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J. L. EVERNGAM, DENTON, MARYLAND | J. L. EVERNGAM, DENTON, MARYLAND

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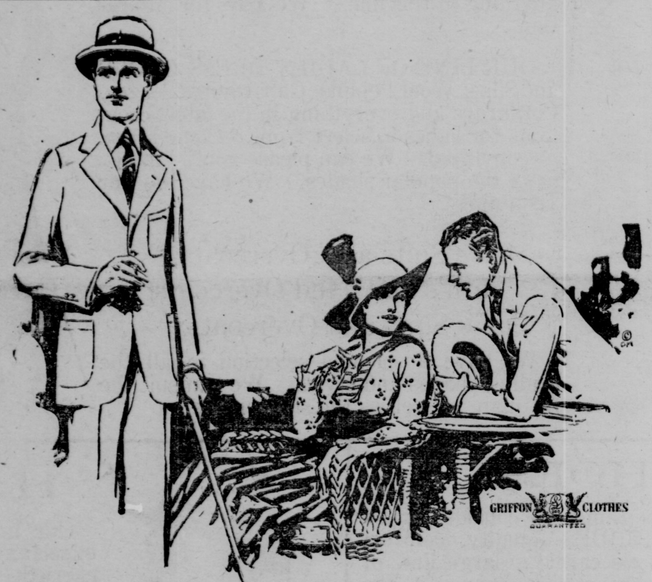

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The Wooden Soldier

How He Drew the Enemy's Fire by Lighting His Pipe.

By CAPTAIN F. A. MITCHEL

In Virginia in 1862 a Federal captain was standing on a rise in the ground looking down a turnpike which extended through a depression and, rising again, entered a small town half a mile away. Hearing horses' hoofs behind him, he turned and saw his general, attended by his staff, riding toward him.

"Turn out the guard, the general commanding!" cried the picket.

"Never mind the guard," said the general and, riding to the point where the captain had been standing, looked at the town beyond with wistful eye, then said to his subordinate:

"Captain, how many men are there in your picket post?"

"There are thirty under my command distributed over a quarter of a mile. But right here I have eight men and a sergeant."

"Have you seen any indications of the enemy in the town?"

"None whatever."

The general turned away with evident reluctance.

"I wish you," he said, "to keep a sharp lookout for the Confederates there. The place is of great strategic importance to us in this campaign. By tomorrow morning General D.'s brigade will come up and, provided the enemy has not already done so, will occupy the town. I am hoping that he will be in time, for the fate of this campaign rests with that position. If the enemy comes in there tonight he will fortify it and we shall not be able to drive him out without a hard fight, which in our present condition would not be practicable. Keep a sharp lookout and keep me advised."

"May I not advance my post to the town, general?"

"No; that would involve an advance of the entire picket line."

The general rode away. Private Tom Bixby, who had been standing at attention beside the road and had heard what had been said, dropped the butt of his musket on the ground and resumed the position of a picket on the lookout. The rest of the afternoon his mind was on the town and the question which side would get there first. At sunset he was relieved and ate his supper. Then, lighting his pipe, he sat down on the ridge and smoked and looked for signs of soldiers in the town on the other side of the valley. When it was dark he knocked the ashes out of his pipe, went to his captain and, saluting respectfully, said:

"Captain, it seems to me that, considering we can't see what's going on in the dark, some one should reconnoiter."

"You may go if you choose."

"All right. I'll just walk down the road and up the other side of the valley, near enough to see if there is any stir, and if there is I'll come back and let you know."

Tom sauntered away into the darkness. On reaching the edge of the town he saw citizens moving about, but no soldiers. The people went to bed early, and when everything was quiet Tom made an entry. Passing a shop under a sign "Otto Schmitt, Tobacconist," Tom, thinking it a good opportunity to replenish his stock of tobacco, went inside. After buying what he wanted he fell into conversation with the proprietor, who, being a German, had no especial affiliation with the Confederate cause. Before the shop stood the figure of a man lighting his pipe. Schmitt, who was an ingenious mechanic, had made it himself for a sign. With one hand the figure held the pipe, while in the other was a match. In the pipe bowl was tobacco. A rubber tube led from the pipestem into the store. Schmitt by pulling on a wire could light the match and smoke from the shop. Tom noticed the mechanism near the shop window and asked what it was. Schmitt not only explained it to him, but put it in operation.

