

# My Lady of the North

THE LOVE STORY OF  
A GRAY JACKET

By **RANDALL PARRISH**  
AUTHOR OF  
"WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING"

Illustrations by **Arthur T. Williamson**

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## SYNOPSIS.

**CHAPTER I.**—The story opens in a tent of the Confederate army at a critical stage of the Civil War. Gen. Lee imparts to Captain Wayne a secret message to Longstreet, upon the delivery of which depend great issues. Accompanied by Sergeant Craig, an old army scout, Wayne starts out on his dangerous mission.

**CHAPTER II.**—The two messengers make a wild ride, dodging squads of soldiers, almost lose their bearings and finally are within the lines of the enemy, having penetrated the cordon of pickets unmolested.

**CHAPTER III.**—Encountering a small party of soldiers in the darkness, Wayne is taken for a federal officer who came to keep an appointment, is accepted as his representative, and a young lady on horseback is given in his charge.

**CHAPTER IV.**—The female companion of the two southern scouts is a northern girl, who, when she becomes aware of her riding whip and attempts to escape but fails.

**CHAPTER V.**—One of the horses giving out, Wayne orders Craig to get through with the dispatches to Longstreet. He and My Lady of the North are left alone near a rocky gorge.

**CHAPTER VI.**—The Confederate officer and the Union girl thread the mazes of the woods. He discovers a lonely hut, and entering it in the dark a huge mass attacks him. The girl shoots the brute just in time.

**CHAPTER VII.**—The owner of the hut, one Jed Bungay, appears and he and his wife give the captain a welcome. Suddenly a party of horsemen are observed coming down the road.

**CHAPTER VIII.**—They are led by a man claiming to be Red Lowrie, who orders Mrs. Bungay to give them food, and her husband to act as a guide. The woman discovers the man to be a disguised impostor, attacks the intruder and there is a general melee.

**CHAPTER IX.**—The disguised leader proves to be Major Brennan, a Federal officer whom the Union girl recognizes. He orders the arrest of Wayne as a spy. The girl protests and says she will appeal to General Sheridan.

**CHAPTER X.**—Wayne held prisoner in a copse, sees files of Confederates pass the road at a distance and knows that Craig has delivered the message.

**CHAPTER XI.**—The captive is brought before General Sheridan who refuses to set him free unless he reveals the secret message.

**CHAPTER XII.**—Captain Wayne is led to understand that the woman he admires is Edith Brennan, wife of the Federal officer, who hates him. He is given the choice of revealing the Lee message or of being shot as a spy.

**CHAPTER XIII.**—Wayne is rescued from his prison by Jed Bungay. One of them must get a quick report through the lines to General Lee and Jed starts on the mission.

**CHAPTER XIV.**—Finding the garb of an absent officer of the Union artillery, Wayne penetrates to the ballroom, where a social army function is in progress, and pretends to be Col. Curran of Ohio.

## CHAPTER XII.

### Under Sentence of Death.

At this late date I doubt greatly if my situation at that time was so desperate as I then conceived it. I question now whether the death sentence would ever have been executed. But then, with the memory of Sheridan's rage and my own hot-headed retort, I fully believed my fate was destined to be that of the condemned spy, unless she who alone might tell the whole truth should voluntarily do so. That circumstances had left me in the power of one whose fierce dislike was already evident was beyond question, and I had yielded to his goading to such an extent as to give those in authority every excuse for the exercise of extreme military power. Yet of one thing I was firmly resolved—no thoughtless word of mine should ever endanger the reputation of Edith Brennan. Right or wrong, I would go to a death of dishonor before I would speak without her authority. Love and pride conspired to make this decision adamant.

"Come," said Caton, briefly, and I turned and accompanied him without thought of resistance. At the front door he ordered the little squad of waiting soldiers to fall in, and taking me by the arm, led the way down the gravelled path to the road. I was impressed by his seeming carelessness, but as we cleared the gateway he spoke, and his words helped me to comprehend.

Captain Wayne," he said quietly, so that the words could not be overheard, "you do not recognize me, but I was the officer who conducted you to headquarters when you brought the flag in at Wilson Creek. Of course I must perform the duty given me, but I wish you to understand that I wholly believe your word."

He stopped, extended his hand, and I accepted it silently.

"There must be some grave personal reason which seals your lips?" he questioned.

"There is."

