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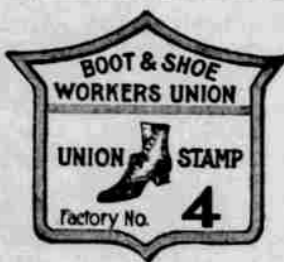
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**A RACE WITH FIRE
CARS**

A Story of the Civil War

By EDWIN C. TRASK

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When one morning just before sunrise we swept down on Turnerville, taking the place by surprise, we found three locomotives and twenty freight cars standing in the railroad yard.

A train was made up, loaded with troops, and I, having been a locomotive engineer, was put in the cab. Before starting the general said to me:

"Sergeant, the success of this expedition depends upon you. Colonel Parker is in command, but has nothing to do with running the train. That's in your hands. As soon as the Confederates know we're here they'll send a force to cut us off. But they'll need the bridge at B, and I want you to get these men there before daylight in the morning to burn it. But you must keep a sharp lookout for snags. The citizens on the line you will pass over are all hostile, and they'll strain every nerve to wreck your train. Remember, not only the lives of the men in these cars, but the safety of the whole command depends upon you."

The first ten miles we did by daylight. Then it grew dark, and I had nothing to see by but the lantern, which lit the track dimly. My head was thrust far out the cab window, and my hand was on the throttle. Twice I stopped her within a few feet of a tie wedged in between a rail and the ties, and once I bumped a tree that had been felled across the track, having not quite stopped before reaching it. On an elevation I struck a junction and a lot of people standing about staring at us as we passed. I didn't like their looks. But the telegraph wires had been cut, and I didn't see how they could send word ahead. There were half a dozen freight cars on a sidetrack, but no locomotive.

Soon after leaving the junction I shut off steam and let her roll down the long declivity. I was nearly at the foot on a short upward grade when I had a break—the engine was only fit for a junk heap—and spent half an hour at a standstill while I patched it. As I remounted the cab Corporal Bob Jenkins, who was acting as fireman, pointed up the hill with a look of horror. I saw a bright light, and a moment later a short string of freight cars shot from out a cut. I knew at once what it meant. The citizens at the junction had started the cars I had seen on the sidetrack, first having set them afire, with the hope that they would smash us on catching us and if there was anything left of our train burn it. I jumped into the cab and pulled the throttle.

The grade behind us wasn't less than 30 degrees, and the fire train was coming like lightning. I had a few train lengths to go on nearly a level, then a straightaway track on a slight decline. The fire train was coming at a rate of a mile in forty-five seconds, and the best my old wheezer could do was a mile in two minutes. If I couldn't haul away far enough before the cars behind reached a place where they would lose momentum they would ruin us.

Then began the race of my life. I could have stopped, let the men out of the cars and permitted the smashup, but the bridge wouldn't be burned and our force at Turnerville would be cut off. I remembered the pressure of the hand the general had given me, and I tightly grasped the throttle, resolved to get away from those fire cars or get wrecked.

I held my eyes front, while Bob Jenkins kept me posted on the fire cars. "They're gaining on us mighty fast!" "Only a mile away!" "They'll catch us sure!" "They're coming like a streak of lightning!" These were the unassuming words Bob gave me while my locomotive puffed and sputtered and dragged along at what seemed to us a snail's pace.

Then suddenly turning a curve I saw a light ahead. Great heavens! Were we to have fire both in front and behind us? Running on a straight track, I saw men kindling a small bridge. They had got the fire well going, but I didn't believe they had burned the stringers sufficiently to let us down. At any rate, I determined to risk it. Leaving on full speed—I couldn't put on any more—I dashed into the flames. My locomotive crossed safely, and I was congratulating myself that the train was all over when I felt a shock. We went a short distance and stopped.

The bridge had gone down under the last two cars. Several men were badly injured, but no one killed. All were got out before the fire cars plunged in on the wreck and stopped there to mingle their burning with that of the other material.

The men of the last two cars got into those cars that had crossed, carrying the wounded. I mounted my engine, and we steamed on for the rest of the night, reaching the bridge at B. just before dawn. My work was done. I leaned out of the cab window, watching the men carry the wood and petroleum and distribute them along the structure. Then suddenly there was a flash, and from one end to the other all was aflame. I never looked at destruction before with such comfort and delight.

When I got back to camp I got a warm pressure of the hand from the general, and it was not long before, through his influence, I was given a commission. But the best work I did in the war was the flight before those fire cars.

