

MY LADY OF THE NORTH

The Love Story of a Gray Jacket

by RANDALL PARRISH
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SYNOPSIS.

The story opens in a Confederate tent at a critical stage of the Civil War. Gen. Lee imparts to Capt. Wayne an important message to Longstreet. Accompanied by Sgt. Craig, an old army scout, Wayne starts on his mission. They get within the lines of the enemy and in the darkness Wayne is taken for a Federal officer and a young lady on horseback is given in his charge. She is a young girl and attempts to escape. One of the horses succumbs and Craig goes through with the dispatches, while Wayne and My Lady of the North are left alone. They seek shelter in a hut and entering it in the dark a huge mastiff attacks Wayne. The girl shoots the brute just in time. The owner of the hut, Jed Bungay, and his wife appear and soon a party of horsemen approach. They are led by a man claiming to be Red Lowrie, but who proves to be Maj. Brennan, a Federal officer whom the Union girl recognizes. He orders the arrest of Wayne as a spy and he is brought before Sheridan, who threatens him with death unless he reveals the secret message. Wayne believes Edith Brennan to be the wife of Maj. Brennan. He is rescued by Jed Bungay, who starts to reach Gen. Lee, and My Lady in disguise penetrates to the ball-room, beneath which he had been imprisoned. He is introduced to a Miss Minor and barely escapes being unmasked. Edith Brennan, recognizing Wayne, says she will save him. Securing a pass through the lines, they are confronted by Brennan, who is knocked senseless. Then, bidding Edith adieu, Wayne makes a dash for liberty. He encounters Bungay; they reach the Lee camp and are sent with reinforcements to join Early.

CHAPTER XXI.—Continued.

With the ardor of young manhood I looked forward to the coming battle, when I knew the mighty armies of North and South would once again contend for the fertile Shenandoah. It was to be American pitted against American, a struggle ever worthy of the gods. Slowly I rode back down the files of my men, marking their alignment and accoutrements with practised eye, smiling grimly as I noted their eager faces, war-worn and bronzed by exposure, yet reanimated by hope of active service. As I watched them thus, I thought again of those many other faces who once rode as these men did now, but who had died for duty even as these also might yet be called upon to die. One hundred and three strong, gay in bright new uniforms, with unstained banners kissing the breeze above our proud young heads, we rode hopefully forth from Charlottesville scarce three years before, untried, undisciplined, unknown, to place our lives willingly upon the sacred altar of our native State. What speechless years of horror those had been; what history we had written with our naked steel; what scenes of suffering and death lay along that bloody path we travelled! To-day, down the same red road, our eyes still set grimly to the northward, our flag a torn and ragged remnant, barely forty men wore the "D" between the crossed sabres on their slouched brown hats, in spite of all recruiting. The cheer in my heart was for the living; the tear in my eye was for the dead.

"Colgate," I said gravely, as I ranged up beside him at the rear of the troop, "the men look exceedingly well, and do not appear to have suffered greatly because of short rations."

"Oh, the lads are always in fine fettle when they expect a fight," he answered, his own eyes dancing as he swept them over that straight line of backs in his front. "They'll scrap the better for being a bit hungry.—It makes them savage. Beats all, Captain, what foolish notions some of those people on the other side have of us Southerners. They seem to think we are entirely different from themselves; yet I reckon it would puzzle any recruiting officer up yonder to show a finer lot of fighting men than those fellows ahead there."

I rode slowly forward to my own position at the head of the troop. As I swung my horse into our accustomed position I was too deeply buried in reflection to be clearly conscious of much that was occurring about me. Suddenly, however, I became aware that some one, nearly obscured by the enveloping cloud of dust, was riding without the column, in an independence of military discipline not to be permitted. In the state of mind I was then in this discovery strangely irritated me.

"Sergeant," I questioned sharply, of the raw-boned trooper at the end of the first p'atoon, "what fellow is that riding out yonder?"

"It's their pesky little cuss as come in with ye yesterday, sir," he returned with a grin. "He's conflicated a muel somewhat an' says he's a goin' back hain' long o' we us."

