

BRIDE of BATTLE

A Romance of the American Army Fighting on the Battlefields of France

By VICTOR ROUSSEAU

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FOREWORD

Intrigue, mystery, chivalry, love, feats of bravery on the field of honor—all these elements are interwoven in this story, which has been well described as the first up-to-the-minute novel of America in the great war for humanity and world freedom. It is a gripping story of a man who "came back" and fought on the battlefields of France for the honor of the army that had discarded him. Victor Rousseau has written many excellent stories but none that excels "Bride of Battle."

CHAPTER I

Lieutenant Mark Wallace of the Seventieth New York regiment came to an abrupt standstill. He was alone in the jungle, upon the blazing hillside before Santiago, in the month of June, 1898.

Through the branches of the trees the Mauder bullets still whipped and whistled, and the prolonged screech of shells and distant shouting indicated that the battle, which had raged all day, had not yet reached its end. But within the short radius of Wallace's vision nothing stirred, not even the palmetto boughs that rustled with the least breeze like the sound of the sea.

Wallace had only the most confused and incoherent knowledge of what was happening on that historic day. There had been an advance in the cool of the morning, if a brief respite from the oppressive heat could be called coolness in contrast. Then came the deployment along the base of the hills as the first shells began to fall, the advance in open order, in which the nicely incalculated teachings of the parade ground fell to pieces, the jumble of men, of companies, and, later, of regiments, pressing forward past the dead and stricken, the shouts, the rattle of machine guns and rifles. Batteries came galloping where they had no theoretical business to be, upsetting the junior officers' desperate attempts to preserve alignment; Red Cross men invaded the battle line to succor the wounded; commissariat mules, shaking off the lethargy which no amount of belaboring had ever overcome, ran away with supplies and strewn embalmed beef over the hillside. In the midst of it all Wallace had rallied some men of his own troop and led them forward; he plunged into the patch of scrub-covered jungle, and found that he was alone.

In front of him was a small clearing, made by some Cuban squatter in the preceding year and abandoned after the reaping. It contained the ruin of a palm shack, and the furrows scraped by a primitive plow were only just discernible amid the rank growth that had sprung up. The lieutenant stopped and shouted, expecting to see his men come running through the trees. But none appeared, and it was at this moment that the bullet that had been stamped with his name, according to the soldier's superstition, found him. He felt a smart blow on the shoulder, which knocked him backward. He stumbled, fell down, sat up again and discovered that his elbow was shattered. The arm hung helplessly at his side.

He managed to bind up the wound with his hand and teeth. There was not much pain, but a sort of physical languor, which made him reel giddily when he arose. There was burning thirst, too. It was extraordinary that a little thing like that should take the grit out of a man. A little blood was running down his sleeve, but the wound seemed trivial.

Wallace leaned against the wall of the shack and waited for his men. He shouted once or twice more, but nobody answered him, and the battle seemed to be drifting in another direction. Wallace imagined that his troop had advanced around the patch of scrub, in which case he was not likely to establish touch with them again till nightfall. He cursed his luck and started forward, but the trees began to reel around him; he clutched at the wall of the shack, missed it, and fell.

Then he realized that he was out of the fight. Yet, in spite of his intense disappointment, he knew that worse might have befallen him. He had fought through hours of the day—that was much; he was probably spared to lead his men again—and that was more. He had found and proved himself; and at twenty-one a young man, for all his self-confidence, is composed of fears and doubts as well. In spite of his soldier ancestors, Mark Wallace had not been sure that his capacity for leadership extended be-

eyond the parade ground, and he had suffered from the young soldier's inevitable fear of fear.

So he resigned himself to his situation. He emptied his water bottle and, gripping the end of his gauze roll with his teeth, managed to bandage his wound sufficiently to stop the bleeding. The languor, however, was increasing. Sometimes he would doze for a few moments, awaking with a start, to wonder where he was, and what had happened. The air was very still. The shouts had long since died away, the rifle firing was a distant crackling; the tremulous staccato tapping of the machine guns was like the roll of drums far away.

Wallace must have slept for a prolonged period, for when next he became conscious he started up to see, to his intense astonishment, a pretty little girl of three or four years, standing in front of him and looking at him. He rubbed his eyes, expecting her to disappear. But she was still there, and just as he was beginning to piece together a Spanish phrase she spoke to him in English.