"I thought as much. I chanced to overhear the words, or rather a portion of them, which Brennan whispered, and have no doubt if they were explained to the General he would feel more kindly disposed toward you."

It was asked as a question, and I felt obliged to reply.

"I appreciate deeply your desire to aid me, but there are circumstances involving others which compel me for the present to silence. Indeed my possible fate does not so greatly trouble me, only that I possess a strong de-

sire to have freedom long enough to cross swords with this major of yours. The quarrel between us has become bitterly personal, and I hunger for a chance to have it out. Do you know, is he a man who would fight?"

The young fellow stiffened slightly. "We are serving upon the same staff," he said more abruptly, "and while we have never been close friends, yet I cannot honorably take sides against him. He has been out twice within the last three years to my knowledge, and is not devoid either of courage or skill. Possibly, however, the arrival of his wife may make him less a fire-eater."

"His wife?"

"I stopped so suddenly that he involuntarily tightened his grip upon my arm as though suspicious of an attempt to escape."

"Do you," I asked, gaining some slight control over myself, "refer to the lady who came in with his party last evening?"

"Most certainly; she was presented to all of us as Mrs. Brennan, she has been assigned rooms at his quarters, and she wears a wedding-ring. Far too fine a woman in my judgment for such a master, but then that is not so uncommon a mistake in marriage. Why, come to think about it, you must have met her yourself. Have you reason to suspect this is not their relationship?"

"Not in the least," I hastened to answer, fearful lest my thoughtless exclamation might become the basis for camp gossip. "Indeed I was scarcely in the lady's presence at all coming in, as I was left in charge of the sergeant."

Perhaps he felt that he had already said too much, for we tramped on in silence until we drew near a large, square white building standing directly beside the road.

"This is the old Culverton tavern, known as the Mansion House," he said. "It is a tremendous big building for this country, with as fine a ballroom in it as I have seen since leaving New York. We utilize it for almost every military purpose, and among others some of the strong rooms in the basement are found valuable for the safe-keeping of important prisoners."

We mounted the front steps as he was speaking, passing through a cordon of guards, and in the wide hallway I was turned over to the officer in charge.

"Good-night, Captain," said Caton, kindly extending his hand. "You may rest assured that I shall say all I can in your favor, but it is to be regretted that Brennan has great influence just now at headquarters, and Sheridan is not a man to lightly overlook those hasty words you spoke to him."

I could only thank him most warmly for his interest, realizing fully from his grave manner my desperate situation, and follow my silent conductor down some narrow and steep stairs until we stood upon the cemented floor of the basement. Here a heavy door in the stone division wall was opened; I was pushed forward into the dense darkness within, and the lock clicked dully behind me. So thick was the wall I could not even distinguish the retreating steps of the jailer.

Tired as I was from the intense strain of the past thirty-six hours, even my anxious thoughts were insufficient to keep me awake. Feeling my way cautiously along the wall, I came at last to a wide wooden bench, and stretching my form at full length upon it, pillowed my head on one arm, and almost instantly was sound asleep.

When I awoke, sore from my hard bed and stiffened by the uncomfortable position in which I lay, it was broad daylight. That the morning was, indeed, well advanced I knew from the single ray of sunlight which streamed in through a grated window high up in the wall opposite me and fell like a bar of gold across the rough stone floor. I was alone.

Even in the dark of the previous night I had discovered the sole pretence to furniture in the place. The room itself proved to be a large and almost square apartment, probably during the ordinary occupancy of the house a receptacle for wood or garden produce, but now peculiarly well adapted to the safeguarding of prisoners.

The solid stone walls were of sufficient height to afford no chance of reaching the great oak girders that supported the floor above, even had the doing so offered a favorable opening for escape. There were, apparently, but three openings of any kind—the outside window through which the sunlight streamed, protected by thick bars of iron; a second opening, quite narrow, and likewise protected by a heavy metal grating; and the tightly locked door by means of which I had entered. The second, I concluded, after inspecting it closely, was a mere air passage leading into some other division of the cellar. I noted these openings idly, and with scarcely a thought as to the possibility of escape. I had awakened with strange

indifference as to what my fate might be. Such a feeling was not natural to me, but the fierce emotions of the preceding night had seemingly robbed me of all my usual buoyancy of hope. In one sense I yet trusted that Mrs. Brennan would keep her pledge and tell her story to Sheridan; even if she failed to do this, and left me to face the rifles or the rope, then it made but small odds how soon it should be over. If she cared for me in the slightest degree she would not let me die unjustly, and to my mind then she had become the centre of all life.

