

MY LADY OF THE SOUTH



A Fiftieth Anniversary War Story

By RANDALL PARISH

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CHAPTER XV.

WE ORGANIZE A SORTIE.

O'BRIEN was very clearly in a mood to shoot first and make inquiries afterward. Yet even in that darkness he recognized my voice and consented to lower the gun which was jammed against my breast. Donald had not recovered consciousness. I paused long enough to feel his pulse, which appeared rapid and strong, yet there was nothing we could do to relieve his condition beyond the application of water. I used O'Brien's belt to strap the lieutenant's feet together, placed him in as comfortable a position as possible and then, with strict injunction to the trooper to remain close beside both men, took up the extinguished lantern and groped my way down the short ladder to the dismal tunnel, closing the trap behind me.

While the brisk action of the past half hour had served somewhat to steady my nerves, yet the memory of that ghostly woman's face still haunted me, and I felt no inclination to attempt that passage alone in the darkness. The possibilities of murder lurked at every step, and, while I was not truly afraid, I felt my flesh creep at the thought and took precaution to light the lantern the instant I was safe at the foot of the ladder. Holding it well in advance, yet not so as to blind my eyes, I hurried forward, watchful of the shadows, but with mind busy with details of the coming attempt at escape. Here certainly lay our only chance of getting away. If we delayed until after daylight and O'Brien's command arrived meanwhile we would be caught like rats in a trap. But if we could manage to strike Dodd's scattered followers from the rear, surprising them by suddenness of attack, we might succeed in breaking away and by swift marching attain our own lines in safety. This plan offered a fighting chance at least, and the more I studied it the stronger became its appeal.

"The door opens."

"Pull straight upward on the andiron farthest to the north."

She obeyed without the slightest hesitation, and the mantel swung so suddenly I barely escaped being struck. The next instant, lantern still in hand, I was beside her, noting how she shrank back, half frightened, at my quick appearance from out the black recess.

"Don't be alarmed," I exclaimed hastily, feeling nothing more longer delay my plans. "No, you are not to go into that hole alone. There is something mysterious about the passage; we found Donald with his throat slashed exactly as those others were, only he still lives, and I believe will recover. I mean to take you to him in a moment, but you must wait here until I come back. You will, will you not? I can trust you?"

Her face was white, her eyes full of appeal.

"Yes, yes, but—but are you certain he will live?"

Even then these words, the deep feeling in the voice, hurt, almost angered me.

"There is no apparent reason why he should not," I answered, not altogether pleasantly. "There is nothing particularly serious about his injuries so far as I could discover. A surgeon and a nurse could bring him around in short order. The important matter is to get back to him just as soon as possible. No, Miss Denslow," and I caught her by the arm in restraint, "you are not to venture into that passage alone. I shall be back here in a moment to accompany you."

"But why cannot I go? You say he is hurt and suffering, and yet order me not to go to him?"

"I merely request you to remain here for a moment until we can guard you through the tunnel."

"Guard me?" Her eyes searching the dark opening. "From what? Is there any peril there?"

"Honestly, I do not know, but it is no place for you to attempt to traverse alone. I will not permit it. See, I am going to trust you fully to wait my return. Take this revolver and watch that opening until I come back."

She accepted it, our hands touching for an instant, before a vague suspicion of my real purpose dawned upon her.

"What—what are you planning to do? Take your men through here?"

"Yes," I acknowledged, already at the head of the stairs. "This is our opportunity for escape."

"And you believe I will be an accomplice? You intend to use me for the defeat of my own people?"

"No, Miss Denslow," and I came back, looking directly into her indignant eyes. "There is no manner in which you can possibly prevent our escape in this way unless you deliberately choose to kill me. You can do that, for you have my weapon in your hand, and I stand here unarmed. Are you willing to do that for the Confederacy?"

I saw the flush sweep into her cheeks, the gray-blue eyes falling before mine.

"No—no," she faltered, "not that."

"Then you are helpless to interfere. I desire to take you with us to the assistance of Colonel Donald, but if it is your intention to make trouble, then we shall have to lock you up again and leave you behind. Which is your choice?"

She could not doubt my sincerity, for the earnestness with which I spoke was convincing. Her eyes uplifted to mine for one single questioning instant.

"I will wait," she said slowly, "but—but I believe I hate you."