"I want my daddy."

Wallace reached out and drew the child toward him. "Where is your daddy?" he asked. "And who are you?"

"I'm Eleanor," she answered, "and won't you please find my daddy for me?"

She pointed with a grimy little hand toward the interior of the shack, and Wallace, struggling to his feet with a great effort, made his way inside. It was almost dark in the hut, and Wallace could only make out with difficulty the form of a man who lay, face downward, upon the ground near the wall. Presently, however, as his eyes became more accustomed to the obscurity, he saw the bullet wound in the back of the head.

He looked up at the child, who stood by, unconcerned. "Go away, Eleanor," he said gently.

The child, too young to know anything of death, went out of the hut and began to play in the shaft of sunlight that filtered through the branches of the palms. Wallace searched the



"I Want My Daddy."

dead man's pockets. He found nothing, however, except a military pass, signed by General Linares of the Spanish forces, authorizing the bearer to pass through the lines; and, after a moment's reflection, he decided to leave it on the body.

So this man had been the child's father, and, apart from her speech, his coloring showed that he had been an American. Wallace concluded that he had been a planter, trapped in Santiago. He raised the body in his arms and tried to turn it over, but let it fall when he saw the work that the bullet had made of the face. He must not let the little girl carry away anything of such memory as that!

He groped his way outside and beckoned to her. "What is your other name, Eleanor?" he asked. The little girl only looked at him; it was evident that she did not understand the meaning of his question.

"Did your daddy live in Santiago?"

"My daddy has gone away. I want him," said the child, beginning to whimper.

Wallace tried her once more. "Where is your mamma?" he asked. But she said nothing, and he sat down, propping himself against the shack. He drew the little girl down beside him.

"Now listen to me, Eleanor," he said. "Your daddy has gone away. He will be gone for a long time. You must be good and patient, and soon somebody will come to take care of you. Do you understand?"

The child's lip quivered, but she did not cry. She fixed her large gray eyes upon him

"Who are you?" she asked, with the directness of childhood.

"My name is Mark."

"I like you, Mark. I will go with you till my daddy comes back."

"All right. Then sit down here beside me and play," muttered Wallace, wondering rather grimly what there was for her to play with.

But the grubby little fingers were soon busy in the sandy soil. Wallace watched the child, wondering who she was, and how it had happened that the father had been forced to take her into the jungle, into the midst of the contending armies. Her clothing was almost in rags, and she must have been drenched by the rains of the preceding night. It had certainly been a desperate and a difficult adventure for the dead man.

The light began to fade. Wallace, half delirious now from pain and thirst, struggled to preserve his consciousness for the sake of the little girl. Sometimes he would emerge from a semi-stupor and look round for her anxiously; but he always found her, not great distance away, building sand castles out of the soft soil and chattering to herself as happily as if she had already forgotten her sorrow.

When he aroused himself finally, it was to see the flash of a torch in his eyes. Faces which he recognized were looking into his own. There was Crawford, the senior lieutenant, who had graduated from West Point the year before, and Captain Kellerman; there was his own negro servant, Johnson, with a look of alarm on his ebony face; and near by were two men from the ambulance, carrying an empty stretcher.

Wallace moaned for water and the sense of the liquid in his throat, warm though it was, brought back consciousness with a rush.

"Well, we've got you," said Crawford cheerfully. "How are you feeling, old man?"

"Fine. Have we got Santiago?"

"Well, not exactly, but nearly. We've carried all the trenches, and we're waiting to get our big guns up. Arm hurting you?"

"No," said Wallace, stifling a groan.

"Say, Crawford, I suppose I was delirious, but I thought there was a kid here."

As he spoke he caught sight of Major Howard emerging from the shack, with the little girl in his arms, fast asleep. The major came up to him.

"How are you feeling, Wallace?" he asked. "Good! I didn't know you were a family man, though, till I saw this kid sleeping in your arms."

"You've been inside?" inquired the lieutenant, looking toward the shack. The major's face grew very serious. He nodded.

"Her father," said Wallace.

