

# WHEN BOYS WERE MEN

By JOHN HABBERTON.

Author of "Helen's Babies," "George Washington," etc.

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"Right-dress!" shouted the old sergeant, who had stationed himself at the right of the line. Then he ran along the front, pushing some men back a little and pulling others forward. Finally he returned to the right and shouted "Front!" The lieutenant looked at us as carelessly as if merely to see if our general appearance was fair. At last he spoke:

"Attention! Men, orders have come for all recruits for the Thirty-eighth cavalry to be sent to the regiment at once. You must remain here, therefore, until the order for transportation comes. We'll get off some lunch this evening. That's all. Break ranks—march!"

The yell, roars and onts that went up from two or three score of the men were more than any I ever had heard. I couldn't blame any of the other recruits, however, for I was as angry, shocked and frantic as they. "Get off some lunch this evening!" That meant I couldn't see father, mother or Ned before I started—couldn't see them in three years unless the war ended sooner. It was awful—it was worse than the worst thing I ever had imagined about war.

Some of the more excited fellows made a rush to the door to find there for the first time an armed guard, beyond whom at the head of the stairs were several more. They did not belong to our own regiment either. Then they dashed to the rear of the loft and



"Fall in, men," said the lieutenant.

They went up the window sashes, but two infantrymen with fixed bayonets were in the tiny courtyard below. Then Babel began again, while the lieutenant resumed his calm, dignified, pomp as coolly as if he were deaf or accustomed to such scenes. "Can it be possible that this was what the major meant?" I asked of Hamilton and Cloyne.

"Undoubtedly," groaned Cloyne. "It isn't a new trick by any means." "The scoundrel!" hissed Hamilton, who was the picture of more kinds of discomfort than I had ever seen in one face before.

"Perhaps he really did want to see us three on the business you suggested," said I to Hamilton. "I won't do any harm to ask."

He shook his head doubtfully, but approached the lieutenant, followed by Cloyne and me.

"Lieutenant," said he, "excuse me, but I have reason to expect some official communications from Albany, through the major, for myself and my friends here. Can you tell me whether they have come?"

"Not that I know of," said the officer pleasantly.

"Will the major be in soon?" "The major is—no. The truth is, I doubt whether we shall ever see him again. He hasn't succeeded in raising a company, much less a battalion, and has dropped out of the business. He never had a commission anyway."

"Then all of us to whom he promised commissions are duped?"

"Not at all—if you've raised the requisite number of men. Have you done it?"

"How many men have you raised?" continued the officer.

"Five," said Hamilton feebly.

"And you?" This to Cloyne.

"Four," sighed the handsome Irishman.

Then the lieutenant looked at me inquiringly.

"Three," I whispered, remembering that one was dead and another reclaimed by his parents.

had developed a new and highly popular industry—that of enlisting, recruiting, deserting, re-enlisting to receive more bounties, and so on indefinitely until the bounty jumper was detected or sent to the front too suddenly and securely to escape. One of the officers, with whom Hamilton and Cloyne scamped acquaintance, said we were lucky not to be sent down in locked cars, with windows so arranged on the outside that they could not be opened enough to let a man through. He said also that a number of hard characters had enlisted only for the purpose of robbing their comrades and that those of us who had much money would do well to hide it securely before dropping asleep.

"First regiment, eh?" said the lieutenant, rising from his desk, while Cloyne and I plucked each other with delight at the impression which Hamilton's announcement had evidently made.

"Yes, and I've enlisted for service, not for money, for I'm quite well off already. My two friends here and I would like to see our families and acquaintances before we start."

"I'll get them to come at once," said the lieutenant. "Go to the nearest hotel and see them there. You wouldn't like to meet them before this crowd. I'll pass you through the guards."

"We must have been a happy trio to look at just now," said Hamilton, looking at the lieutenant's hand and murmured: "God bless you!"

"I hope he will," said the officer, "for everybody else is cursing me today, though I'm merely doing my duty. The lieutenant leading, just then I felt a clutch at my shoulder and, turning, saw Brainerd, his face tear-stained and most weebopine. Hamilton glanced to see him, too, stopped, stared and exclaimed:

"Eh? What's this?" "This is a surprise," said I. "He's one of us after all."

"Thank heaven!" exclaimed Hamilton.

