

# ONE OF OURS

By WILLA CATHER.  
Famous Nebraska Author.

(Continued from Yesterday.)

**SYNOPSIS.**  
Claude Wheeler, married to religious daughter of Jason Royce, Nebraska farmer, has built home on land given him by his father, Nat. Enid, Claude's wife, is in China where she went when receiving a letter from her younger sister, Caroline, saying she was ill. Claude formerly attended small college in Lincoln, Neb. While there he made friends of English family, a motherly widow and five sons. He also has as friends, living near him at home, Ernest Havel and Leonard Dawson. Leonard married, before his marriage to Enid Royce, Claude was much engaged in study of German language. Upon Enid's death, Claude's departure for China he again takes up his interest in the war just prior to sinking of Lusitania. Claude, during his wife's absence, lives with his mother. Claude and Ernest Havel have argued over prohibition, in which cause Claude's wife is active when at home. Ernest leaves in a huff. Later interest in the war draws them back together. On way to Frankfurt from the ranch, Claude picks up Gladys Farmer, high school girl friend of his wife. Claude would like to cut on her but battles the thought when he realizes it would cause talk in town.

**CHAPTER VIII.**  
During the bleak months of March Mr. Wheeler went to town in his buckboard almost every day. For the first time in his life he had a secret anxiety. The one member of his family who had never given him the slightest trouble, his son Bayliss, was just now under a cloud.  
Bayliss was a pacifist, and kept telling people that if only the United States would stay out of this war, and gather up what Europe was wasting, she would soon be in actual possession of the capital of the world. There was a kind of logic in Bayliss' utterances that shook Nat Wheeler's imperturbable assumption that one point of view was as good as another. When Bayliss fought the drum and the clarinet, Wheeler only laughed. That a son of his should turn out a prohibitionist, was a joke he could appreciate. But Bayliss' attitude in the present crisis disturbed him. Day after day he sat about his son's place of business, interrupting his arguments with funny stories. Bayliss did not go home at all that month. He said to his father, "No, mother's too violent. I'd better not."

Claude and his mother read the papers in the evening, but they talked so little about what they read that Mahalley inquired anxiously whether they weren't still fighting over yonder. When she could get Claude alone for a moment, she pulled out Sunday supplement pictures of the devastated countries and asked him to tell her what was to become of this family, photographed among the ruins of their homes; of this old woman, who sat by the roadside with her bundles. "Where's she goin' to, anyways? See, Mr. Claude, she's got her iron cook-pot, pots old thing, carryin' it all the way!"  
Pictures of soldiers in gas masks puzzled her; gas was something she hadn't learned about in the civil war, so she worked it out for herself that these masks were worn by the army cooks, to protect their eyes when they were cutting up onions! "All them onions they have to cut up, it would put their eyes out if they didn't wear somethin'," she argued.

On the morning of the 8th of April Claude came downstairs early and began to clean his boots, which were caked with dry mud. Mahalley was squatting down beside her stove, blowing and puffing into it. The fire

was always slow to start in heavy weather. Claude got an old knife and a brush, and putting his foot on a chair over by the west window, began to scrape his shoe. He had said good morning to Mahalley, nothing more. He hadn't slept well, and was pale.

"Mr. Claude," Mahalley grumbled, "his stove ain't never drawn good like my old one Mr. Ralph took away from me. I can't do nothin' with it. Maybe you'll clean it out for me next Sunday."

"I'll clean it today, if you say so. I won't be here next Sunday. I'm going away."  
Something in his tone made Mahalley get up, her eyes still blinking with the smoke, and look at him sharply. "You ain't goin' out there where Miss Enid is?" she asked anxiously.

"Mahalley," he had dropped the shoe brush and stood with one foot on the chair, his elbow on his knee, looking out of the window as if he had forgotten himself. "No, I'm not going to China. I'm going over to help fight the Germans."

He was still staring out at the wet fields. Before he could stop her, before he knew what she was doing, she had caught and kissed his unworthy hand.  
"I knowed you would," she sobbed. "I always knowed you would, you nice boy, you! Old Mahall' knowed!"  
Her upturned face was working all over; her mouth, her eyebrows, even the wrinkles on her low forehead were working and twitching. Claude felt a tightening in his throat as he tenderly regarded that face: behind the pale eyes, under the low brow where there was room for many thoughts, an idea was struggling and tormenting her. The same idea that had been tormenting him.

"You're all right, Mahalley," he muttered, patting her back and turning away. "Now hurry breakfast."  
"You ain't told your mudder yet?" she whispered.

"No, not yet. But she'll be all right, too. He caught up his cap and went down to the barn to look after the horses."  
When Claude returned, the family were already at the breakfast table. He slipped into his seat and watched his mother while she drank her first cup of coffee. Then he addressed his father.

"Father, I don't see any use of waiting for the draft. If you can spare me, I'd like to get into a training camp somewhere. I believe I'd stand a chance of getting a commission."

"I shouldn't wonder," Mr. Wheeler poured maple syrup on his pancakes with a liberal hand. "How do you feel about it, Evangeline?"  
Mrs. Wheeler had quietly put down her knife and fork. She looked at her husband in vague alarm, while her fingers moved restlessly about over the tablecloth.