"I would far rather you felt thus, Miss Denslow," I returned quietly, "than to be utterly indifferent toward me."

I caught her sudden look of surprise, the quick uplift of her face, but before she could find expression in words

I had slipped down the stairs to the hall.

They came straggling forth from the various doorways, blackened with powder smoke and sleepy eyed from the long night vigil, yet a fairly tough looking bunch of fighting men, and ranged themselves before me. They had scarcely had opportunity to observe me before in the rush of that first attack, but the cavalry officer's uniform I wore had an immediate effect, and they remained respectfully silent, leaning on their carbines, waiting for me to speak.

"Well, men," I said soberly, "we're going out of this, but we are liable to have a bit of stiff fighting before we get away. I'll explain the situation, because you will have to operate in the dark, and each man must use his own judgment to some extent, although we will try to keep together. Those fellows out yonder are part of Donald's band of guerrillas, with a small squad of regular cavalry. They'll outnumber us a little over three to one, but are scattered around the house, the main force bunched in front. I've been out and looked them over, and if we can strike them suddenly in the rear we ought to have them on the run in five minutes. They haven't any guards out, and I have found a secret passage leading underground to a negro cabin a hundred feet west of the house kitchen. But we've got to act at once, and before daylight, for another bunch of those fellows are marching this way and may show up at any minute. Are you lads ready for a scrap?"

Their faces as well as voices answered.

As I turned to step upon the stair above two shots suddenly rang out in the upper hall, the sharp reports those of a revolver. Jenn! It must be Jenn! I leaped forward, the men racing at my heels.

She stood, crouching slightly, half way between the stair head and the end of the hall, staring into the blackness of the open fireplace, the revolver yet smoking in her hand.

"What was it, Miss Denslow? What were you firing at?"

The tenseness of her muscles gave way, and her slender form swayed back against the support of my shoulder, one hand clasping at my sleeve.

"At something there—there! God knows what. It looked like a woman, but such a face—such a face!"

"Yes, yes; I understand. I have seen the same," I said hastily. "It was in fear of such an appearance again that I gave you the revolver. Yet what is it—a vision of the brain or a reality? I have examined every inch of that tunnel. I came through it alone ten minutes ago and saw nothing. No one could enter from the other end or from this without being seen. The mystery puzzles me."

"That was no vision, no specter which I saw," she insisted. "See—there is a spot of blood on the screen. She came directly toward me out of that hole, creeping on all fours like a wild beast. I was near the head of the stairs endeavoring to hear what you were saying below. Something made me turn suddenly, and I saw her—saw her eyes, her clawlike fingers, the flash of a knife in her hand. Oh, it frightened me so; I stood there like a



STARING INTO THE BLACKNESS OF THE OPEN FIREPLACE.

bird fascinated by a snake, but I had the revolver in my hand and pulled the trigger. See—there is where the first ball went, straight down into the door! I thought you would hear and come, but the sound of the shot nerved me, and the second time I fired straight at her, and—and—she cried out sharply and seemed to fade into that blackness there like a ghost."

We dropped into the hole one by one. I was first to reach the earth floor and stood there holding the lantern high above my head.

"This tunnel runs directly west, lads," I explained briefly. "There are no turns and nothing to fall over. All you've got to do is walk straight and follow me."

The whiteness of the girl's face was conspicuous. I smiled back into her eyes, but met with no response. The dull thud of the feet behind, naturally falling into marching step, awoke muffled echoes, and I flung the light as far ahead as possible down the channel. It was bare, unoccupied. What had become of that woman?

In the darkness I could not see where

the wounded man lay, but I managed to touch O'Brien, whispering to him to take her at once to Donald. I heard a kiss, the murmur of low voices conversing, and, with gritted teeth, turned back to hasten the movements of the men below.

"Up with you, lads—no talking, but come up one at a time!"

I leaped over, counting as they came up, their forms outlined by the flame of the lantern in the channel. The last one clambered through the opening and found room to stand in the narrow space. The soldier below, the light on his upturned face, still held the lantern level with his head.

"Shall I put it out now, sir, and come up?" he questioned.

"Yes—they are all here."