Curious to learn how Jed had emerged from his arduous adventures, I spurred my horse alongside of him. The little man, bending forward dubiously, as if fearful of accident, was riding bareback on a gaunt, long-legged mule, which, judging from all outward appearances, must have been some discarded asset of the quartermaster's department.

"Going home, Jed?" I asked, as he glanced up and saw me.

"Jist as durn quick as I kin git thar," he returned emphatically. "By gum, Cap, I ain't bin' way from Marlar long as this afore in twelve year. Reckon she thinks I've skeddled fer good this time, an' 'll be a takin' up with some other 'll critter lest I git back thar mighty sudden. Womans' odd, Cap, durn high as ornary

"bout some things as a muel." He eyed his mount critically.

"Durned if ever I thought I'd git straddle o' any four-legged critter agin," he said, rubbing himself as if in sudden and painful recollection of the past. "But I sort o' picked up this yere muel down at ther corral, an' he's tow durn wore out a totin' things fer you uns ter ever move off a walk. I sorter reckon it's a heap easier a sittin' yere than ter take it afut all ther way ter ther mountings."

It was long after dark the second day when, thoroughly wearied, we turned into an old tobacco field and made camp for the night. To right and left of our position glowed the cheery fires, telling where Early's command bivouacked in line of battle. From the low range of hills in front of where we rested one could look across an intervening valley, and see far off to the northward the dim flames which marked the position of the enemy. Down in the mysterious darkness between, divided only by a swift and narrow stream, were the blue and gray pickets. The opposing forces were sleeping on their arms, making ready for the death grip of the morrow.

As I lay there thinking, wondering what might be my fate before another nightfall, seeing constantly in my half-dreams the fair face of a woman, which made me more of a coward than I had ever felt myself before, I was partially aroused by the droning tones of a voice close at hand. Lifting myself on one elbow I glanced curiously around to see where it originated, what was occurring. Clustered about a roaring fire of rails were a dozen troopers, and in the midst of them, occupying the post of honor upon an empty powder keg, was Bungay, enthusiastically reciting Scott. I caught a line or two:

"At once there rose so wild a yell
Within that dark and narrow dell,
As all the fiends from heaven 'th fell
Had pealed the battle-cry of hell."
and then the drowsy god pressed down my heavy eyelids, and I fell asleep.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Battle in the Shenandoah.

To me it has always seemed remarkable that after all my other battle experiences—Antietam, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, ay! even including that first fierce baptism of fire at Manassas—no action in which I ever participated should remain so clearly photographed upon memory as this last desperate struggle for supremacy in the Shenandoah. Every minute detail of the conflict, at least so far as I chanced to be a personal participant, rises before me as I write, and I doubt not I could trace to-day each step taken upon that stricken field.

The reveille had not sounded when I first awoke, and, rolling from my blanket, looked about me. Already a faint, dim line of gray, heralding the dawn, was growing clearly defined in the east, and making manifest those heavy fog-banks which, hanging dank and low, obscured the valley. The tired men of my troop were yet lying upon the ground, wrapped tightly in their blankets, oblivious of the deadly work before them; but I could hear the horses already moving uneasily at their picket-ropes, and observed here and there the chilled figure of a sentry leaning upon his gun, oddly distorted in form by the enveloping mist.

