

MY LADY OF THE SOUTH



A Fiftieth Anniversary War Story

By RANDALL PARRISH

COPYRIGHT, 1909, BY A. C. McCLURG & CO.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FIGHT; THE AVALANCH.

It was a slip and tuck, the surprised troopers wheeling their horses as though on pivots and digging in the spurs in a mad endeavor to get between us and our haven. O'Brien fell once, tripped or shot, I knew not, but was instantly upon his feet again. I was first over the threshold, stumbling as I made it, and falling forward on the punchon floor. A rain of bullets crashed into the opposite wall, and as I struggled to my knees, I caught a glimpse of the circling horsemen without and of O'Brien crouching beside the door, his carbine working viciously. It was all instantaneous, and I rolled over, kicked the heavy oaken door shut and dropped the bar into its socket.

It was a single room cabin, its only window boarded up, so very little light found entrance. I came face to face with a woman, fronting me with gun in hand.

"Who be yer—Yanks?"
"Yes," I acknowledged.
"Who's them fellers after yer?"
"Rebs, of course."
"Donald's outfit?"
"I expect so—either his guerrillas or Dunn's cavalry."

"Thin ye kin count us in, Yank. Git out, Daniel, an' kiver that window." A boy of thirteen, sallow and thin, with stooped shoulders, but firm set jaw, crawled out from the bed and, long rifle in hand, clambered up to where he could peer through between the boards. Quickly he pushed the brown barrel out, sighted along it and pulled the trigger.

"That's one of 'em, ma," he said rather wearily, expectorating tobacco juice on the floor.

"Keep 'em a-movin', Daniel. Benjamin, whab be ye?"
"Yere, ma."

"Wal, git out 'long with thet flogger at the door. Gol dern yer, move!" She caught him by one ear, a younger edition of the same lanky type, and handed him in the center of the floor.

Rubbing his eyes with the sleeve of his shirt, the lad shuffled over toward O'Brien. I began to understand the situation, to appreciate these new recruits. Woman and children then had been brought up in the atmosphere of war and were not to be despised as allies.

"You are Maria Daniels, I imagine?"
"I reckon I am, stranger," one hand on her hip and chin advanced.

"Your husband is in the neighborhood somewhere, Mrs. Daniels," I hastened to say. "I saw him less than half an hour ago in the house yonder. He left by way of a secret passage. He had heard of your plight and was seeking you. He even went to Donald to learn the truth."

"Bill did? Ter Jim Donald? Stranger, ye're a blame liar!"
I stepped back, the fierceness of her face startling me.

"They're a-comin', sor!" sang out O'Brien, and there was a sharp barking of guns, the cabin filling with powder smoke.

From every side the fire aimed at the cabin converged to the opening where we stood. Bullets crashed into the lower half of the door and whistled past us to find lodgment in the further wall. O'Brien swore and went tumbling backward. Daniel's youngest had a livid mark across his forehead and sank to the floor, his face in his hands. Maria grabbed his gun and let drive beside me. I could hear the deep barks of the older lad's rifle through the crack in the window. Our foes were rushing toward the door with a long timber, and behind this heavy battering ram I caught a glimpse of Dunn, urging the men forward. The sight of the fellow robbed me of all judgment, left me reckless and desperate. He was beyond range of my revolver, but I emptied it into the faces of those nearer. For the moment our concentrated fire staggered

ed them, but there was too many out there to be held back long by so small a force. Then, with a yell, they rushed us. Only half ready, we fired blindly, scarcely able to see through the smoke. With a crash the end of the timber struck, splintering the boards and tearing the lower half of the door from its fastenings.

The woman was flung backward, her rifle discharging as she fell, and I sprang aside, tripping over the boy and striking against something which rendered me for the instant helpless. Yet I managed to reach my knees and fired twice at the dim figures leaping toward me through the smoke. Then I went down, grappled by a dozen hands, but struggling desperately until pinned to the floor.

The hubbub ceased, the roar and shouting, the rattle of guns. The smoke blew out of the door in a cloud. The elder Daniels boy was backed into a corner, the black muzzle of a gun at his breast; the younger lay on the floor apparently unconscious. O'Brien was just getting up, his clothes in rags from the fierce struggle, while Maria sat on the bed, gun still in hand, glaring about her, but without a shot left. A fellow struck my arm a numbing blow, causing the revolver to drop to the floor. I had seen nothing of Dunn during that fierce rush, but now he stood fronting me, sword in hand and eyes gleaming in triumph.

"Surrender, you dirty Yankee spy," he shouted. "We've got you this time!" In my excitement I laughed at the fellow, despising the cowardice of his words and scarcely realizing the power he possessed.

"All right, lieutenant," I returned, holding out my hands. "This happens to be your turn."