"I thought," Claude went on hastily, "that maybe I would go up to Omaha tomorrow and find out where the training camps are to be located, and have talk with the men in charge of the enlistment station. Of course, he added lightly, "they may not want me. I haven't an idea what the requirements are."  
"No, I don't understand much about it either," Mr. Wheeler rolled his top pancake and conveyed it to his

mouth. After a moment of mastication he said, "You figure on going tomorrow?"  
"I'd like to. I won't bother with baggage—some shirts and underclothes in my suitcase. If the government wants me, it will clothe me."  
Mr. Wheeler pushed back his plate. "Well, now I guess you'd better come out with me and look at the wheat. I don't know but I'd best plow up that south quarter and put it in corn. I don't believe it will make anything much."

When Claude and his father went out of the door, Dan sprang up with more alacrity than usual and plunged after them. He did not want to be left alone with Mrs. Wheeler. She remained sitting at the foot of the deserted breakfast table. She was not crying. Her eyes were utterly sightless. Her back was so stooped that she seemed to be bending under a burden. Mahalley cleared the dishes away quietly.

Out in the muddy fields Claude finished his talk with his father. He explained that he wanted to slip away without saying good-bye to any one. "I have a way, you know," he said, flushing, "of beginning things and not getting very far with them. I don't want anything said about this until I'm sure. I may be rejected for one reason or another."

Mr. Wheeler smiled. "I guess not. However, I'll tell Dan to keep his mouth shut. Will you just go over to Leonard Dawson's and get that wrench he borrowed? It's about noon, and he'll likely be at home."  
Claude found big Leonard watering his team at the windmill. When Leonard asked him what he thought of the president's message, he blurted out at once that he was going to Omaha to enlist. Leonard reached up and pulled the lever that controlled the almost motionless wheel.

"Better wait a few weeks and I'll go with you. I'm going to try for the marines. They take my eye."

Claude, standing on the edge of the tank, almost fell backward. "Why, what—what for?"  
Leonard looked him over. "Good Lord, Claude, you ain't the only fellow around here that wears pants! What for? Well, I'll tell you what for," he held up three large red fingers, threateningly. "Belgium, the Lusitania, Edith Cavell. That dirt's got under my skin. I'll get my corn planted, and then father'll look after Susie till I come back."

Claude took a long breath. "Well,

Leonard, you fooled me. I believed all this chaff you've been giving me about not caring who chewed up who."

"And no more do I care," Leonard protested. "not a damn! But there's a limit. I've been ready to go since the Lusitania. I don't get any satisfaction out of my place any more. Susie feels the same way."

Claude looked at his big neighbor. "Well, I'm off tomorrow. Leonard, don't mention it to my folks, but if I can't get into the army, I'm going to enlist in the navy. They'll always take an able-bodied man. I'm not coming back here." He held out his

hand and Leonard took it with a smack.  
"Good luck, Claude. Maybe we'll meet in foreign parts. Wouldn't that be a joke! Give my love to Enid when you write. I always did think she was a fine girl, though I disagreed with her on prohibition." Claude crossed the fields mechanically, without looking where he went. His power of vision was turned inward upon scenes and events wholly imaginary as yet.

(Continued in The Morning Bee.)

St. Louis banks have more women depositors than men.

## Governor of Minnesota to Address Lutheran Rally

Governor J. A. O. Preus of Minnesota will be the principal speaker at a Lutheran mass meeting in the Brandeis theater Sunday, May 6, at 7:30. The 29 Lutheran congregations in Omaha will dispense with their regular services that evening. A chorus of 300 voices will sing.  
Governor Preus' father and grandfather were Lutheran clergymen, as was also his mother's father. He holds degrees from Luther college, the University of Minnesota and Gustavus Adolphus college.

## Seven Alleged Speeders Fined in Municipal Court

Seven alleged speeders faced Judge Wappich in municipal court yesterday and were released with fines. They were Rex Barker, 5112 Dodge street, \$7.50; Charles Lankes, 5609 South Twentieth street, \$12.50; V. Jones, 5167 South Twenty-fifth street, \$12.50; Otto Langhelm, 4313 South Thirteenth street, \$7.50; Harry Davis, 4512 Blondo street, \$15; R. A. Stewart, 6936 Florence boulevard, \$10; L. M. Tefft, Majestic apartments, \$12.50.



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- Hard Roll Bread
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This new name shall be easy to pronounce and easy to remember. It must be a "fitting" name for a quality loaf of bread. It may be a "coined" word, but not necessarily so. It should create confidence and must have an appeal "in its ring" for the children as well as for the grownups.

You must have your "suggested" names into our office not later than May 15th. A selected group of judges will decide upon the "best" name submitted and we will pay the above mentioned sum to the party giving the selected name. It is understood that we shall hold all "rights" and privileges to the use of any name submitted.

Address "New Name" Judges, c/o Petersen & Pegau Baking Co., 12th and Jackson Streets, Omaha, Neb.

# The Brandeis Store OMAHA