

BRIDE of BATTLE

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

By VICTOR ROUSSEAU

(Copyright, by W. G. Chapman.)

CHAPTER XIII—Continued.

Suddenly the German uttered a choking cry and dropped, blood spurting from his throat, where a chance bullet had found him. As he fell, Mark precipitated himself upon him and lay flat on the ground.

The firing died away. Captain Mark began to crawl back toward the parapet of his lines. A whispered challenge, an answer, and he had scaled the sandbags and descended into the mud of the trench, to find the firing posts crowded and himself facing Kellerman and the company captain.

Inwardly boiling, he stood still. It was too dark to see the expression on Kellerman's face, but he could imagine the sneering grin that disfigured it.

"Well!" said Kellerman sharply. "The man you sent me to bring in was dead. He had been there for days."

"Where are your companions?" demanded Kellerman.

"Captured."

"And you?"

"We were attacked in the dark. I fought with my man until a bullet killed him. The others were taken."

"And your stretcher?" asked Kellerman with a bland sneer.

"I left it between the lines. Do you wish me to go back for it, sir?"

"This man is lying," said Kellerman to the Captain calmly. "He abandoned his companions and ran away. He lost his stretcher. Put him under arrest."

The Captain beckoned to the platoon sergeant, who came forward.

"I'd like to say one thing," said Mark, striving to keep his voice steady.

"We three were sent out to bring in a dead man, who had been dead for days—anyone here will bear me out in this. Was any man wounded tonight? There was only one body in this section."

"Cut it out!" said the sergeant, laying his hand on Mark's shoulder.

But Mark swung clear of him and turned and faced Kellerman again.

"You sent me out tonight to put me out of the way!" he cried, losing all self-control. "For reasons that you know, and I know, you wanted me dead, and you were willing to send two others to their death also. You lied to me to put me off my guard, and you, you treacherous dog! And here's the blow you gave, back again!"

He struck Kellerman a buffet that sent him reeling back against the parapet.

CHAPTER XIV.

The three officers who had brought in their verdict, and the fourth, of high rank, who had passed the sentence, stood rather stiffly at the door of the little headquarters village house, watching Mark as, with hands chained, he was marched away by two armed guards toward the jail.

When he was out of sight they unbent.

"Don't it!" said one.

"My sentiments," answered another.

"What do you think, McKinnon?"

"I don't want to talk about it."

"If it had been some tough who had got roped into the army—a gunman or that sort—but—"

"Well, if the fellow's a gentleman, why did he do it? He must have known."

"And, after all, he might have been rewarded for the blow, but the gross cowardice—"

"I don't see that. The blow was worse than the cowardice. A new hand, between the lines at night, his first night—Kellerman shouldn't have sent him—"

"I don't follow you there. Kellerman had known the man in the U. S. and wanted to give him a chance to redeem himself."

At nightfall Mark was sitting in his cell. He had eaten, he had composed himself to meet his end according to the traditions of his caste and race; but he could not meet it calmly. He had deliberately flung everything away; he had let Kellerman goad him to madness; he was going to die without even the soldier's satisfaction of duty honorably done. And he could not compose himself.

Suddenly he heard the outer gate of the prison click; then came the sound of voices, footsteps, a woman's swishing skirts; Eleanor and Colonel Howard stood at the barred entrance with the guard.

Mark rose from his bed and stood staring at them; he could hardly believe them real. The guard unlocked the door of the cell. Eleanor shrank back against the corner of the doorway, her kerchief to her lip, her face chalky white. Suddenly she started forward. The Colonel whispered a word, she brushed him aside as if she had not heard him. Her arms sought Mark's neck and found it. She pressed her lips to his.

"Captain Mark! Dear Captain Mark!" she sobbed.

And, holding her closely to him, and forgetting Howard's presence and everything else, Mark found his peace.