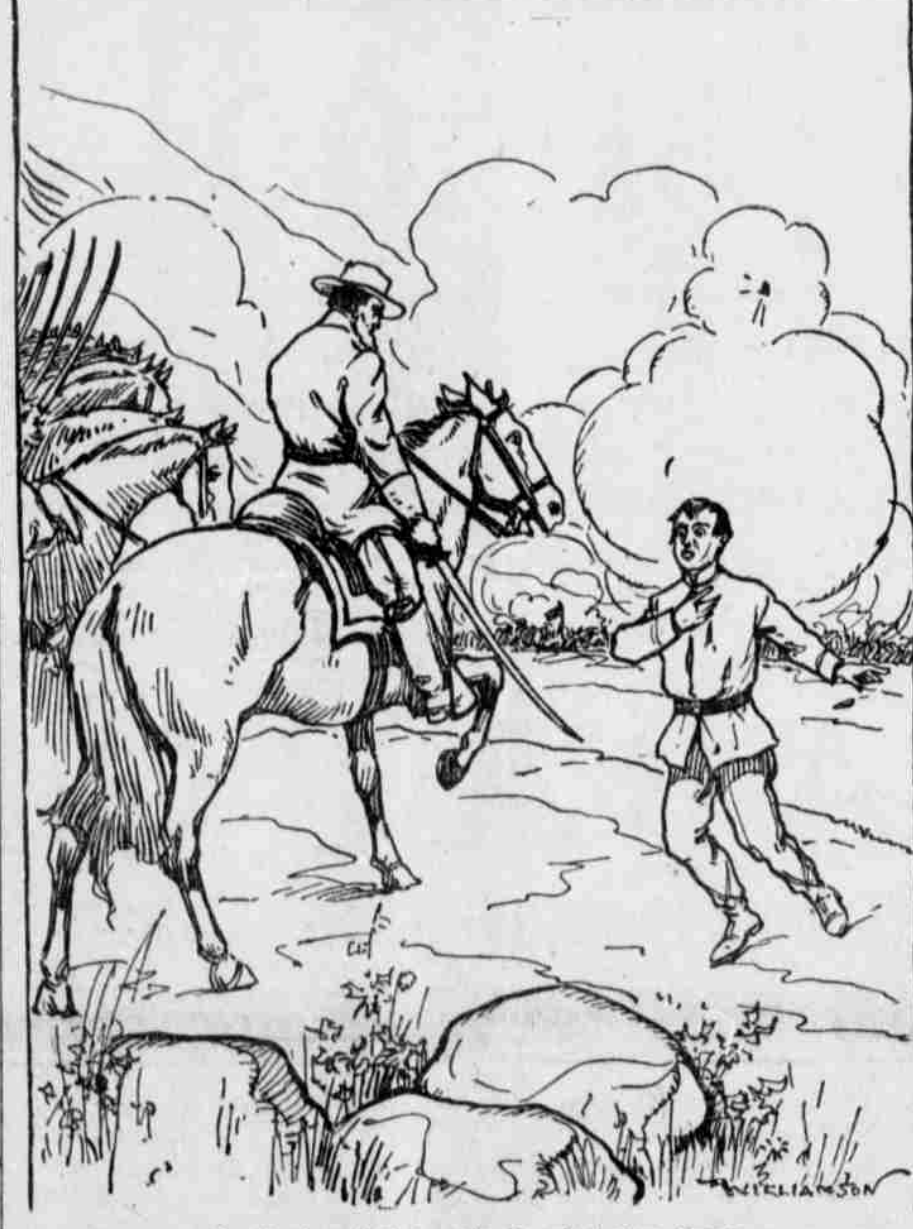
Directly in advance of where we rested, a long hill sloped gently upward for perhaps a hundred yards, its crest topped with a thick growth of young oak-trees, yet seemingly devoid of underbrush. No troops were camped in our immediate front, and feeling curious to ascertain something of our formation, as well as to examine the lay of the land between us and the position occupied by the enemy, I walked slowly forward, unhindered, until I attained the crest. The fog yet held the secrets of the valley safely locked within its brown hand, and I could penetrate none of its mysteries. It was like gazing down from some headland into a silent, unvoiced sea. But directly across from where I stood, apparently along the summit of another chain of low hills similar to those we occupied, I could perceive the flames of numerous camp-fires leaping up into sudden radiance, while against the brightening sky a great flag lazily flapped its folds to the freshening breeze. Evidently our opponents were first astrir, and the headquarters of some division of the enemy must be across yonder.

As I gazed, other fires burst forth to left and right, as far as the unaided eye could carry through the gloom, and I was thus enabled to trace distinctly those advanced lines opposing us. Experience told me their position must be a strong one, and their force heavy.

