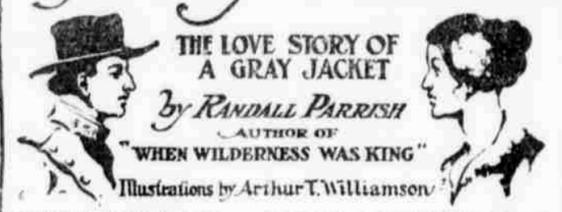


My Lady of the North



THE LOVE STORY OF
A GRAY JACKET

By RANDALL PARRISH

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"WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING"

Illustrations by Arthur T. Williamson

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SYNOPSIS.

The story opens in a Confederate tent as a critical stage of the Civil War. Gen. Lee's army is in the process of moving to the north. Accompanied by a young man, an army scout, Wayne, a young man, and a young woman, Mrs. Brennan, they are on their way to the north. The story follows their journey through the wilderness, with various encounters and challenges. Mrs. Brennan is a young woman who has been abandoned by her husband, and she is determined to find him. Wayne is a young man who has been orphaned and is looking for a home. The story is a love story, but it is also a story of survival and adventure.

CHAPTER XVII—Continued.

"Colonel Curran is certainly to be congratulated upon having found an charming guide, madam, and I can assure you I shall most gladly do my part toward the success of the expedition. The Major was exposed back before this, I believe?"

"He left word that if he had not returned by twelve I was to wait for him no longer as he should go directly to his quarters. I find the life of a soldier to be extremely uninteresting."

"We are our country's servants, madam; he replied, readily, and then taking out a pad of blanks from his pocket, turned to me.

"May I ask your full name and rank, Colonel?"

"Patrick L. Curran, Colonel, Sixth Ohio Light Artillery."

He wrote it down rapidly, tore off the paper, and handed it to me.

"That will take you safely through our inner guard lines," he said gravely, "that being as far as my jurisdiction extends. Good-night, Colonel; good-night, Mrs. Brennan."

We bowed ceremoniously, and the next moment Mrs. Brennan and I were out upon the stars, breathing the cool night air. I stood looking at her face as the gleam of light fell upon it—how calm and reserved she appeared, and yet her eyes were aglow with intense excitement. At the foot of the steep she glanced up at the dark, projecting roof far above us.

"Do you suppose you can possibly be up there yet?" she asked, in a tone as low as to be inaudible to the ears of the sentry.

"What? Huzzay?" I questioned in surprise, for my thoughts were elsewhere. "Oh, he was like a cat, and there are trees at the rear. Probably he is in the low part, or else a prisoner once more."

Beyond the gleam of the uncovered windows all was wrapped in complete darkness, save that here and there we could distinguish the dull red glare of campfires where the company cooks were yet at work, or some sentry post had been established. We turned sharply to the left, and proceeded down a comparatively smooth road, which seemed to me to possess a rock basis, it felt so hard. From the position of the stars I judged our course to be eastward, but the night was sufficiently obscured to shroud all objects more than a few yards distant. Except for the varied camp noises on either side of us the evening was oppressively still, and the air had the late chill of high altitudes. Mrs. Brennan pressed more closely to me as we passed beyond the narrow zone of light, and unconsciously we fell into step together.

A few hundred yards farther a fire burned redly against a pile of logs. The forms of several men lay out stretched beside it, while a sentry paced back and forth in and out of the range of light. We were almost upon him before he noted our approach, and in his haste he swung his musket down from his shoulder until the point of its bayonet nearly touched my breast.

"Halt!" he cried sternly, peering at us in evident surprise. "Halt! this road is closed."

"Valley Forge," whispered the girl, and I noticed how white her face appeared in the flaming of the fire.

"The word is all right, Miss," returned the fellow, stoutly, yet without lowering his obstructing gun. "But we cannot pass any one out on the countersign alone. If you was going the other way it would answer."

"But we are returning from the officers' hall," she urged anxiously, "and are on our way to Major Brennan's quarters. We have passes."

As she drew the paper from out her glove one of the men at the fire sprang to his feet and strode across the narrow road toward us. He was smooth of face and boyish looking, but wore corporal's stripes.

"What is it, Mapes?" he asked sharply.

Without waiting an answer he took the paper she held out and scanned it rapidly.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Reputation of a Woman.