Two cavalrymen strapped me up until I lay like a log on the floor, yet the full significance of this did not burst upon me until their work had been accomplished, and I again caught sight of Dunn's face.

"What does this mean?" I insisted indignantly. "Am I not to be treated as a prisoner of war?"

"You'll be treated for what you are. You've done the work of a spy, and you end as a spy."

"But I am not one, and you know it. I came here as a scout in uniform. I have made no attempt whatever to assume disguise. I am in uniform now."

That he was by disposition mean, spiteful and cowardly I had ample reason to know; now he possessed means for revenge without danger to himself.

"Lieutenant Dunn," I called after him, "I might think you in earnest if you were not a soldier, but I cannot believe this of a Confederate soldier."

Without even looking at me he passed out through the door, and I lay there on my side, watching the sergeant oversee the removal of the others. Maria and the older boy were apparently unhurt, but O'Brien had to be supported by two of the men, while the younger lad was swung in a blanket. After they had disappeared five troopers remained, lounging in the doorway, with guns in hand, and the sergeant took time to come over and examine my fastenings.

"Your lieutenant is something of a joker, isn't he?" I questioned.

"Not that over I heard about," he returned gruffly. "I've suspected him of most everything else, but never of that."

"You mean he really intends to hang me?"

"I reckon he does. We all are soldiers," he replied finally, "an' I reckon what the lieutenant says goes. Far as I'm concerned, stranger, a Yank's a Yank, and I'm willin' ter string 'em all up if them's the orders. The boys mostly feels like that."

They set me up where I could lean against the bed, my hands and feet strapped securely, my limbs numb from the tightness of the fastenings. The sergeant sat opposite me in a

chair thrown against the wall, his eyes partially closed, but his jaws busy on the tobacco in his cheek, the guard blocking the doorway.

Dunn had reason to hate me—greater reason perhaps than he knew, and sufficient certainly to make him anxious to get me out of the way for all time. He might not be aware of Jean's real love for Donald, but he did know of the form of marriage between us, and had every reason to believe that the intimacy of the past few days had created a friendship dangerous to his ambition. My rough treatment of him would never have led to such reprisal as compassing my death as a spy. There must be another cause, and that cause was Jean Denslow.

He stepped in between the guard and stood still staring at me.

"King," he questioned peremptorily, "is there any truth in what I have just heard, that those murders in the house were committed by a woman?"

"Yes," I said, surprised at the emotion in his voice. "I saw her."

"You saw her! What was she like?"

"A thin, haggard face, with wild eyes and straggly gray hair."

He stopped, gaining control of himself with an effort. "Do you know what I'm going to do with you? I am going to hang you to that tree yonder as a Yankee spy."

"That will be a brave deed, Lieutenant Dunn, but one you are no doubt capable of. But there is one thing you did not dare do—confess your purpose to Jean Denslow."

"This has nothing to do with her. Oh, I know the trick you played on the girl, and believe she will rejoice to be thus easily rid of you. You may not be a spy, but you have done a spy's work and are going to meet a spy's fate. Connors!"

The sergeant, who had been watching us through half closed eyes, rose to his feet and saluted.

"Here, sir."

The sergeant grinned, looking me over coolly. Dunn evidently knew his man, for he snapped out his orders sharply.

"Unstrap his legs and get him on his feet. Take the fellow's jacket off; the collar is too high. Here, Munn, you and Franklin hold him by the arms. That's right, men; outside with him. We'll give the lad another look at the sunshine."

They were grimly in earnest, holding me roughly and forcing me forward through the door. I saw the back of the house a hundred yards away, most of the troop of cavalrymen lounging beside the well. The majority remained where they were, staring curiously at us, but a half dozen got upon their feet and strolled in our direction. Scarcely knowing what I did, yet obeying the pressure on either side, I advanced until jerked to a halt. Before me dangled a rope with a noose at the end. I heard a bird singing on the branch above, yet I saw nothing but a maze of faces and that dangling noose which was intended to choke out my life. Some one struck me, and the blow broke the spell. I looked into Connors' face, then beyond him into the eyes of Dunn.

"You infernal cur!" I said coldly. "If you think this wins you the woman you'll learn your mistake."

A hand reached over my shoulder, grasped the rope, and I felt the noose settle about my neck and tighten.

I know not from whence she came or how. In that first second I thought it a dream, a vision, but it was Jean, and she looked questioningly at the sergeant. "What are you going to do?"

He stammered, "We were goin' to hang a spy, ma'am."

"This man is no spy. Lieutenant Dunn, you are in command here. Is this jest or earnest?"

"This is a military matter," he began roughly, "and no affair of yours whatever, Jean. I will not brook your interference. This man has penetrated our lines. He has taken information derived as a spy to Federal headquarters. In ordering his execution I am doing no more than any other officer would."