I saw him turn down the wick and blow out the flame. In the dense blackness below I heard him set the lantern down and place his foot on the first rung of the ladder. Then there was a single sharp cry—startled, agonized—a moan, and the heavy fall of a body. Without a thought I leaped through the hole down into the darkness. I struck against a prostrate figure, stumbled slightly, rattling the lantern with my foot; my extended hand gripped at something, which gave way, and I stood groping blindly about without a sound to guide me. I knew what had happened, and now, the first mad rush over, my heart was in my throat. I felt for the lantern with my foot, found it at last, and managed to apply a match to the wick. At the foot of the ladder lay the soldier, a knife thrust in his throat, his head bent back, his dead eyes staring up at me. In the grip of my fingers was a rag, a strip of red calico, evidently ripped from a dress. That was all.

With heart beating rapidly I retraced my steps, moving backward, the lantern held before me. Corporal Masterson, with two troopers, was at the foot of the ladder bending over the motionless form. The corporal straightened up, his face white.

"Somers is dead, sir," he said, his voice full of horror—"knifed in the throat."

"Yes, corporal. It is a part of the mystery of this house."

"Take the body up the ladder," I commanded.

They went at the gruesome job reluctantly, yet evidently glad enough to get out of the hole, two of them lifting from above, with Masterson helping below. As the corporal's legs disappeared I mounted close behind, holding the lantern beneath and laying hold of the trap before I extinguished the light. It was with a distinct feeling of relief that I closed the heavy door and stood upon it.

"O'Brien!"

"Yes, sir."

"Everything right here?"

"Just about as ye left it, sor, only the colonel seems to have got part of his senses back, an' the other fellow swore so loud I bucked him with a bit o' rag. Av ye'll keep still, sor, I think ye'll hear some noise jist back of the cabin."

We were instantly quiet, the men holding their breath to listen. I could distinguish a sound as though of moving bodies, but was unable to guess at the cause.

"What is it?"

"Horses, sor. They've got them picketed out there—some reb an' some Yankee, no doubt."

"Masterson, leave two men here to guard that trap and the prisoners. They will remain until they hear the sound of firing in front of the house and then mount and join us. We'll leave horses for them. You take half our force and clear out the guard on the kitchen porch—there are six men there. Make it quick action, and as soon as the job is accomplished fall back here behind the cabin. O'Brien, with two of the troopers, attend to any scattered rebs you find about the north side. The rest of us will see to the horse herd, and inside of ten minutes we ought to be in saddle. Don't fire a single shot more than is necessary."

They filed past me one by one, crouching down in the shadows just outside the door.

"Now, O'Brien, select the next three and steal around the other side of that negro cabin. As soon as Masterson goes forward make a run for those bushes along the carriage drive. The rest of you fellows come with me."

Out of sight, yet not far away, horses were champing at their bits. Some one on the kitchen porch laughed, and a man walked to the well. I turned back until I saw the crouching figures of the corporal's squad.

"All right, Masterson," I said, "go in."

(To Be Continued.)

LEAP YEAR BALL A BIG SOCIAL SUCCESS

Young Ladies Having the Arrangements in Charge Perform Duties With Great Credit.

From Saturday's Daily.

The young ladies in charge of the leap year ball are receiving the congratulations of their friends today on the success of the event, which was one of the largest attended functions of its kind held in the city this winter. Numerous young ladies and gentlemen from out of the city were in attendance and shared in the festivities. It is only once in four years that the ladies have their choice of escorts and partners for the dance, and it is not surprising that they should manifest some slight exuberance in the realization of their freedom for one evening.

The hall was tastefully decorated by a committee composed of Misses Marie Donnelly, Florence White, Georgia White, Ethel Balance and Mrs. Austin, the red hearts of the St. Valentine season predominating. Red streamers formed a canopy over the ball room, and in the kitchen white curtains were draped from the windows, dotted over with the little tokens of love and romance, the small red hearts.

The music furnished by Herr Holly's orchestra was of the usual quality that compels the foot to trip in perfect time with the musician's, and the floor was of glassy smoothness, having been newly waxed by the committee on arrangements.

The grand march was led by Miss Marie Donnelly and Bruce Rosenagers. Neat programs were provided by the young ladies for the dancers, ornamented with hearts. Punch of the rarest brew was served in the ball room and refreshments in the kitchen. After the ball a party was given at the home of H. N. Doves in honor of the Omaha guests.