Like a flash occurred to me the only possible means by which we might escape our discovery—an instant disclosure of my supposed rank, coupled with indignant protest. Already believing me merely some private soldier straying out of bounds with a woman of the camp as companion, he had thrown himself from the saddle to investigate. Whatever was to be done must be accomplished quickly, or it would prove all too late. To think was to act. Stopping instantly in front of the shrieking girl and facing him, I said sternly:

"I do not know who you may chance to be, sir, nor greatly care, yet your words and actions imply an insult to this lady which I am little disposed to overlook. For your information per-



"Halt! This Road is Closed."

mit me to state, I am Colonel Curran, Sixth Ohio Light Artillery, and am not accustomed to being halted on the road by every drunken fool who sports a uniform."

He stopped short in complete surprise, staring at me through the darkness, and I doubted not was perfectly able to distinguish the glint of buttons and gleam of braid.

"Your pardon, sir," he ejaculated at last. "I mistook you for some runaway soldier. But I failed to catch your words; how did you name yourself?"

"Colonel Curran, of Major-General Halleck's staff."

"The hell you are! Curran had a full gray beard a month ago."

He took a step forward, and before I could recover from the first numbing

shock of surprise was peering intently into my face.

"Huzzay!" he cried, tugging violently at a revolver in his belt. "I know that face! You are the meanly Johnny Reb I brought to bay before yesterday."

There came a quick flutter of drapery at my side, and she, pressing me firmly backward, faced him without a word.

The man's extended arm dropped to his side as though pierced by a bullet, and he took one step backward, shrinking as if his startled eyes beheld a ghost.

"Edith!" he cried, as though doubting his own vision, and the ring of agony in his voice was almost piteous. "Edith! My God! You here, at midnight, alone with this man?"

However the words, the tone, the posture may have stung her, her face remained proudly calm, her voice cold and clear.

"I certainly am, Major Brennan," she answered, her eyes never once leaving his face. "And may I ask what reason you can have to object?"

"Reason?" His voice had grown hoarse with passion and surprise. "My God, how can you ask? How can you even face me? Why do you not sink down in shame? Alone here, at such an hour, in company with a Rebel, a sneaking, cowardly spy, already condemned to be shot. By Heaven! he shall never live to honor of it!"

He flung up his revolver barrel to prove the truth of his threat, but she stepped directly between us, and shielded me with her form.

"Put down your pistol," she ordered coldly. "I assure you my reputation



"Put Down Your Pistol," She Ordered Coldly.

is in no immediate danger unless you shoot me, and your bullet shall certainly find my heart before it ever reaches Captain Wayne."

"Truly, you must indeed love him," he sneered.

So close to me was she standing that I could feel her form tremble at this insult, yet her voice remained emotionless.

"Your uncalculated words shame me, not my actions. In being here with Captain Wayne tonight I am merely paying a simple debt of honor—a double debt, indeed, considering that he was condemned to death by your lie, while you deceived me by another."

"Did he tell you that?"

He did not. Like the true gentleman he has ever shown himself to be, he endeavored to disguise the facts, to withhold from me all knowledge of your dastardly action. I know it by the infamous sentence pronounced against him and by your falsehood to me.

"Edith, you mistake," he urged anxiously. "I was told that he had been sent North."

She drew a deep breath, as though she could scarcely grasp the full audacity of his pretence to ignorance.

"You appeared to be fully informed but now as to his death sentence?"

"Yes, I heard of it while away, and intended telling you as soon as I reached our quarters."

I could feel the scorn of his miserable deception as it curled her lip, and her figure seemed to straighten between us.

"Then," she said slowly, "you will doubtless agree that I have done no more than was right, and will therefore permit him this chance of escape from so unmerited a fate; for you know as well as I do that he has been wrongly condemned."

He stepped forward with a half-smothered oath, and rested one hand heavily upon her shoulder.

"I rather guess not, madam," he said. "Damn him! I will hang him now higher than Haman, just to show Queen Esther that it can be done. Out of the way, madam!"

Rendered desperate by her slight resistance and his own jealous hatred, he thrust the woman aside so rudely that she fell forward upon one knee.

His revolver was yet in his right hand, gleaming in the starlight, but before he could raise or fire it I had grasped the steel barrel firmly, and the hammer came down noiselessly upon the flash of my thumb. The next instant we were locked close together in fierce struggle for the mastery. He was the heavier, stronger man; I the younger and quicker. From the first every effort on both sides was put forth solely to gain command of the weapon—his to fire, mine to prevent, for I knew well at the sound of the discharge there would come a rush of blue-coats to his rescue. My first fierce onset had put him on the defensive, but as we tugged and strained his superiority in weight began to tell, and slowly he bore me backward until all the weight of my body rested upon my right leg. Then there occurred to me like a flash a wrestler's trick taught me years before by an old negro on my father's plantation. Instantly I appeared to yield to the force against which I contended with simulated weakness, sinking lower and lower, until, I doubt not, Brennan felt convinced I must go over backward. But as I thus sank, my left foot found steady support farther back, while my free hand sank slowly down his straining body until my groping fingers grasped firmly the broad belt about his waist. I yielded yet another inch, until he leaned so far over me as to be out of all balance, and then, with sudden straightening of my left leg, at the same time bending my head beneath his chest in average, with one tremendous effort I flung him, head under, crashing down upon the hard road. Trembling like a reed from the exertion, I stood there looking down upon the dark