Colonel Howard was trying to calm her, to assuage her frantic grief. At last he persuaded her to sit down. He

took Mark by the arm as if he were a child, and placed him beside her.

"Mark, my dear boy—Mark, I heard of it only five minutes ago," he said. "I had to spend the night here, and Eleanor had got leave to meet me. I've just learned the outlines of it. I'm trying to get the General. Yes, yes, I know he refused this morning, but he didn't know. I'm only going to ask for a respite till I can see him personally. It will come out all right. Now tell me, Mark, what happened? How did Kellerman meet you? Why did you strike him? I don't ask about the charge of cowardice, because that isn't worth speaking about. I'll settle that with the General—I haven't forgotten Santiago. But about that blow, Mark—how did it all happen? Tell me exactly, so that I—"

It was unlike the old Colonel to gabble so fast. Perhaps he was afraid of breaking down.

"Can tell the General. Now begin, Mark. Tell me from the beginning."

But Mark did not open his lips. And before Colonel Howard could resume Eleanor had sprung up and faced Mark eagerly.

"Now, Captain Mark, listen! If you've never listened to me before, listen now!" she cried. "I know you aren't going to tell the Colonel. It's like you, Captain Mark. You're stubborn. You have a stupid, wicked streak of stubbornness in you that always makes you pretend things, and always prevents you from letting the world see what a dear, good, splendid man you are. I know you through and through, though you've never known I did. You've ruined your life by your silly silences. You seem to like to be misunderstood. You like things to go wrong with you, so that you can suffer undeservingly. But it isn't heroic of you, Captain Mark. It's stubborn and wrong, and, where others are concerned, it's criminal. Where others are concerned—others who love you, Captain Mark!"

She spoke with intense passion, but when she ended, she put her arms

around his neck.

"Vague cries rang in his ears, distant cries, blending, surging, swelling and dying down, but never ceasing. The rattle of small-arms was continuous, and punctuated by the loud timbre of guns."

He was lying amid a heap of debris that had been the village jail. Not far away he saw the Colonel sitting with eyes closed, propped up against the fragments of a wall, a blood-stained bandage round his head.

"O thank God!" cried Eleanor. "You have been unconscious so long, Captain Mark! And the Colonel is badly hurt. I saw the Red Cross wagon pass and cried, but they could not hear me."

All round them the guns were booming, all round them they saw khaki-clad Americans swarming over the fields, and yet the village seemed deserted. They were alone in a little oasis of calm amid the tumult.

"What are we to do?" cried the girl. "Can you walk? Try to stand on your feet. Let me help you. We must get the Colonel somewhere."

The question on Mark's lips died away as there came the howl of a heavy shell, followed by a stunning impact. A column of broken bricks spouted into the air at the end of the street, dissolving into a cloud of dust. An interval, and again there came a missile from the monster gun. A house in the next street went down like cardboard.

It was the threatened attack on the American lines. The enemy was in force somewhere across the fields, the reserves were rushing up to repel them.

Mark staggered to his feet and found that he could stand. His arm ached under the bandage, but it was not broken. Probably a splinter had struck him. He made his way toward the Colonel, who eyed him vacantly as he approached.

"Take Eleanor to safety and leave me, Mark," he said, in a choking voice. "I'll take you both, sir. This can't last long. Our men will be in the village in a few minutes. Or an ambulance will pass."

Mark put his hands beneath the Colonel's arms and tried to lift him.

As the Colonel tried to stand he collapsed forward in Mark's arms. He looked at Mark piteously.

"Take her and leave me," he whispered. "And listen to me, Mark. She cares for you. All will come right, if I can keep my worthless carcass alive until I've seen the General. But I never counted on being done up like this."

There were tears in the old man's eyes. "Forgive me, my boy," he muttered, and fell into unconsciousness.

Mark set him down against the wall again. It was impossible to move him, even with Eleanor's help.

Mark looked at Eleanor. "It's safest here," he said. "The village will be occupied soon. Help will come."