I was so pleased at this remark that I was about to comprehend the entire meaning of it, which was that there was a woman in the case. Meanwhile Hamilton named the hotel to which we would go and where the lieutenant could notify us when it was time to start. My attention was attracted by his families and while awaiting them, made some hasty goodby visits to friends in the city. Two hours later we felt as criminals condemned to death must feel during the final visit of the executioner.

"Dear, thoughtful heart—bringer down the entire family and the dog besides. Had it not been for that dog's efforts to explore the hotel and Ned's efforts to bring him back there would have been little relief from the gloom of which all of us were full. Brainerd's mother seemed to suffer worst of all. She had gone through the agony of giving her son away only to get him back again forever, she supposed. Now he was a soldier on his way to join his unit, and she was to lose him in an hour's notice. My own misery was doubled by her sorrow, for was not I to blame for his being in uniform?"

"My cousin may tried to put some cheer into the party, and as she always laughed heartily at the slightest provocation it was impossible not to be affected by her spirits. She made cheery though modest replies to some gallant speeches which Hamilton addressed to her. She told Mrs. Brainerd to think how much more cheerful a quick visit would be to the nation than the guns of a dozen cannon men. She scarcely spoke a word to Charley himself, however, and he looked at her only slyly, for, as she told me afterward, he had caught glimpse of her. My own misery was doubled by her sorrow, for was not I to blame for his being in uniform?"

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"And you've consumed nearly a month at this," said the officer. "What commission do you suppose you are entitled to?"

No one answered, so the lieutenant resumed his work.

Then we three Summerton men stepped aside at Hamilton's suggestion for transportation, but we once began to moan and grumble instead of consulting. Cloyne said he had no one in particular to say goodbye to; nevertheless to go off as we were about to, without saying a word to any of the many people he had known pleasantly for years, would make him feel very much as if suddenly arrested and sent to prison.

Hamilton said he heartily wished himself in Cloyne's condition, but unfortunately there were many people to whom he owed parting calls and some with whom he had made engagements which he wouldn't break for anything. I began to say that I feared that not to see me again would be the death of my father or mother or both, but I didn't get through my speech very well. As for my brother Ned, when I thought of that little fellow and all I might have been to him, but hadn't, and now he wouldn't have a big brother again for years, I secretly promised heaven to endure patiently any hardship or suffering of war if I might be permitted to make amends to that small boy.

Suddenly Hamilton exclaimed: "This won't do. We're wasting precious time. If we can't go back here we can at least telegraph our friends to come to us and say goodbye to us. Let me labor with the great moral once more."

"Lieutenant," said Hamilton, whom Cloyne and I followed to the desk, "I beg a thousand pardons, but I know you'll forgive me if you'd put yourself in my place for a moment. I'm an old

lot already well filled. The men in the tents did not do much to make me feel at home, although one or two put on some appearance of friendliness as they asked us if we had brought down anything in pocket flasks.

We Summerton boys were not made any more comfortable by being separated, as we were to be. No three of us were assigned to the same company, much less to the same tent. There seemed nothing for us to do or see either, for the drill was over during the morning. Before dinner camp was sounded I had lost all interest in the service and the war. I could think of nothing but our farm at Summerton and the people who occupied it. My own camp before winter if the authorities would permit. How I hoped he would not do it! I should have been glad to have him see the camp of the Ninety-ninth, but the cavalry camp was very different. There seemed no end of detached tents and huts, with no particular purpose that I could discover. Nothing was as I had expected.

After dinner we boys had an opportunity to see each other again. We enjoyed the meetings, but not as much as we had done before. I was given a shovel and set to digging post holes and ditches for some new stables that were to be built. I could have had plenty of digging without coming several hundred miles from home, for my father had long intended to set a new one. An excited young Frenchman among the recruits seemed somewhat of my way of thinking, for he suddenly dropped his shovel and shouted:

"I will not dig he hole! I enlist for la gloire, not for dirty work like this." "Ah, you want glory, eh?" said the German sergeant who seemed engineer in chief. "Den better it is you go back to your country, very day ain't got no sense."

The Frenchman said something between his teeth and thrust out his fist. The sergeant collared the Frenchman and kicked him all the way to the guardhouse. There were no protests after that. Post holes and ditches increased rapidly, and I was somewhat astonished to discover that the short ditch dug by Phil Hamilton was the most shapely of the lot.