TIMIDITY OF LOVE

A Veteran of the Civil War
Quails Before a Woman

By ARNOLD BROWN

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It was April —, 1861. The —th regiment was ordered to march the next day to the defense of Washington. A reception was to be held the evening before departure in the armory, at which mothers, wives, sisters and sweethearts could bid adieu to their loved ones, some of whom might not return. During the afternoon previous to the reception young Norman Egerton, second lieutenant of G company, sat at a desk in his comfortable home writing. This is what he wrote:

I have delayed to speak, fearing to be repelled, but now at the last moment I must tell you that I love you—love you better than my life—everything but my duty. May I hope if I return that I may claim you for my wife? If "Yes," wear one of these flowers tonight at the reception.

The words, such as a boy would write who realized into what he was going, were intended for Miss Mabel Harding, even younger than himself. They were written on a bit of thin paper, which he folded into a small compass, and, taking up a bouquet that lay beside him, he thrust his missive into its center, covering it with the flowers as if fearful the girl would find it. Calling a servant, he directed him to carry the flowers to their destination and report to him that they had been received by the young lady. Then he walked the floor till the report had been made.

That night at the armory he watched eagerly for the signal. Presently he saw Miss Harding walking toward him on the arm of a man whom he had feared as a rival. She wore no flowers. The young officer, like many a man in his first fight, quailed. He left the hall and did not return to it.

Egerton proved the reverse in war of what he was in love. He returned with an empty sleeve and a colonel's commission, with brevet rank of brigadier general. But he had no sooner reached home than his lover's cowardice got the better of him. Sensitive to a high degree, he dreaded meeting the girl who had refused him, his dread being enhanced by the absence of his right arm. A mutilated man nurses his misfortune, and it is doubtful if any soldier is proud of the loss of a limb. The general rankled at his maiming, for he considered that it removed him further, if that could be, from the woman he still loved. To escape a meeting with her as soon as he was mustered out of the service he made a tour abroad. But this only deferred the meeting, and at last he summoned courage and went back to the city where they both lived.

On the street one day he saw her coming. If he continued to advance he would meet her face to face. He looked about him, as he had seen many a man do on the field of battle, for cover. An alley was near. It was a narrow, mean looking lane, but he dashed into it. It led nowhere, and he found himself in a pocket flanked by the rear of small shops. He stood trembling till he knew that his enemy must have passed, then slunk out of it and pursued his way.

A few days later he received a fright that took away his breath. It was an invitation to an evening function given at Miss Harding's home. Fortunately the date of the affair was some days away. He resolved a dozen times to "regret" to go, but, having time to get up a little courage at the last moment, sent an acceptance. It had no sooner been dispatched than he wished to recall it. But it was too late.

On the appointed date he got into evening dress, pinned up his empty sleeve, heaving a deep sigh as he did so, and went to the house. Half an hour in the robing room was necessary to give him the requisite courage to go below. The hosts were drawn up to receive their guests, to Egerton appearing like an opposing line of battle to a raw recruit. He approached, saluted and, seeing a look of embarrassment on Miss Harding's face, as soon as the ceremony was over beat a precipitate retreat.

Later he was stalking about, wondering if sufficient time would ever pass to enable him to depart with propriety, when he felt a hand slipped on his arm and, turning, saw the girl who had refused him.

"General," she said, with her eyes on the floor, "why did you not come to see me after your return from the war?"

"Why—I went abroad."
"Then why not since your return?"
There was a warm hand on his left arm that imparted courage to his heart.

"I—didn't suppose—that you wished to see me."

"Why not?"
There was a pause before the reply. It came at last. "Do you remember that I sent you a bouquet of flowers before the reception given the evening previous to our departure?"

"I do."
"And the scrap of paper in it?"
"The scrap of paper?"

"Yes."

She had led him into a corner where no one but themselves was present. "Wait here," she said.
Darting away, she ran upstairs and returned with a withered bouquet. Diving into it, she withdrew his note written six years before and, opening it, read for the first time his message. Then, taking all that was left of a rose, the stem, she inserted it in her corsage.

LABOR DAY EDITION

**THE
WAGEWORKER**

The Seventh Annual Labor Day Edition of The Wagoner will appear on Friday, September 2, and will be the handsomest edition ever issued by this paper.

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

The Labor Day Edition of The Wagoner will be illustrated with portraits of leading union men of the community, cuts of prominent public buildings, business houses, public officials, etc.

SPECIAL ARTICLES

Special Articles will appear on union topics from the pens of pioneers in the organizations of the community. These special articles will be of great interest and possess a rare educational value.

LABOR DAY PROGRAM

The full program of the Labor Celebration to be held in Lincoln, together with a list of prizes offered in the sporting events of the day, will appear in this issue.

BITS OF HISTORY

The historical sketches in this edition will be worthy of preservation by loyal unionists or inscribed on union archives. In every respect the Labor Day Edition of The Wagoner for 1910 will be in keeping with the high standard set and maintained by this newspaper.

TO THE ADVERTISERS

The Wagoner's regular and gentlemanly advertising solicitor is now making contracts for space in this handsome edition. He will call on you.