She looked directly into his face, her clear eyes reading the truth behind his words. Suddenly she turned, grasped the rope and lifted the noose over my head.

"That is my answer," she said quietly. "You shall not hang this man; he is not a spy; he is not here as a spy—he is my husband."

Whatever veneer of gentleness Calvin Dunn might assume on occasion was gone now. With reddened face and blazing eyes he sprang forward, grasped her arm and flung her aside, so fiercely that she fell upon one knee.

"Your husband!" he shouted, fairly beside himself with rage. "Yes, by a trick—a dirty, contemptible Yankee trick. Now I'll play another and divorce you."

I saw only the girl's face as she staggered to her feet. It was white, the lips firm set, the eyes burning.

"I have not said I desired a divorce."

"Well, I do, and I'm going to hang this man. You can stay and see the job done or you can leave, just as you please. Connors, replace that rope!"

I saw a quick movement of the girl's hand, an outstretched arm, the glitter of a steel barrel.

"Lieutenant Dunn," she said, her voice without a tremor. "I am a woman, but you are going to listen to me. If you move or one of your men puts hand on the prisoner I shall fire. I acknowledge this man as my husband."

"I dare you to lay violent hands upon him."

"You think that revolver will prevent," he sneered. "With one word my men would overpower you."

"Not before I could pull this trigger. But there is still another reason—Colonel Donald is now riding in through the gate. Within two more minutes he

will be here. He knows Lieutenant King." Her hand dropped to her side, and her lips smiled. "Now, if you wish to, show your authority."

All Dunn's pretended bravado seemed to desert him at these words. Suddenly Donald trotted into the midst of the group, two men behind him, and drew rein sharply.

"What is the meaning of this?" he questioned. "Jean, what are you doing here? Dunn, I should like some explanation of this."

"I am not under your orders," growled the lieutenant. "I belong to the regular service."

Donald looked at the man contemptuously.

"Which you continually manage to disgrace," he said coldly. "Lieutenant King, what did these fellows propose to do with you?"

"Hang me as a spy," I answered. "It would have been over with me by now but for the heroism of Miss Denslow."

"Lieutenant Dunn," he said tersely, "it's perfectly true that I have no authority over you in the service, but I think you know what it means to oppose me now. Irregular though I am, a word from me to General Johnston relative to this matter will bring you face to face with a court martial. This prisoner is not a spy and has never acted in that capacity. You were thoroughly aware of that fact."

"Then I hold him as prisoner of war. Take charge of him, Connors."

"Wait!" The single word rang out like a shot, and the sergeant stopped instantly, unable to decide whom he had better obey. "He is not your prisoner, Dunn, but mine. If a man of you lays hands on him again you shall answer for it to me."

"Your prisoner! My God, how? We captured him in flight. That fellow cost us six men."

Donald flung one booted leg over the pommel of his saddle and calmly rested a revolver along it, his gaze on the excited faces.

"I am very sorry for that, lieutenant," he admitted quietly, "but you should have let him alone. Most men fight when driven to it. King was my prisoner and on parole when you attacked him. I have special authority to parole prisoners whom I cannot send into headquarters. Lieutenant King is my prisoner, and I propose to hold him by power of this." He touched the deadly black barrel resting in his right hand and smiled. "Fennel, untie Lieutenant King's hands. Lieutenant Dunn, I shall expect you in the library in ten minutes."

(To Be Continued.)

Returns From Europe.

John Scheel of Murdock, who left for Germany on November 20, 1911, returned Saturday, February 24, 1912, having had a most enjoyable visit in the old fatherland, which he had not seen for twenty-eight years. He reports that everything had changed and that he did not have any desire to live there again. He also reports that he had a fine time on his trip and that on returning the ship had to stop for sixty-two hours on the ocean on account of a dense fog. Mr. Scheel has three brothers living in Germany, who were greatly surprised to see him once more, but sorry to see him leave. They accompanied him as far as Berlin, from which place he journeyed to Bremen and sailed for home on the boat, George Washington.

This is the season of the year when mothers feel very much concerned over the frequent colds contracted by their children, and have abundant reason for it as every cold weakens the lungs, lowers the vitality and paves the way for the more serious diseases that so often follow. Chamberlain's Cough Remedy is famous for its cures, and is pleasant and safe to take. For sale by F. G. Fricke & Co.

Have Called a Pastor.

The Christian church of this city, which has been without a pastor for some months, have extended a call to Rev. A. L. Zink, who was pastor of the church here four years ago. Rev. Zink has accepted the call and will be in Plattsmouth ready to begin work one week from next Sunday. The congregation of the Christian church, as well as the members of other congregations, will welcome Rev. Zink warmly, as he is a young man of much ability and a strong pulpit orator. His acquaintance with Plattsmouth people will greatly aid him in his work here, and the church board is to be congratulated on securing him for this church. He is a genial gentleman, easily to get acquainted with, and will no doubt be a strong help to the church here.