The young ladies in charge of arrangements acquitted themselves nobly, and nothing was omitted from the arrangements which would add to the enjoyment of the occasion, and the committee has the satisfaction of knowing that when their turn comes to furnish the entertainment they can be depended upon to give something superior to anything attempted so far in the city.

22nd day of February, 1912, at 10 o'clock A. M. at the County Court room at Plattsmouth. All objections and protests to said petition should be on file and heard at said time. (Seal) ALLEN J. BEESON, County Judge, 2-1-2760.

LEGAL NOTICE.

In the District Court of Cass County, Nebraska.

NOTICE.

Frank E. Schlatter, Plaintiff, vs. Abraham Burkholder, et al., Defendants.

To Abraham Burkholder, Matilda Burkholder, D. N. Smith, (first name unknown), Geo. W. Lyrrkit, Jered N. Handie, Jared N. Handie, the unknown heirs or devisees of Jared N. Handie, deceased, Alta Sarah Handie, the Oregopolis Company, a corporation, the town of Oregopolis, a municipal corporation, of Cass County, Nebraska; Loudon Mullin the unknown heirs or devisees of Loudon Mullin, deceased, Barbara E. Mullin, George Loomis, the unknown heirs or devisees of George Loomis, deceased, Evaline P. Loomis, Sylvia E. Smith, widow of Anselmo B. Smith, deceased, Warren M. Smith, Matilda M. Smith, Myrtle B. Pratt, Noah R. Pratt, Elmer L. Smith, Louise A. Smith, Lois Smith, McGinnis, Robert L. McGinnis, the Anselmo B. Smith Investment Company, a foreign corporation, the unknown heirs or devisees of Jason G. Miller, deceased, Mary P. Miller, Alfred L. Brown, the unknown heirs or devisees of Alfred L. Brown, deceased, Catharine J. Brown, David M. Kelsey, the unknown heirs or devisees of David M. Kelsey, deceased, Mrs. David M. Kelsey (first real name unknown), William Felch, William Felch, the unknown heirs or devisees of William Felch, deceased, Mrs. William Felch (first real name unknown), Rush Children, Rush Children, the unknown heirs or devisees of Rush Children, deceased, Emilie A. Chilson, Emilie T. White, the unknown heirs or devisees of Emilie T. White, deceased, William Henn, John Cloedt, Samuel H. Jones, George W. Ramsey, Phoebe Ann Ramsey and H. P. Bennett (first name unknown), trustee for J. H. Maxon, defendants.

You and each of you will hereby take notice that on the 3rd day of February, 1912, Frank E. Schlatter, Plaintiff in the foregoing entitled cause, filed his petition in the District Court of Cass County, Nebraska, against you, the object, prayer and purpose of which is to obtain a decree from said Court removing clouds from and quieting the title of record of the Southwest Quarter and Government Lots Six (6) and Seven (7) and all that part of Government lot Three (3) lying Northwesterly of the right of way of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad and South of the bridge or culvert immediately North of Swallow Point all in Section Six (6), and Government lot One (1) in Township Seven (7) all in Township Twelve (12), North, in Range Fourteen (14), East of the Sixth Principal Meridian, in Cass County, State of Nebraska, excepting the right of way of the Burlington & Missouri River Railroad Company, in Nebraska, or its grantees and assignees, in Plaintiff, as against you, and to exclude and enjoin you and each of you from ever asserting or claiming any right, title or interest therein, or to any part thereof, except to plaintiff, and for such other and further relief as may be just and equitable.

You are Required to Answer Said Petition on or before the 18th day of March 1912, if the allegations contained in said petition will be taken as true and a decree rendered as prayed for therein.

Dated: February 5th, 1912.

FRANK E. SCHLATTER, Plaintiff.

By JOHN M. LEYDA, His Attorney.

LOCAL NEWS

From Friday's Daily.

M. Erwin and O. Erwin, both of Liberty precinct, had business in Plattsmouth today and drove up to look after it.

Mrs. Booth left for Lincoln yesterday morning, called there by the sudden death of her brother-in-law, ex-Mayor Graham of that city.

Ferdinand Hennings and wife and daughters, Misses Louise and Helen, were Plattsmouth visitors today, looking after the week-end shopping.

Zack Shrader returned from Chillicothe, Mo., on the morning train today, where he has been looking over a few real estate propositions.

August Stohman and wife and children of near Louisville were in the city today, Mr. Stohman having come down to attend the sale of the Boedeker land.