We received no comfort after supper in criticizing the movements of the cavalry at dress parade. They marched with less style than the most awkward company of the Ninety-ninth, and looked shabby by the lack of resemblance in their hats, no two of which set alike, although all were of black felt.

Signs of hospitality continuing to be invisible, some of us Summerton recruits concluded to spend the night on the quartermaster's bay pile. Virginia deems, however, that in the month that had elapsed since the Ninety-ninth went north, and we had to arise in the middle of the night and indulge in violent exercise to warm our bones. I talked a great lot, too, so much that the other boys who came over to see what was the matter. When we told him why we were there and how uncomfortable we were, he said:

"Serves you right. Men who've been in the service long before and got out and hadn't sense enough to stay out, deserve all the bad luck they can find." I was angry and miserable enough to believe for the moment that he was nearly half right.

CHAPTER V. THINGS SLOW AND LIVELY. WITHIN a few days our company was organized, and we recruits were gathered into tents of our own. But we were not to be thoroughly miserable. The cavalry camp seemed such a shiftless, do-nothing place for all who were not recruits that I thought seriously of writing a private letter to President Lincoln suggesting that he should have this large and lazy body of men go out and kill some rebels or do something else that would help end the war. It seemed to me that the men I was lounging about me could not possibly be the same as the men who had talked of the post when the Ninety-ninth was there.

We recruits did very little lounging. We were drilled pretty steadily in the use of a saber, a weapon which did not feel or act anything like we had supposed. For days it seemed too heavy and clumsy for me ever to use it for any purpose, and I doubted whether I ever should be able to injure the Confederacy or defend myself by any of the means.

Cloyne laughed as he tried a pun. "Somebody somewhere has ventured more life than sense on the subject."

I thought this was very cynical of Cloyne. Of course there are impostors everywhere, but splendid, straight, mainly looking fellows like our own regiment's share of the "Six Hundred" could not be suspected of anything unfair or pretentious. They were superbly cool and composed, as great soldiers always are, and neither of them seemed to take ordinary interest in any one around him until I chanced to mention one of them to the other. To my great surprise, they were not even my acquaintances. This fact, or some other seemed to surprise the one I spoke to, and when I brought them together and introduced them they did not look and act at all as I imagined. Thinking perhaps of a historic battle, we reviewed old associations in private, I left them, after which they began to chat quite freely, and when next I met one of them he told me they had identified each other at last, and glad they were to find they were old friends. It was a long time before I could get Cloyne to take the slightest interest in them, but he finally eyed them, first carelessly, then curiously. Later I saw him in earnest conversation with one of them, and when I joked with him about it he put on a queer smile and patted me on the shoulder in a patronizing manner that exasperated me.

Our reception at the camp of the Thirty-eighth was not what I had expected. The veterans of the regiment did not turn out to cheer the brave youths who had come to help them put down the rebellion. They did not even offer us something to eat, although it was long after breakfast (time and our haversacks had been empty since the night before). A few sauntered over to the adjutant's tent, to which we had been marched, and looked at us as if in search of familiar faces, but no one took special interest in us except the orderly sergeants of the various companies, whom the adjutant had the sergeant-major summoned by bugle call. The company in which we had enlisted had not yet been organized, so we were allotted temporarily among the older companies, and the orderly sergeants swore faithfully, as they marched us off, at the trouble they would have to squeeze an extra man or two into every tent of a

Chronic bronchitis troubles and discomfort can be quickly relieved and cured by Foley's Honey and Tar. Sold by Denton & Ward.

Some creature that war trousers are only called men through courtesy.

Ten Years in Bed. R. A. Gray, J. P., Oakville, Ind., writes: "For ten years I was confined to my bed with disease of my kidneys. It was so bad that I could not move part of the time. I consulted the very best medical skill available, but could get no relief until Foley's Kidney Cure was recommended to me. It has been a Godsend to me." Sold by Denton & Ward.

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Stealing is not confined to taking the product of man's hands.

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No good health means the kidneys are sound, Foley's Kidney Cure makes the kidneys right. Sold by Denton & Ward.