Do you know that more real danger lurks in a common cold than in any other of the minor ailments? The safe way is to take Chamberlain's Cough Remedy, a thoroughly reliable preparation, and rid yourself of the cold as quickly as possible. This remedy is for sale by F. G. Fricke & Co.

And the next day it snowed!

All the more reason why you should buy one of those warm, fine, dressy overcoats we are selling at **\$7.50**

They put style in your appearance, money in your pocket and warmth in your blood. Buy one now before they are all gone.

Watch for Our Next Ad!

C. E. Wescott's Sons
Always the Home of Satisfaction

HAVE FAITH IN YOUR OWN TOWN

Citizens Must Have Confidence in the Future of Their City.

There is an ill-begotten saying to the effect that "if you don't like your job why don't you quit?" This bit of wisdom may be very appropriately applied to any citizen who hasn't confidence in the future of the city in which he lives. If you don't like the city in which you are living why don't you move to another town which you will like better, perhaps, and be doing justice to yourself at least? If a town is not improving and advancing it is certainly slipping backward, as there is no such condition as a perfect middle. If you have not got faith in the future greatness of your city and are not working for its advancement how do you suppose that it can possibly make any forward progress?

Plattsmouth is not a city because of the mere fact that a number of acres of ground have been given that name, but because a number of the people have banded together and formed a municipality. Now each and every person within the confines of this municipality is a working part of a city of the first-class, and as such is burdened with a duty which by no means can be to hold back and retard the others who would drive ahead.

Faith is the first cardinal principle of which we learn and it is first practiced by the clinging confidence we have in our parents. A man without faith, even in this day of substitution and invention, is held to be of little consequence, and the fact that his position in life be high or low carries little weight with public regard. Faith in one's future is absolutely the most important thing in life. There is not a man living who has not faith in himself.

Is there one plausible reason why Plattsmouth should not have a brilliant future? And, on the other hand, is there not many insurances against retardation?

There was never an instance yet where show of confidence did

not produce telling effect. Why not apply a little faith to your city's affairs. Don't you think it would help?

Lack of confidence and cowardice has been the stroke that felled many a near-won victory where a little show of faith has evicted an overwhelming enemy.

Boosting is the outward show of faith in this instance, but it must come with a will to be aided constantly with effort.

Discard those little petty jealousies. By so doing you show that you have faith in the future of your city and fellow mankind. You will be greatly surprised at the result.

Undecided.

Some people are unable to make a quick decision, but keep on postponing things from day to day, if there is nobody who would compel them to do something. They always depend on others. They will postpone work and even taking medicine, in case of sickness, although knowing that something should be done. If such persons have good friends they should call themselves happy. In cases of suffering from some trouble of the stomach or the bowels, or of sudden weakness, pains in the digestive organs, or loss of appetite, you will confer a great favor on the sufferer by advising him to use at once Triner's American Elixir of Bitter Wine. It is to be recommended in constipation, headache and backache, vomiting, poverty of blood, nervousness, heartburn, difficulties after meals, loss of weight, dizziness, colic. At drug stores. Jos. Triner, 1333-1339 So. Ashland Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Married Today.

From Wednesday's Date. Marriage license was issued at the county judge's office for Emil J. Meisinger and Miss Isabella M. Todd, the ceremony occurring at high noon today at the residence of the bride's parents, A. L. Todd and wife. We hope to have an account of the wedding of this popular young couple for tomorrow's issue of the Journal. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Mayfield of Louisville.

A. B. Fornoff of Cullom came down on No. 4 this morning to do some marketing of produce and visit friends for the day.

Plattsmouth Auto and Wagon Bridge Company

TOLL RATES

Foot passengers	\$.05
Horse and rider	.15
Motorcycle and rider	.15
One horse, vehicle and driver	.20
Two " " " "	.25
Three " " " "	.35
Four " " " "	.50
Horses or cattle hauled or driven, each	.10
Calves, sheep, goats or hogs, hauled or driven, each	.10
Maximum rates per wagon load	.50
Fruit, grain or hay, per load, with team and driver	.50
Huckster, patent medicine, grocery peddler, junk dealer, live poultry, each with wagon and driver	1.00
Emigrant wagons with driver	1.00
Automobiles with chauffeur	.50
Each additional person in any vehicle	.05
Thresher, separator, team and driver	2.50
Corn sheller, team and driver	1.50

\$10 and \$5 Coupon Books at 25% Discount for Cash!

POLLOCK & DUFF,
PROPRIETORS