"Come, get in with you!" answered Major Howard, curtly, indicating the ambulance. Mark, supported by the orderlies, who had placed the stretcher upon the ground, crawled in and lay down. He stretched out his arm toward the child. It was an unconscious action, but Major Howard noted it and, detaching the small arms from about his neck, he placed the little girl in the stretcher. The little head drooped upon the lieutenant's arm. As the ambulance men picked up their burden two soldiers came out of the hut, carrying something in a blanket. They carried it to the center of the clearing and set it down beside a hole which had already been dug.

"He carried a pass signed by Linares," said Wallace to the major.

Major Howard's eyes contracted into narrow slits. He nodded. "I have it," he answered.

"I wonder who he was?" said Wallace.

"We'll decide what to do with the kid after we get her back to camp," said the major curtly. It seemed to Wallace that he was unwilling to speculate upon the identity of the dead man. "Lie still, and don't muddle your brains with thinking, my boy," he added. "We'll have you at the base hospital in next to no time."

"How many men have we lost?"

"Can't tell you. Quite a few, I'm afraid. Soames is gone. Crawford and Murray and I found ourselves bunched together at the top of the hill, leading a mixed company of Texas Rangers and Pennsylvania Dutch. We'll get them sorted out and sent home with labels as soon as we can. Move on, boys!"

The jolting stretcher proceeded out of the scrub and down the hill. Here, in the open, everything was almost as silent as in the bush, after the day's battle. Under the light of the rising moon could be seen parties of men moving over the hillside, stragglers seeking their regiments, or fatigue parties detailed upon the necessary night work that follows a day of death. The moon shone down on huddled forms scattered for the most part in little clusters, where shells or machine-gun fire had caught them.

It seemed an infinitely long journey, and every movement of the stretcher was almost unbearable. Wallace shut his lips tight. He looked at the child beside him. She moved in her sleep, feeling for his neck with the little

grimy hands. Her cheek snuggled into the hollow of his arm. The lieutenant was curiously touched by this unconscious confidence.

He issued from his ordeal of pain at last, when the bearers halted in front of the line of tents that served for a field hospital. Stretchers by the dozen were piled about the ground, and more were arriving constantly. Wounded men, guided by the sound, came limping in on the last lap of their painful journeys. Others, who had arrived but had not yet been attended to, sat or lay in front of the tents. Orderlies were scurrying to and fro. Major Howard caught one of the regimental surgeons, who looked Mark over quickly and then picked the child out of the stretcher.

"Hello! Who's this?" he asked.

"Friend of his," said the major, indicating Mark.

"She doesn't look like a Cuban young lady," said the doctor, as he cut away the sleeve of the tunic.

"Her father's dead. Hit by a shell on his way from Santiago. I think he was an American," said Mark.

"Give her to me. I never had one," said the doctor, suddenly injecting a hypodermic into Mark's arm.

"Not after that," said Mark, wincing. "Besides, I'm thinking of adopting her myself."

And he wondered what had made him say that when the thought had hardly reached his own consciousness.

"See here, young man! Let me look at that arm of yours before you talk that way. Hum! You'll be running round in a couple of weeks, as well as ever."

"Thank heaven for that!" ejaculated Mark fervently. "Then I'll be in at the death."

"I doubt it. I won't pass you for duty for six months to come," said the doctor, grinning. Then, seeing Mark's dejected look, he added, more seriously:

"You may thank the modern high-power bullet that you are going to keep your arm, my boy. It's drilled a nice little pencil-hole clean through the joint, instead of shattering it, and that's got to be filled in with new growth. Even I can't grow bones in a week. I wish I could. Ten years ago your arm would have had to come off. There's nothing more I can do for you, my son," he added, as he smeared some sticky stuff over the wound and began adjusting a bandage, "except tie you up and put you in the hospital to-night, and send you down to the base in the morning."

"The devil you will! I guess I'm well enough to stay on the job as I am."

"Here, I haven't any more time to waste on you!" said the doctor. "Pounce will make you a sling and you'll go into that tent and stay there, or I'll cashier you. You won't be feeling so spry tomorrow morning. Get out!"

He strode away, leaving Mark looking into the grinning black face of Johnson.

After the sling had been adjusted he discovered that the sense of well-being, due to the hypodermic, was already beginning to leave him. His servant helped him into the tent and Major Howard brought in the little girl, who at once coiled herself up to sleep at Wallace's side.

Lieutenant Wallace makes some plans for the future of the child that had come into his possession so unexpectedly, but he is stunned by revelations that are made to him by his commanding officer, Major Howard. Read about this in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Truly King of Birds.