Despondency is largely a matter of physical condition, and I was still sufficiently fagged to be in the depths, when the door opened suddenly, and an ordinary army ration was placed within. The soldier who brought it did not speak, nor did I attempt to address him; but after he retired, the appetizing smell of the bacon, together with the unmistakable flavor of real coffee, drew me irresistibly that way, and I made a hearty meal. The food put new life into me, and I fell to pacing back and forth between the corners of the cell, my mind full of questioning, yet with a fresh measure of confidence that all would still be well.

It was without warning, the door once again opened, and Lieutenant Caton entered. He advanced toward me with outstretched hand, which I grasped warmly, for I felt how much depended on his friendship, and resolved to ask him some questions which should solve my last remaining doubts.

"Captain Wayne," he began soberly, looking about him, "you are in even worse stress here than I supposed, but I shall see to it that you are furnished with blankets before I leave. Sheridan is hasty himself, and his temper often leads him to rash language. I am sure he bears you no malice for what you said. But Brennan has his ear, and has whispered something to him in confidence—what, I have been unable to ascertain—which has convinced him that you are deserving of death under martial law."

"Without trial?"

"The opportunity of furnishing the information desired will be again offered you; but, as near as I can learn, the charge preferred against you is of such a private nature that it is deemed best not to make it matter for camp talk. Whatever it may be, Sheridan evidently feels justified in taking the case out from the usual channels, and in using most drastic measures. I am sorry to bring you such news, especially as I believe the charges are largely concocted in the brain of him who makes them, and have but the thinnest circumstantial evidence to sustain them. Yet Sheridan is thoroughly convinced, and will brook no interference. The discussion of the case has already led to his using extremely harsh words to his chief of staff."

"I am to be shot, then?"

"His hand closed warmly over mine. "While there is life there is always hope," he answered. "Surely it must be in your power to prove the nature of your mission within our lines, and the delay thus gained will enable us to learn and meet these more serious allegations."

"If I but had time to communicate with General Lee."

"But now—is there no one, no way by which such representation can be given this very day? If not full proof of your innocence, then sufficient, at least, to cause the necessary delay?"

I shook my head. "I know of nothing other than my own unsupported word," I answered shortly, "and that is evidently of no value as against Major Brennan's secret insinuations. When is the hour set?"

"I am not positive that final decision has yet been reached, but I heard daybreak-to-morrow mentioned. The probability of an early movement of our troops is the excuse urged for such unseemly haste."

I remained silent for a moment, conscious only of his kindly eyes reading my face.

"Mrs. Brennan," I asked finally, recurring to the one thought in which I retained deep interest,—"does she still remain in the camp?"

"She was with the Major at headquarters this morning. I believe they breakfasted with the General, but I was on duty so late last night that I overslept, and thus missed the pleasure of meeting her again."

We talked for some time longer, and he continued to urge me for some further word, but I could give him none, and finally the kindly fellow departed, promising to see me again within a few hours. Greatly as I now valued his friendship, it was, nevertheless, a relief to be alone with my thoughts once more.

(To Be Continued.)

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Senator Frye as a Humorist.

Senator Frye had a splendid sense of humor and fund of anecdote. His reminiscences were most entertaining. His characterizations were singularly accurate. It was he who spoke of Martin Maginnis of Montana as the senator who had more certificates and fewer chances to sit down than any one else he had ever known.

When Buffalo was represented in the house by a flighty and erratic youngster, who must be nameless, and a severely prim elderly statesman, Mr. Frye expressed his wonder that so flourishing a city should desire to be served by "a corpse and a lunatic."

He told, on his return from Paris, of his fruitless efforts to acquire French. Schooling himself so as to give directions to his barber, after repeated efforts, he heard the tonsorial artist exclaim: "Oh, if you could only speak a little English!" And Mr. Frye liked the story.

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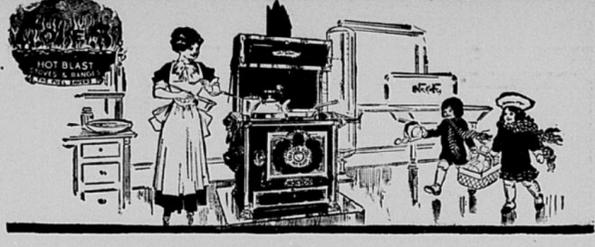
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