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A Real Friend. "I suffered from dyspepsia and indigestion for fifteen years," says W. T. Sturdevant of Merry Oaks, N. C. "After I tried an old doctor and medical men, I was cured by Little Early Risers. I have never had any trouble since. It gave me immediate relief. I can eat almost anything I want now and my digestion is good. I cheerfully recommend Kodol. Don't try to cure stomach trouble by dieting. That only further weakens the system. You need wholesome, strengthening food. Kodol enables you to assimilate what you eat by digesting it without the stomach's aid." Smith Bros.

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Man who leaves church just as the collection plate starts around may have been taken suddenly ill, but he rarely gets credit for it.

Miss Pallade—Was very much surprised, Mr. Cleverton, that you were not at church this morning to hear me saying the solo. Didn't your friend Dakaway tell you about it beforehand?

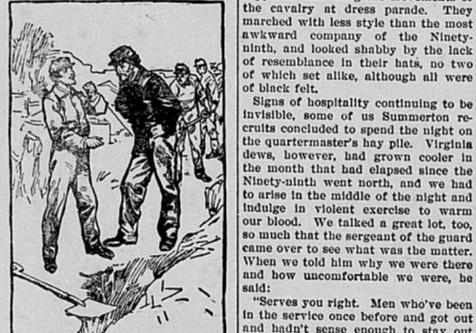
Cleverton—Yes; he was good enough to—Harden Life.

No matter how trifling a man is, he swells up if asked advice.—Washington Democrat.

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"Ah, you want glory, eh?"

before he enlisted. There were only 45 recruits, but 45 different trades and professions were named. Indeed, there was but one business or calling which more than one man designated. It was "soldier," Hamilton, Cloyne and I were three of the five who made this statement. The others were two stalwart Englishmen, almost middle aged. I engaged these successively in conversation and was almost paralyzed at learning that they were survivors of the famous "Six Hundred" who formed the "Light Brigade" that charged at Balaklava and was immortalized by Tennyson in a poem which I and every other boy in our school had declaimed on "speech day."

"I was long before I could tear myself away from these fine fellows and tell Hamilton and Cloyne what an acquisition our regiment had made. Hamilton was as much surprised and delighted as I, but Cloyne twitched his face, looked out the car window in an abashed sort of way and remarked:

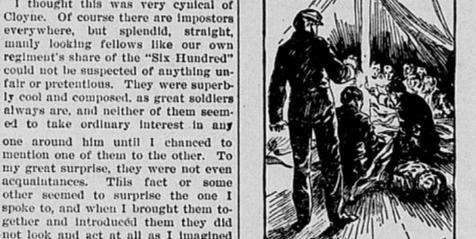
"They'll make about 1,200 survivors of that 'Six Hundred' whom I have personally met, yet I haven't been a great traveler."

"That's right," said I. "Lord Cardigan did not carefully count his men before riding at the Russian guns, or perhaps Tennyson took poetic license as to number."

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I beheld an odd spectacle.

thrusts, points or cuts of the manual of arms. I told Cloyne so one day, and he replied:

"That's the reason you're being taught. There'd be nonsense in teaching you if you already knew how."

The regiment—that is, the new companies—had no horses, and we Summerton boys would feel very ill at ease when we saw the older companies mount and go off on a scouting trip, as they did at least once a week, while we, instead, were marched out to drill or set to work on the stables, which were so many and large that it seemed they never would be finished. There were 12 of them, and each was more than 300 feet long and required 100 thick 10 foot posts, which had to be cut in the forest, besides hundreds of smaller ones for the roof and to divide the stalls. Many of the men made up their minds while this work was going on that a soldier's life was a dog's life, and they proved their sincerity by acting like dogs—growling, snarling, snuffing and digging.

During this wretched experience of cavalry life my spirits were strengthened frequently by observing the imperturbable manner of Hamilton, listening to Cloyne's sensible comments on the various companies, whom the adjutant had the sergeant-major summoned by bugle call. The company in which we had enlisted had not yet been organized, so we were allotted temporarily among the older companies, and the orderly sergeants swore faithfully, as they marched us off, at the trouble they would have to squeeze an extra man or two into every tent of a

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Reason for the Hit. "Was Mrs. Gabbot's 'conversation' a success?"

"Decidedly. Everybody chatted at a great rate."

"How did she ever manage it?"

"Oh, she had a musical programme, you know, that lasted all through." Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Reason. Judge—Your statement doesn't agree with that of the last witness.

Witness—That is easily accounted for, your honor. He's a bigger liar than I am.—Chicago News.

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