He broke off abruptly as another of the heavy shells dropped nearer, sending the brick fragments flying in all directions. Of a sudden it had occurred to him that the reason why the Americans did not enter the village was that

For nothing mattered any more, nothing at all. He couldn't find excuses—Mark Wallace had never excused himself in his life.

Eleanor drew herself out of his arms and looked at him. He looked from her face to the Colonel's. Why were they worrying him? How could he hope to save his life by going into the obscure details and explanations that they required of him?

And what a long rigmarole, beginning back in the war department! Mark could not string a case together; his mind was not constructed in that fashion.

Eleanor laid her hand on his arm. "Captain Mark—don't you see that every moment is torture to us?" she asked.

There was a terrible intensity in her tone, as if she were holding herself rigidly in restraint, for fear that she would fall should she yield to her emotion.

"I struck him," stammered Mark. "I told you why. I thought he was wrong to risk those lives—I—"

The look upon each face seemed to be frozen there; it was as if their lives and not Mark's, hung upon his words.

Suddenly a shriek pierced the sky, cutting off Mark's speech, and a shell burst somewhere by with a shattering detonation, followed by the dull boom of a distant gun. The Colonel started, and then resumed his gaze.

It seemed to Mark as if that was an eternity of torture. He struggled in his mind desperately to find words to say when the noise subsided.

But there came a stunning sound that seemed to split his ear-drums. He fell forward, and felt as if some one had lifted him; looked out into darkness, sought Eleanor and knew nothing.

CHAPTER XV.

When he slowly grew conscious it was with the glad realization that he had found her. He felt her hands, supple and warm, binding a bandage round his arm. He opened his eyes to see her face bent over his. And it was dawn.

Vague cries rang in his ears, distant cries, blending, surging, swelling and dying down, but never ceasing. The rattle of small-arms was continuous, and punctuated by the loud timbre of guns."

He was lying amid a heap of debris that had been the village jail. Not far away he saw the Colonel sitting with eyes closed, propped up against the fragments of a wall, a blood-stained bandage round his head.

"O thank God!" cried Eleanor. "You have been unconscious so long, Captain Mark! And the Colonel is badly hurt. I saw the Red Cross wagon pass and cried, but they could not hear me."

All round them the guns were booming, all round them they saw khaki-clad Americans swarming over the fields, and yet the village seemed deserted. They were alone in a little oasis of calm amid the tumult.

"What are we to do?" cried the girl. "Can you walk? Try to stand on your feet. Let me help you. We must get the Colonel somewhere."

The question on Mark's lips died away as there came the howl of a heavy shell, followed by a stunning impact. A column of broken bricks spouted into the air at the end of the street, dissolving into a cloud of dust. An interval, and again there came a missile from the monster gun. A house in the next street went down like cardboard.

It was the threatened attack on the American lines. The enemy was in force somewhere across the fields, the reserves were rushing up to repel them.

Mark staggered to his feet and found that he could stand. His arm ached under the bandage, but it was not broken. Probably a splinter had struck him. He made his way toward the Colonel, who eyed him vacantly as he approached.

"Take Eleanor to safety and leave me, Mark," he said, in a choking voice. "I'll take you both, sir. This can't last long. Our men will be in the village in a few minutes. Or an ambulance will pass."

Mark put his hands beneath the Colonel's arms and tried to lift him.

As the Colonel tried to stand he collapsed forward in Mark's arms. He looked at Mark piteously.

"Take her and leave me," he whispered. "And listen to me, Mark. She cares for you. All will come right, if I can keep my worthless carcass alive until I've seen the General. But I never counted on being done up like this."

There were tears in the old man's eyes. "Forgive me, my boy," he muttered, and fell into unconsciousness.

Mark set him down against the wall again. It was impossible to move him, even with Eleanor's help.

Mark looked at Eleanor. "It's safest here," he said. "The village will be occupied soon. Help will come."