As I turned to mark our own formation, the roll of drums rang out, while the quickening notes of the reveille sounded down the long lines of slumbering men. Life returned, as if by magic, to those motionless forms, and almost in a moment all below me became astir, and I could clearly distinguish the various branches of

the service, as they stretched away commingled upon either hand. We were evidently stationed close to the centre of our own position. The intervening ground sloped so gently forward, while the hill crest was so thickly crowded with trees, it looked an ideal position from which to advance in line of attack. Upon my right there appeared a break in the solidity of our line, but even as I noted it, wondering at the oversight, the dense front of an infantry column debouched from a ravine and, marching steadily forward, filled the gap. I could distinctly mark the wearied manner in which the men composing it flung themselves prostrate on the hard ground the moment they were halted—doubtless all through the long hours of the black night they had been toiling on to be in time.

Aldes were galloping furiously now among the scattered commands. The obscuring fog slowly rose from off the face of the valley, but all the central portion remained veiled from view. Suddenly, as I watched, the brown cloud beneath me was rent asunder here and there by little spits of fire, and it was curious to observe how those quick spiteful darts of flame swept the full length of my vista. I could distinguish no reports,—it was too far away,—but realized that the opposing pickets had caught sight of each other through the gloom. Then a big gun boomed almost direct-



On Foot and Dying He Reached Our Front.

ly opposite me, its flame seeming like a red-hot knife rending the mist. This had barely vanished when a sudden cheer rang out upon my left, and I turned in time to behold a thin, scattered line of gray-clad infantrymen swarm down the steep slope into the valley. With hats drawn low, and guns advanced, they plunged at a run into the mist and disappeared. Our skirmishers had gone in; the ball had opened.

I had tarried long enough; any moment now might bring "boots and saddles," and if I possessed the slightest desire for a breakfast to fight on, it behooved me to get back within our lines. The memory of that animated scene in front still fresh upon me, how quiet and commonplace everything appeared down there in the hills.

"What has become of Bungay?" I questioned of Colgate, who was lying upon his back with eyes fastened on a floating cloud.

"Do you mean the little mountaineer who came in with us last night?" I nodded.

"Oh, his mule bolted at the first shot over yonder, and the little fellow is after it. He's down the field there somewhere."

How time dragged! The battery to left of us went into action, and began firing rapidly; we could mark the black figures of the cannoniers at the nearer guns, outlined against the sky over the crest, as they moved quickly back and forth. Twice they bore motionless bodies to the rear, and laid them down tenderly beyond the fierce zone of fire. Then the heavier pieces of artillery farther down the line burst into thunder, and we silently watched a large force of infantry move slowly past us up the long slope until they halted in line of battle just behind its summit, the advanced files lying flat upon their faces and peering over. But no orders came for us. Nearly noon by the red sun hiding

behind the drifting powder cloud. The ever-deepening roar of ceaseless contest had moved westward down the valley, when an aide wheeled his smoking horse in front of the Colonel, spoke a dozen hasty words, pointed impetuously to the left, and dashed off down the line. The men leaped to their feet in eager expectancy, and as the "Fall in, fall in there, lads," echoed joyously from lip to lip, the kindling eyes and rapid movements voiced unmistakably the soldier's spirit. We moved westward down the long, bare slope in the sunshine, through a half-dozen deserted, desolate fields, and along a narrow, rocky defile leading into a deep ravine. At the mouth of the ravine we came forth into the broad valley, and halted. Just in front of us, scarcely a half-mile distant, were the fighting lines, partially enveloped in dense smoke, out from which broke patches of blue or gray, as charge succeeded charge, or the wind swept aside the fog of battle. The firing was one continuous crash, while plunging bullets, overreaching their mark, began to chug into our own ranks, dealing death impartially to horse and man. The captain of the troop next mine wheeled suddenly, a look of surprise upon his face, and fell backward into the arms of one of his men; with an intense scream of agony, almost human, the horse of my first sergeant reared and came over, crushing the rider before he could loosen foot from stirrup; the Lieutenant-Colonel rode slowly past us to the rear, his face deathly white, one arm, dripping blood, dangling helpless at his side. This was the hardest work of war, that silent agony which tried men in helpless bondage to unyielding discipline. I glanced anxiously along the front of my troop, but they required no word from me; with tightly set lips, and pale, stern faces, they held their file steady as granite, closing up silently the ragged gaps torn by plunging balls.