"Our national bird, the bald eagle, wild in its native haunts, is so large, so majestic, and flies with an evidence of so enormous strength, that one is impressed with the thought that here is the king of birds," writes T. Gilbert Pearson of the Audubon society. "On one occasion while eating my lunch in the shade of a little bush on a Southern prairie, I saw one carry off a lamb."

Iron in Ukraina.

Within the boundaries of Ukraina are found the principal available deposits of iron ore in Russia. The development of the iron ore deposits of the Krivoi Rog district has been mainly responsible for the rapid growth of the Russian iron and steel industry, which now depends to an extent of about 70 per cent on the iron ore in the southern part of the country.

Have No Silly Belief in Luck.

All successful men have agreed in one thing—they were causationists. They believed that things went not by luck, but by law. Belief in compensation—or, that nothing is got for nothing—characterizes all valuable minds.—Emerson.

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON (By REV. F. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.) (Copyright, 1918, Western Newspaper Union.)

LESSON FOR OCTOBER 6

ABRAM LEAVING HOME.

LESSON TEXT—Genesis 12:1-9. GOLDEN TEXT—Be thou a blessing.—Genesis 12:2. DEVOTIONAL READING—Hebrews 11:1-10. ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS—Genesis 11:27-32; Hebrews 11:8-10.

1. Abraham's Call (v. 1). The new era inaugurated with Noah at his head ended in a colossal failure. In view of such failure God turned aside from the nation as such, and called Abram out from his kindred and land, and placed him at the head of a new nation which he would train for himself. This call involved:

1. A call to separation. He was to leave the place of his fond associations for a land unknown to him. Obedience to this command meant the severance of three ties.

(1) "His country in the widest range of his affections. (2) His place of birth and kindred, which comes closer to his heart. (3) His father's house, as the inmost circle of all tender emotions." All this must be cast off before the Lord could get him into the place of blessing. When kindred and possessions stand in the way of love and service to Christ, one must renounce them (Matthew 10:37).

2. A call to heroic tasks. For Abram to go into a strange land and take possession of it for God called for the heroic in him. It costs much to live the life of separation, but it is the only way to have God's favor. Those who are children of faithful Abram must trust God.

3. God's demand for separation was followed by a seven-fold promise—a gracious engagement on the part of God to communicate certain unmerited favors and to confer blessings upon him.

1. "I will make of thee a great nation." (v. 2). This in some measure compensated for the loss of his country. He escaped from the defiling influences of his own nation, and became the head of a chosen nation. This was fulfilled in a natural way in the Jewish nation and in Yshmael (Gen. 17:20), also in a spiritual sense embracing both Jews and Gentiles (Galatians 3:7-9).

2. "I will bless thee" (v. 2). This was fulfilled (1) Temporally (Gen. 13:14-17; 24:35). He was enriched with lands and cattle, silver and gold. (2) Spiritually (Gen. 15:8; John 8:56). He was freely justified on the grounds of his faith. The righteousness of Christ was imputed to him.

3. "And make thy name great" (v. 2). He renounced his father's house, and became the head of a new house which would be venerated far and wide. He is known as the friend of God (James 2:23).

4. "Thou shalt be a blessing" (v. 2). It was a great thing to be thus honored and blessed by God, but to be the medium of blessings to others was greater still. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

5. "I will bless them that bless thee" (v. 3). God so identified himself with his servant that he regarded treatment of Abram as treatment of himself. Christ so completely identifies himself with his people that he regards wrong done to them as done to himself. Since he was God's friend, God regarded acts performed toward Abram as performed toward himself. In all ages since then the nations and individuals that have used the Jew well have been blessed.

6. "And curse him that curse thee" (v. 3). The nations that have been against the Jews have never prospered. While God at different times used the surrounding nations as scourges of Israel, he in turn punished them for their mistreatment of Israel.

7. "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (v. 3). This has been fulfilled (1) in the Jewish nation being made the repository of the Oracles of God. Through them the Bible has been given to the world. (2) The bringing into the world of the Redeemer.

(3) In the future time when the Jews shall be God's missionaries in carrying the good tidings of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

III. Abram's Obedience (vv. 4-9). Abram at once departed out of his own land. He proved his faith by his works. He did not argue or parley. Neither did he demand some guarantee, but stepped out upon God's naked word. There were difficulties in his way, but faith in God made him brave. Faith in God gives victory over the world. He worshiped God. To go into a heathen land and establish true worship requires a courageous faith.