He broke off abruptly as another of the heavy shells dropped nearer, sending the brick fragments flying in all directions. Of a sudden it had occurred to him that the reason why the Americans did not enter the village was that

it was a death-trap; its ranges were all mapped and plotted, and the Germans were bent on its systematic destruction.

Mark stood by Eleanor in irresolution, cursing his fate. He did not know what to do. He could not leave her; and yet he felt a burning impulse to play some part in affairs. His eye, trained by long years of practice, took in the tactical situation at a glance. The Germans must have made a prodigious thrust in the night, bursting through the center; the reserves, still rushing over the fields, were trying to fill and hold the gap. And the little Headquarters village was the key to the whole battlefield.

Wounded men came streaming down the street, followed by the merciless shells. The aeroplane above was still circling like a hawk; it seemed incredible that no aeroplane attacked it. And it was quite clear to Mark that only treachery, calculated and long planned, could have brought about the situation.

For the Germans must have advanced four miles since nightfall.

"Help will come—" Mark repeated; and suddenly, even above the drumfire, he could hear the sounds of cheering. And, topping the ridge that ran before the village, there came a swarm of gray-green figures, thrusting back the thin, scattered line that held it. The bullets were whirring overhead, audible, and like a swarm of bees. Clouds of dust rose up and hid the battle.

Eleanor, clutching Mark's arm, stood tense beside him; Mark saw that she understood, and the two held their breath as the dust clouds eddied along the ridge.

Suddenly they dissolved, and the attacking swarm poured like a great flood into the village. It looked as if all were lost.

But an instant later Mark saw a little company of Americans thrust out a Maxim gun from behind a wall, where they had hidden it. The gunner took his seat, and just as the ranks were closing in on him, swept the street from side to side. The ranks recoiled and fell, body piling on body. Then, as a torrent forces its way through the ice-crust of a river, the attackers overwhelmed the Maxim section and swept into the streets.

And, as torrent meets torrent, with a surge and a rush a body of American troops swept forward to meet them.

The battle was all about them. Every house was a fortress, every mound of bricks a rallying point. Mark raised the half-conscious Colonel in his arms and drew him into the shelter of a little hollow in the brick wall. He beckoned to Eleanor to crouch down beside him. There they were safe from flying bullets, and might hope to pass unnoticed. He still hesitated, when a body of Germans rushed, shouting, past him, upon a troop of Americans who came round a shattered corner, led by a young officer carrying a bloody sword.

It was quick and short bayonet work. Mark saw the blades flash, heard the panting gasps of the thrusters and the moans of the wounded. He saw the young officer stagger and fall, a bayonet through his shoulder. The sword fell from his hand. Before the German could withdraw his weapon Mark had snatched up the sword and, with a mighty blow, cloven the German's arm from his body.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

EAGLE ALWAYS AN EMBLEM

From Mythological Times the Monarch of the Air Has Been Chosen as Representative of Power.

In mythology the eagle usually represents the sun. The great mythical eagle of India, the Garuda, is the bearer of the god Vishnu, victorious by his brightness over all demons. In Scandinavian mythology the eagle is a gloomy figure, assumed by demons of darkness or by Odin himself, concealed in the gloomy night or in wind swept clouds. The storm giant Hrasvelg sits in the form of an eagle at the extremity of heaven and blows blasts over all people and on the great tree Yggdrasil sits an eagle observing everything that happens. When Zeus was preparing for his struggle with the Titans the eagle brought him a thunderbolt, whereupon the god took the bird for his emblem. It naturally became the emblem of nations after its long use in mythology. Ptolemy Soter made it the emblem of the Egyptian kingdom. In the Roman story the eagle was the herald to Tarquinius of his royal power, and it was one of the most important insignia of the republic, and was also assumed by the emperors, and adopted into medieval heraldry after the time of Charlemagne.

A Good Laugh.