"Captain," said Colgate, riding to where I sat my horse, "you will see that the paper I gave you reaches

discharge, their movements clock-work! Tense, eager, expectant, every hand among us hard gripped on sabre hilt, we waited that word which surely could not be delayed, while from end to end, down the full length of our straining line, rang out the yell of exultant pride.

"Steady, men; steady there, lads!" called the old Colonel, sternly, his own eyes filled with tears. "Our turn will come."

Torn, rent, shattered, bleeding, treading upon the dead and mangled in rows, those iron men in blue came on. They were as demons laughing at death. No rain of lead, no hail of canister, no certainty of destruction could check now the fierce impetus of that forward rush. God knows it was magnificent; the supreme effort of men intoxicated with the enthusiasm of war! Even where we were we could see and feel the giant power in those grim ranks of steel—the tattered flags, the stern, set faces, the deep-toned chorus of "Glory, glory, hallelujah," that echoed to their tread. Those men meant to win or die, and they rolled on as Cromwell's Ironsides at Marston Moor. Twice they staggered, when the mad volleys ploughed ragged red lanes through them, but only to rally and press sternly on. They struck that crouching gray line of infantry, fairly buried it with their dense blue folds, and, with one fierce hurrah of triumph, closed down upon the guns. Even as they blotted them from sight, an aide, hatless and bleeding, his horse wounded and staggering from weakness, tore down toward us along the crest. A hundred feet away his mount fell headlong, but on foot and dying he reached our front.

"Colonel Carter," he panted, pressing one hand upon his breast to keep back the welling blood, "charge, and hold that battery until we can bring infantry to your support."

No man among us doubted the full meaning of it—we were to save the army! The very horses seemed to feel a sense of relief, hands clinched more tightly on taut reins to hold them in check; under the old battered hats the eyes of the troopers gleamed hungrily.

"Virginians!" and the old Colonel's voice rang like a clarion down the breathless line, "there is where you die! Follow me!"

Slowly, like some mighty mountain torrent gaining force, we rode forth—a walk, each trooper lined to precision of review, yet instinctively taking distance for sword play. Halfway down the slight slope our line broke into a saar; trot, then, as the thrilling notes of the charge sounded above us, we swept forward in wild, impetuous tumult.

Who can tell the story of those seconds that so swiftly followed? Surely not one who saw but the vivid flash of steel, the agonized faces, the flame of belching fire. I recall the frenzied leap of my horse as we struck the line ere it could form into square; the blows dealt savagely to right and left; the blaze of a volley scorching our faces; the look of the big infantryman I rode down; the sudden thrust that saved me from a levelled gun; the quick swerving of our horses as they came in contact with the cannon; the shouts of rage; the blows; the screams of pain; the white face of Colgate as he reeled and fell. These are all in my memory, blurred, commingled, indistinct, yet distressful as any nightmare. In some way, how I know not, I realized that we had hurled them back, shattered them by our first fierce blow; that the guns were once again ours; that fifty dismounted troopers were tugging desperately at their wheels. Then that dense blue mass surged forward once again, engulfed us in its deadly folds, and with steel and bullet, sword and clubbed musket, ploughed through our broken ranks, rending us in twain, fairly smothering us by sheer force of numbers. I saw the old Colonel plunge head-down into a ruck beneath the horses' feet; the Major riding stone dead in his saddle, a ghastly red stain in the centre of his forehead; then Hunter, of E, went down screaming, and I knew I was the senior captain left. About me scarce a hundred men battled like demons for their lives in the midst of the guns. Even as I glanced aside at them, shielding my head with uplifted sabre from the blows rained upon me, the color-sergeant flung up his hand, and grasped his saddle pommel to keep from falling. Out of his creaking fingers I snatched the splintered staff, lifted it high up, until the rent folds of the old flag caught the dull glow of the sunlight.