crest of the low hill toward their quarters. Then I turned my face eastward and tramped resolutely on. I was, first of all, a soldier, and nothing short of death or capture should prevent me reaching Lee with my message. Let what would happen, all else could wait!

The gleam of the stars fell upon the double row of buttons down the breast of the coat I wore, and I stopped suddenly with an exclamation of disgust. Nothing could be gained by longer masquerade, and I felt inexpressible shame at being thus atired. Neither pass nor uniform would suffice to get me safe through those outer picket lines, and if I should, fall in the attempt, or be again made prisoner, I vastly preferred meeting my fate clad in the faded gray of my own regiment. With odd sense of relief I hastily stripped off the gorgeous trappings, flung them in the ditch beside the road, and pressed on, feeling like a new man.

There was small need for caution here, and for more than an hour I tramped steadily along, never meeting a person or being started by a suspicious sound. Then, as I rounded a low eminence I perceived before me the dark outlines of trees which marked the course of the White Briar, white directly in my front, and half obscured by thick leaves of the underbrush, blazed the red glare of a fire. I knew the stream well, its steep banks of periglacial rock, its rapid, swirling current which, I was well aware, I was not a sufficiently expert swimmer to cross. Once upon the other bank I should be comparatively safe, but to pass that picket post and attain the ford was certain to require all the good fortune I could ever hope for.

But despair was never for long my comrade, and I had learned how determination opens doors to the courageous—it is ever he who tries that enters in. It took me ten minutes, possibly, creeping much of the way like a wild animal over the rocks, but at the end of that time I had attained a position well within the dense thicket, and could observe clearly the ground before me and some of the obstacles to be overcome.

As I supposed, it was a cavalry outpost; I could distinguish the crossed sabers on the caps of the men, although it was some time before I was able to determine positively where their horses were picketed. There must have been all of twenty in the party, and I could distinguish the lieutenant in command, a middle-aged man with light-colored chin beard, seated by himself against the wall of a small shanty of logs, a pipe in his mouth and an open book upon his knee. His men were gathered close about the blazing fire, for the night air was decidedly chill as it swept down the valley; a number were sleeping, a few at cards, while a little group, sitting with their backs toward me, yet almost within reach of my hand, were idly smoking and discussing the floating rumors of the camp. I managed to make out dimly the figure of a man on horseback beyond the range of flame, and apparently upon the very bank of the stream, when some words spoken by an old gray-haired sergeant interested me.

"Bob," he said to the soldier lounging next him, "what was it that staff officer sent ter the lieutenant? I didn't just git ter straight of it."

The man, a debonaire young fellow, stroked his little black mustaches reflectively.

"The covyed as how Cole's division wud be along here afore day light, an' that our fellows wud likely be sent out ahead of 'em."

"What be they a goin'?"

The lieutenant asked him, an' the covyed as it was a general advance to meet of Hancock at Minersville."

"That's good 'nough, lads," chimed in the sergeant, slapping his knee. "It means a dance down the valley after Early. I'm a guessin' we'll have a bang-up of light 'fore three days more."

"Pervidin' allers that ther Johnnies don't skeedaddle fast," commented another, tartly. "What in thunder is ther matter with them bosses?" he asked suddenly, rising and peering over into the bushes beyond the hut, where a noise of squealing and kicking had arisen.

"Oh, the bay filly is probably over the rope agin," returned the sergeant, lazily. "Sit down, Sims, an' be easy; you're not on hoss guard tonight."

"I know that," growled the soldier, doubtfully, "but ther thar kid is no good, an' I don't want my boss all banged up just as we're goin' on campaign. Tain't no sorter way ter hitch 'em anyhow, to a picket rope; ruins more hosses than ther Rebs dew."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Standard of Colors.

The call for international standards of all kinds is becoming every day more insistent with the progressive unification of the industries of the world. The latest demand of this kind is for an international standard of colors.

Chemists, manufacturers of dye-stuffs and pigments, and many others would benefit by such a standard. It is suggested that when once the desired color scheme has been decided upon, the best method of perpetuating the standards, and rendering them available for comparison everywhere, would be by means of colored glasses with which a tintometer could be constructed. A tentative instrument of this kind, based on an arbitrary color scheme, has been made.—Youth's Companion.

