, boys. Pershing's a datto. Datto Pershing sounds well, doesn't it?"

And at that minute in the far away Philippines Captain Pershing—he had his two bars on his shoulders now—was walking through a Moro village with brown skinned Moro maidens strewing flowers in his pathway. Was he thinking of the flowers and the homage that was being paid to him? Not a bit of it. He was rehearsing in his mind the passage from the Koran which he was going to spring on Datto Bangbang to heighten still further that dusky chieftain's respect for him!

Why Pershing! He has had the wit to see that these people can be pacified as well by getting inside their minds as by shooting civilization into them. He has done his share of shooting, with extraordinary courage that is to bear extraordinary fruit in Washington. Twice he went after the Moros—in 1901-3 and in 1911-13.

### CHAPTER V.

#### Making a Record Jump—Romance and Tragedy.

THE news of Pershing's promotion to brigadier general thrilled Washington and sent a wave of astonishment through the nation. From captain to brigadier general! Over the heads of 862 senior officers jumps the man who was once undecided whether he should become a lawyer or a soldier. Unprecedented jump and one not to be repeated, in all likelihood, in the history of the American army. But the former soldier in the White House has followed with admiration and perhaps just a bit of envy the wonderful work of the soldier in the Philippines.

"I've just got to promote that man. Taft says the law won't let me make him a major or a colonel. What shall I do with him? By Godfrey, I've got it, I've got it! Hello, hello, give me Secretary Taft at once. Mr. Taft, does the law permit the president of the United States to make a general officer of any officer in the United States army? It is your opinion that it does. Good! Have your man make out a commission for Brigadier General John J. Pershing as soon as you can, send it over to me, and I'll sign it at once. Goodby."

"Miss Warren," said Major Lampson at a reception at the home of Senator Warren of Wyoming, "will you permit me to present my friend Captain Pershing?"

"I am delighted to meet Captain Pershing," said Miss Frances Warren. "I have heard of his work in Cuba and the Philippines and have desired to congratulate him."

This was the beginning of the romance that was destined to end in deepest tragedy. Miss Warren was young, beautiful and a belle in Washington society. Her father, senator from Wyoming, was one of the leaders in the national upper house. She had heard the work of Captain Pershing lauded by the senators when President Roosevelt made the captain's record part of an annual message to congress. So, like Desdemona, she "loved him for the dangers he had passed."

They were married on Jan. 26, 1905. Three daughters and a son were born to them, and then came the end in August, 1915. In a fire at the Presidio, San Francisco, Mrs. Pershing and the three little girls were suffocated. The son, Warren, was rescued. General Pershing was then stationed at El Paso. After a few days of bitter grief he returned to his work in the army, more silent than before, with his face deeply marked with lines of sorrow. Only the boy and his army career remained for him.

Again a crisis faces the United States in relation to Mexican affairs. There have been many serious situations in the past three years, but none quite as bad as this. Villa has broken loose, has raided Columbus, N. M., and has spilled American blood shed in defense of the little border town. He has swept through Chihuahua, struck his blow and got away in the night. All America is aflame with the cry for vengeance. "Get him alive or dead!" rings the cry from one ocean to another. Washington turns to Funston, in command of the southern department

"Send your best brigadier. Let him take whatever force you think needed. Get him over the border as soon as you can. We've got to get Villa!"

"Orderly," says Major General Funston, "tell General Pershing I desire to see him at once!"

In a few minutes the little red headed man from Kansas and the tall, gray haired, sun browned soldier from the neighboring state of Missouri are in deep conference. The scout has orders to admit no one. There is work to be done across the border, and Funston, obeying directions from Washington, has hit at once upon the man to do it. It is Brigadier General Pershing, the veteran of fighting in Cuba, in the Philippines, the man who served as military attaché with the Japanese army in Manchuria during the gigantic struggle with Russia, the able soldier, diplomat, lawyer, student of languages and international affairs.

"The president wants you to 'get' Villa," says Funston.

"When shall I start after him?" says Pershing.

Who can say that Pershing would not have got Villa if Washington, not desiring to make war on all Mexico,



HE QUESTIONS A SPY IN MEXICO.

had not called off the expedition? Surely not any army man who knows Pershing. When he started after Villa we just knew that Villa's future was settled. But the great war in Europe was threatening to involve the United States, Carranza was bitterly hostile, and Villa displayed the qualities of a will-o'-the-wisp. No one was more disappointed than Pershing when the orders to return were issued and he, the soldier in Mexico, had to hear them and obey.

The great war was devastating the world, and America, after more than two years of waiting, was called upon to "make the world safe for democracy." Foreign countries sent their envoys here to discuss with the president and the government the manner in which America could make its weight tell in the shortest time.

"Send us some of your men, that our soldiers may see them at their side and be heartened in the fight against German autocracy," said Balfour and Joffre to President Wilson and Secretary of War Baker.

"We shall send them," said President Wilson. "Mr. Baker, whom shall we send to command our troops in France?"

"Send Pershing," said Mr. Baker. "All America knows what Pershing can do. We know him to be not only a brave, resourceful fighter, but a man of high administrative ability. We must send our French and British allies a man who will be able not only to lead our men in the field and show that he is conversant with the latest advances in military science, but also a man who can manage our soldiers before they get into the battle line. He must represent us to the French and the British worthily, as we should want to be represented."

"You are right, Mr. Secretary," said President Wilson. "And from what I have heard of Pershing and seen of him he is the man to send."

With absolute secrecy, without the blare of a single bugle note or the roll of a single drum, Pershing sailed for Europe. Not until he landed in England did the American public know that the commander of the southern department, summoned to Washington ostensibly for a consultation, had left for the European battle front.

From the farthest Scottish headlands to the Mediterranean coast Britain and France were aflame with interest, excitement and curiosity when the announcement of Pershing's landing was made. "Who is this man Pershing the Americans have sent us?" asked one Londoner of another. "Blessed if I know!" was the reply.

The newspapers ransacked their reference departments and scanned their files for material for writeups of Pershing. They told as much as they could about his career, but it was all too little to satisfy the public's curiosity. Then the crowds flocked to learn about Pershing at first hand. Seldom in Europe's long history has any man received so wonderful a reception. Here was American aid in the great war, which had lasted almost three years, presented in tangible form in the person of the tall, straight, soldierly figure of a fighting general. The crowds went literally wild over Pershing.

And all of this was expressed in heaped-up measure when the American reached Paris. "The deliverer has come! Vive Pershing! Vive Joffre!" rang the cries when the two famous generals appeared side by side in the French capital. "This man has come to France to repay the debt owed to Lafayette, to Rochembeau, to the other Frenchmen who risked their lives that America might be free. They will help to deliver France from the German invader," said the crowds, and they cheered Pershing until the banners rang.