Secrets in Our Heart. We talk about searching our hearts. We cannot do it. What we want is to have God search them . . . and bring out the hidden things, the secret things that cluster there.—D. L. Moody.

Testaments for Soldiers. I am glad to see that every man in the army is to have a testament. Its teachings will fortify us for our task.—Fershing.

Who has deceived thee so often as thyself?

CAROLINA TROOPS IN HEAT OF FIGHT

GERMAN LOSS SINCE JULY IS 200,000 IN PRISONERS AND UNNUMBERED DEAD.

RETIREMENT FROM RUMANIA

Reports Are Current in Rumania That Rumanian Population Have Revolted.

London.—Troops from the states of New York, Tennessee and North Carolina attacked the Hun line on a front of nearly 100 miles, capturing Bellecourt and St. Roy.

This announcement was made by Field Marshal Haig in his report from headquarters.

An English division crossed the Scheldt canal on Hebbels main road and improvised bridges and crossed the main Hindenburg defenses around Bellengisse and captured the whole German position.

Canadian troops are in the outskirts of Cambrai.

The Sixty-third naval division has reached the southern outskirts of Cambrai. The Canadians are in the outskirts on the northwest.

Prisoners to the number of 20,000 and 325 guns had been captured by the British in Palestine Friday night according to an official communication. Notwithstanding Turkish resistance in the region of Tiberias, the British forced further passages of the Jordan. To the south the British cavalry drove the enemy northward through Mezerib and joined hands with the forces of the king of Hejaz.

French, British, American and Belgian troops in the last three days have captured 40,000 prisoners and 20 guns. It is estimated here. Since July 18 the allies have captured 200,000 prisoners, 3,000 guns, 20,000 machine guns and enormous quantities of material. This does not take into account the operations in Macedonia and Palestine.

The German forces of occupation in Rumania began to retire from the country Friday, according to information received in Swiss political circles. There are persistent rumors in Switzerland that the Rumanian population has revolted. The German civil authorities are said to be removing their archives hastily.

The American army operating on the Champagne front has captured Briailles-Sur-Meuse and Romagne, west of that town on the outskirts of the forest of Romagne and the attack is progressing rapidly.

INCREASING PRESSURE IS PRESAGE OF EARLY DEFEAT

Washington.—Continued and increasing pressure by Marshal Foch along virtually the whole western front from Verdun to the North Sea has brought the Germans face to face with a critical situation in the opinion of several observers here. With the enemy defense position—the Hindenburg line—shattered in several places, his secondary line to the east—the Kriemhild position—penetrated, and his own official reports admitting withdrawals on all fronts, there is growing possibility, it is thought, of a serious disaster.

French troops are over the Chemin-Des-Dames barrier on a wide front and as they now are pressing on the flank of the retreating Germans to the south and west, the situation in the center of the great German defensive arch appeared to observers at the most critical.

BULGARIAN DELEGATES ARRIVE AT SALONKI

Paris.—The Bulgarian delegates who are to discuss armistice and probable peace arrangements with the allied governments arrived at Saloniki. The delegates are General Lonkoff, commander of the Bulgarian second army; M. Liapcheff, finance minister, and M. Radoff, a former member of the Bulgarian cabinet.

GERMANY'S MOST SERIOUS HOUR SEEMS TO HAVE COME

Amsterdam.—Germany's most serious hour seems to have struck," declares The Lokal Anzeiger of Berlin, in discussing the Bulgarian question. The Frankfort Zeitung says:

"It is useless to gloss over this news and we are not quite sure whether it would not be useful to attach considerable importance to the semi-official attempts to veil the threatening secession of Bulgaria or raise any hopes."

ACTION OF BULGARIA MAY OR MAY NOT BE ALL CAMOUFLAGE

London.—The news from Bulgaria which comes through various channels compels the belief that the Prussia of the Balkans is not merely seeking a breathing spell but really wants peace. All the evidence indicates that she needs it grievously.

The German pretense that Premier Malinoff was acting on his own responsibility finds no confirmation. King Ferdinand's crown is at stake and he is trying to save his dynasty.