An Exception: The Foundling.

Every mother's son of us has relatives he doesn't like.—Chicago News.

COST OF GRAIN GROWING IN CENTRAL CANADA

A careful canvass made of a number of men farming in a large way indicates that even with the extreme expense of harvesting the crop, which has been caused by the bad weather and difficulty in threshing, wheat has been produced and put on the market for less than 55 cents a bushel. The average freight rate is not over 13 cents per bushel. This would make the cost of production and freight 68 cents and would leave the farmer an actual margin on his low-grade wheat of 17 1/2 cents and for his high-grade wheat of 19 1/2 cents; and though this is not as large a profit as the farmer has every right to expect, it is a profit not to be despised, and which should leave a very fair amount of money to his credit when all the expenses of the year have been paid, unless the value of low-grade wheat sinks very much below its present level. A matter of importance to the prospective settler is that of the cost of production. The following table has been prepared after careful investigation:

Interest on 320 acres, value \$20 per acre, 3 years at 6 per cent interest.....	\$1,720.00
Interest on horses, machinery, wagons, ploughs, harrows, etc., to operate 320 acres—say \$2,500 for 3 years.....	450.00
Getting 320 acres ready for crop first year, doing one's own work, with hired help, about \$3.50 per acre.....	1,120.00
Getting 320 acres ready for crop, second and third year, about \$1.25 per acre per year, or \$2.50 per acre 2 years one's own work and hired help.....	800.00
Seed per year, wheat, per acre \$1.25, 3 years.....	1,200.00
Seeding, 320 acres, 25 cents per acre, 3 years.....	240.00
Twine, 320 acres, 30 cents per acre, 3 years.....	288.00
Harvesting, 320 acres, 30 cents per acre, 3 years.....	288.00
Marketing, 320 acres, estimate 20 bushels per acre per year for 3 years, 3 cents per bushel, or 9 cents per bushel for 3 years.....	576.00
Threshing 320 acres, estimate 20 bushels per acre per year for 3 years, 6 cents per bushel per year or 18 cents for 3 years.....	1,152.00
Total	\$7,834.00

Cr.
By wheat crop farm 320 acres for 3 years, average 20 bushels per acre per year for 3 years, or a total of 60 bushels, = 19,200 bushels at 80 cents per bushel..... \$15,360.00
Balance to credit of farm after 3 years operation, \$2,563.00 per year..... 7,526.00

"To operate 480 acres would cost less in proportion, as the plant required for 320 acres would do for the larger farm, and the interest on plant for the extra 160 acres would be saved."

The figures given may be open to criticism, but they will be found to be reasonably accurate, with a fairness given to the expense columns. There are those who profess to do the work at a much less cost than those given.

Unjustifiable Suspicion.

The colonel had caught Hastus red-handed, coming out of the hen coop with three fat pullets under his coat.

"So," he said, "I've caught you at last stealing my hens, have I?"

"What me, sub?" replied Rastus, in pained surprise. "Why, Marsa Colonel, sub, I hain't a-stealin' no hens, sub."

"Then what are you doing with them under your coat?" demanded the colonel.

"Why, Marsa Colonel, hit look to me so like it war gwine to snow, sub, dat ah went out to de coop to bring dem hens in by de kitchen flah, sub, to keep 'em from gittin' froze, sub," said the old man, with a deep sigh, to think that his honor had been suspected.—Harper's Weekly.

Efete Briton.

Ruth Tarkington, the American playwright and novelist, is a very early riser, and when the English playwright and novelist, Arnold Bennett, visited him at his charming residence in Indianapolis, Mr. Tarkington said, the first evening at dinner:

"I believe in the simple life. I get up with the sun. Will you take a ten-mile walk with me at six o'clock tomorrow morning?"

"Thank you, Mr. Tarkington," the Englishman answered, "but I don't walk in my sleep."

Constipation causes many serious diseases. It is thoroughly cured by Doctor Pierce's Pleasant Pellets. One a laxative, three for cathartic.

Hope.

He—They say men of brains live long.
She—Well, hope for the best. You may prove one of the exceptions.

FILES CURED IN 6 TO 14 DAYS
Your druggist will refund money if PAIN EXIST. MEANT to cure any case of itching, blind, bleeding or protruding piles in 6 to 14 days. See

There never was a man as important as a bride expects her husband to be.

Anyway, a spinster can pretend that she would rather be her own boss.

Most people look at trouble through a microscope.