"—th Virginia!" I shouted. "Rally on the colors!"

I could see them coming—all that was left of them—fighting their way through the press, cleaving the mass with their blows as the prow of a ship cut the sea. With one vicious jab of the spur I led them, a thin wedge of tempered gray steel, battering, gouging, rending a passage into that solid blue wall. Inch by inch, foot by foot, yard by yard, slashing madly with our broken sabres, battling as men crazed with lust of blood, our very horses fighting for us with teeth and hoofs, we ploughed a lane of death through a dozen files. Then the vast mass closed in upon us, rolled completely over us. There was a flash, a vision of frenzied faces, and I knew no more.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

An Inspiration.

"Professor McMuddle is very ingenious in twisting things around to illustrate his theories, is he not?"

"Yes, I believe he proposes to take the fact of the champagne troubles in France nearly overturning the government, to illustrate the curse of drink."

TESTIMONY OF FIVE WOMEN

Proves That Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Is Reliable.

Reedville, Ore.—"I can truly recommend Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound to all women who are passing through the Change of Life, as it made me a well woman after suffering three years."
—Mrs. MARY BOGART, Reedville, Oregon.

New Orleans, La.—"When passing through the Change of Life I was troubled with hot flashes, weak and dizzy spells and backache. I was not fit for anything until I took Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound which proved worth its weight in gold to me."
—Mrs. GASTON BLONDEAU, 1541 Polymnia St., New Orleans.

Mishawaka, Ind.—"Women passing through the Change of Life can take nothing better than Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I am recommending it to all my friends because of what it has done for me."
—Mrs. CHAS. BAUER, 523 E. Marion St., Mishawaka, Ind.

Alton Station, Ky.—"For months I suffered from troubles in consequence of my age and thought I could not live. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound made me well and I want other suffering women to know about it."
—Mrs. EMMA BAILEY, Alton Station, Ky.

Deisem, No. Dak.—"I was passing through Change of Life and felt very bad. I could not sleep and was very nervous. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound restored me to perfect health and I would not be without it."
—Mrs. F. M. THORN, Deisem, No. Dak.



FORCE OF HABIT.



Father—Now, if you ask me one single question more I'll send you to bed—

Son—Why?

One Was Lacking.
Head Clerk (to applicant who kept her government post)—Are these your identification papers?
Applicant—Yes, sir.
Head Clerk—H'm, your death certificate is missing.

No More Income Needed.
"Uncle Joe, do you believe in votes for women?"
"No, sah, I don't. Manda's got all de money dat's good for her now."

Whoever serves his country well has no need of ancestors.—Voltaire.

A TROUBLE MAKER
Coffee Poison Breeds Variety of Ills.

A California woman who didn't know for twenty years what kept her ill, writes to tell how she won back her health by quitting coffee:

"I am 54 years old," she says, "have used coffee all my life, and for 20 years suffered from indigestion and insomnia. Life was a burden and a drag to me all the time, and about once a year my ailments got such hold upon me that I was regularly 'sick in bed' for several weeks each time.

"I was reluctant to conclude that coffee was the cause of my trouble, but I am thankful that I found out the truth.

"Then I determined to use Postum exclusively—for a week at first—for I doubted my ability to do without coffee for any length of time. I made the Postum carefully, as directed, and before the week expired had my reward in a perceptible increase in strength and spirits.

"Seeing the good that my short experiment had accomplished, I resolved to continue the use of Postum, cutting out the coffee entirely. This I did for nine months, finding, daily, increased cause for gratification at my steadily improving health. My indigestion gradually left me, my sleep returned, I gained 25 pounds in weight, my color changed from sallow to a fresh, rosy hue and life became a blessing.

"Then I thought I would try coffee again, and did so for a few weeks. The punishment for deserting my good friend, Postum, was a return of my old troubles.

"That taught me wisdom, and I am now and shall be all my life hereafter using Postum exclusively and enjoying the benefits it brings me." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek Mich.

"There's a reason," and it is explained in the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pgs.

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They are genuine, true, and full of human interest.