A "good laugh" is not quite the same thing as a hearty laugh. Occasionally you may have seen young people convulsed with laughter over something that meant suffering and disaster to another. Many a laugh has been raised by an unclean suggestion. But it is a "good laugh" that has no hint of impurity or unkindness.

For Mature Figures



Lines that give an effect of slenderness make the plainest frocks or suits intensely interesting to women whose figures have lost that longed-for attribute of youth. Line and quality—they are the first consideration in the American gentlewoman's clothes after she has reached "the age of discretion" and becomes severely discriminating. She will take the simplest affair in street frock or suit, if it possesses what she requires in these regards, and tone it up to a high degree of distinction by means of a bit of neckwear, a furpiece, and a hat that matches it in trimness. Designers occupy themselves in working out clothes that are to give to the figure long and very graceful lines and their artful achievements compel us to admire them.

The suit shown in the picture above is a case in point; built on almost straight lines and plain even to the exclusion of buttons. The skirt is narrow and a trifle longer than has been the rule in suits. It has barely enough width to allow a comfortable stride in walking and is finished with a five-inch hem. The coat has a long waistline, indicated by a narrow belt made of the cloth and crossed at the front. It has pockets of the sort that are not noticeable, merely slits at each side that don't interfere with any line which is pursuing its straight-downward career. The ever present fur collar and cuffs, in this particular instance, are of Hudson seal, the collar one of those long convertible affairs that can be brought up close about the throat.

Collars by the way are one of the means of achieving length of line. Made of the material of the coat or frock or blouse they creep up about the chin and are fastened by buttons at the end of a long row on the garment. It is impossible not to follow this slim line of buttons that attract and hold the eye.

Panels, wide and narrow, that hang from neck to hem, made their instant success because of their long lines. For the sake of variety designers have added narrow floating panels to one-piece frocks and have carried out the idea in many ways on both frocks and suits. Even blouses have taken on the distinction of panels that fall from the shoulder and far below the limits of the waist they embellish.

From the Salon Debutantes



Only three of the many charming styles in hats, made for the girl who finds herself at last grown up, can be shown in our illustration. But these three styles have been found great favorites with the younger women whose individual tastes and preferences in matters of dress, are more clearly defined than those of their elders. Their young intuitions are keen and it will have to be conceded that no millinery could express more definitely the spirit of youth than these hats which so many debutantes have approved.

The hat at the left of the group is one of a great many interpretations of the tam which is enjoying a long-drawn-out period of popularity. It is picturesque to start with, and since the war, the glamor of the Blue Devil of France has cast a spell about it. This particular tam is made of beige-colored beaver cloth, mounted on a headband of grosgrain ribbon in the same color, tucked at intervals. A flat bow of the same ribbon fastens the folded-in-crown to the band. These tams are made in all the popular colors—with brown and purple worth mentioning for their richness in beaver. And there are others of velvet.

The pretty square-crowned hat at the right reveals beaver in combination with velvet in a street hat of unusual merit for all-round wear. It is a beige and brown combination having a band and bow of brown grosgrain ribbon. A bit of needlework of the simplest sort holds the flat bow to the side crown—or pretends to—and it might be put on in a gay color.

A dressier bit of headwear appears in the black hat of panne velvet at the bottom of the group. It has a facing of plain velvet and is placed in the class of things youthful by the scalloped edge of the brim. An odd trimming daintily placed helps out in this regard. It is a small stiffened tab of velvet, supporting a cabochon made of black soutache braid which is fastened to the edge of the brim. One must explain it as a vagary of youth as well as an ornament. This is an all-black hat which proves that all-black may be as youthful as rose-color—if it is managed in the right way.

Julie B. Bostwick

To Lengthen Skirts. To lengthen petticoats for little girls instead of taking out tucks to make longer, open the shoulder seam and sew pieces of muslin to one edge, make buttonholes and button to the front. You can thus drop the skirt to the desired length and easily shorten it if necessary.