Edward Meisinger and his bride, from Eight Mile Grove precinct, were in the city yesterday looking after the purchase of some household furnishings.

G. L. Meisinger, Adam Meisinger and J. W. Heil of near Cedar Creek came down on No. 4 this morning and visited Plattsmouth friends for the day.

Charles Boedeker of Murray was a bystander at the sale of the land belonging to the estate of Theodore Boedeker, departing for Omaha on the fast mail.

Gale Rhoden of near Murray was a Plattsmouth visitor yesterday, looking after business matters for a few hours. He was accompanied by G. Rice of the same vicinity.

Albert Doty, the Weeping Water wrestler, who took part in the Louisville contest last evening, passed through the city this morning en route home. While here he paid the Journal office a brief call.

John Beckman and wife and three sons of Eight Mile Grove precinct were in the city today looking after the week-end shopping. Mr. Beckman is one of the Journal's friends and called in to renew for another year.

Wendell Heil of Eight Mile Grove precinct was a Plattsmouth visitor today, where he looked after business matters for a time. While in the city Mr. Heil dropped in and renewed his subscription for the Journal. Mr. Heil is on of the prosperous farmers in his locality and has been a reader of this paper for a long time.

NOTICE OF SALE.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CASS County, Nebraska.

In the Matter of the Estate of Lena Weisheit, Deceased.

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of an order of Hon. Harvey D. Travis, Judge of the District Court of Cass County, Nebraska, made on the 20th day of January, 1912, for the sale of the real estate hereinafter described, there will be sold at the south door of the American Exchange Bank in the Village of Elmwood, Cass County, Nebraska, on the 21st day of February, 1912, at 1 o'clock P. M. at public vendue to the highest bidder for cash, the following described real estate to-wit: The Northeast Quarter of Section 12, Township 16, Range 13, East of the 6th P. M., in Cass County, Nebraska. Said sale will remain open one hour.

Dated this 22nd day of January, 1912.

HERMAN LUETCHENS, Executor of Said Estate.

C. S. ALDRICH D. O. DWYER, Attorneys.

NOTICE OF SALE.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CASS County, Nebraska.

In the Matter of the Estate of Adam Ingram, Deceased.

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of an order of Hon. Harvey D. Travis, Judge of the District Court of said Cass County, made on the 20th day of January, 1912, for the sale of the real estate hereinafter described, there will be sold at the south door of the Court House, at Plattsmouth, Nebraska, on the 23rd day of February, 1912, at 1 o'clock P. M. at public vendue, to the highest bidder for cash, the following described real estate to-wit: The west half of the northwest quarter of the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter, in Section 15, Township 8, Range 12, in Cass County, Nebraska. Said sale will remain open one hour.

Dated this 23rd day of January, 1912.

Edward Ingram, Administrator of Said Estate.

D. O. DWYER, Attorney.

NOTICE.

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CASS County, Nebraska.

In the Matter of the Guardianship of Ray Ruby, Ross Ruby, Teddy Ruby and Helen Ruby, Minors.

Now, on this 25th day of January, 1912, this cause came on to be heard upon the petition of Martin L. Ruby, guardian, praying therein for a license to sell the Southeast Quarter of Section Twelve (12), Township Eleven (11), Range Twelve (12), situate in Cass County, Nebraska, for the purpose of maintaining and educating said minors.

It is ordered that the next kin of said minors and all persons interested in said matter, appear before me at the District Court Room at Plattsmouth, in Cass County, Nebraska, on the 25th day of February, 1912, at 10 o'clock A. M. to show cause why a license should not be granted to said guardian as above set forth.

That notice of the time and place of above hearing be given to the next kin of said minors and all persons interested by publishing a copy of this order in the Weekly Journal, a newspaper printed and of general circulation in Cass County, Nebraska, for three weeks prior to the said day of hearing.

HARVEY D. TRAVIS, Judge of the District Court.

NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATION.

IN THE COUNTY COURT OF CASS County, Nebraska.

In the Matter of the Estate of Thomas Shlyrock, Deceased.

All persons interested in said estate are hereby notified that a petition has been filed alleging that said deceased died intestate and praying for administration upon said estate. A hearing will be had upon said petition on the

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 ✦ Plattsmouth, Neb. ✦