An idea popped into Tom's brain. If he had that figure and connections on the side of the town from which the Confederates would approach possibly he might make them believe that the Federals had got ahead of them and had occupied the town. He took Schmitt into his confidence and told him that if he would lend him his sign and help him carry it to a new location he thought the Federal general might pay him very handsomely—that is, if the ruse succeeded.

The German hesitated. Most of the citizens of the place were Confederate sympathizers, and he feared that if his act became known he would suffer for it. But Tom assured him that if the town was unoccupied by the Confederates at daylight the Federals would surely enter it in force, and the hope of profit won him over. He shut up his shop, put out the lights, and an hour later, when not a footstep was to be heard on the street, he and Tom carried the figure to the road by which the Confederates would be likely to advance. Reaching an eminence on which a picket could be seen from a distance, they set up the dummy in the middle of the road. Tom could not take off its Confederate uniform, but he could put his own over it, which he did, and rested his musket in the hollow of the arm holding the pipe.

Schmitt meanwhile was making the attachments, filling the pipe and leading the tube to a convenient place of concealment, behind which he had Tom took position and waited.

It was 11 o'clock when they set up the dummy. A wagon passed into the town a half hour later, but Tom and his assistant heard it coming in time to remove the figure and set it up again as soon as the team was gone. This was the only interruption that occurred. At 1 o'clock Tom heard a distant sound like the rumbling of artillery over a bridge. The wind being from the south, the sound very faint and Tom's hearing acute, he judged that whoever was crossing the bridge was miles away. He wished he could be in two places at once. He would have liked to go back and hurry up the Federals who were coming and remain where he was at the same time.

In another hour the sounds of an approaching force were unmistakable, and not much later the tramp of men was audible. Then down the road Tom heard an officer order skirmishers to deploy, covering the road and each side of it.

"Light up," said Tom to Schmitt.

There was a tiny flash, which rose and fell as Schmitt pulled on the tube, while clouds of tobacco smoke rose from the pipe. There was just light enough to reveal the figure to those advancing without their being able to see that it was a dummy.

There was a crack, and a bullet jarred the wooden soldier.

"Stop smoking," whispered Tom, and, screened by the darkness, he ran to the figure, which still stood bravely on its feet, and, seizing the musket, fired a shot that went singing down the road. Then, drawing his revolver, he fired three shots in quick succession.

"What's that for?" asked Schmitt.

"They'll think it a signal for our troops in the town to warn them that the enemy is coming. They won't dare come on against an unknown force. My opinion is that if our troops come up before the enemy can see that there's no one here except three men, one of them a dummy, we've won. You can't do anything more here. Suppose you go down the road on the other side of the town and hurry up whoever is coming. If this game succeeds you'll be well paid, I'm sure."

Schmitt set off through the town, having little over half a mile to go to reach the Union picket post.

It was now about an hour before dawn. Tom kept his position on the ridge, from which he sent an occasional shot, always changing his position between shots to make the enemy believe that they were fired by different men. The fire was not returned, for the enemy could see no one to fire at. They were very quiet. Tom's fear was that they were moving around to push forward on his flank, where they would not meet with any opposition whatever, and the fact that the town was unoccupied would be apparent.

For the greater part of an hour Tom stood between the Confederates and the town. He was within sound of the troops below and could hear the usual noises made by soldiers on the march, halted while the commanding officer deliberated as to what he should do. That was the longest hour Tom ever spent in his life. Every minute he expected to hear the command "Forward!" given and to see through the darkness a dim mass coming up the road. His imagination served him many a trick. At one time a stump appeared to be a Confederate standing with his musket to his shoulder; at another he was sure that he heard the tramp of men coming nearer and nearer.

But all these proved to be nothing but scares. The Confederate commander was not minded to walk into a death trap that he could not see.

In some twenty minutes after Schmitt left Tom he came near the picket post and made himself known. He was admitted to the lines and rushed to the general, not far distant, who, on hearing his story, ordered a regiment under arms instantly and pushed forward. In this he disobeyed an order of his superior, but took the risk. In less than fifteen minutes the men were marching toward the town and, under Schmitt's guidance, to the point held by Tom Bixby and his wooden support. Silently ranging themselves along the ridge on each side of the road, they waited the dawn and the coming of the brigade that was supposed to be advancing.

As soon as it was light enough to see the enemy he was discerned drawn up in line of battle at the foot of a declivity. An officer on horseback in the middle of the road was looking up through a pair of glasses. But he could see few of the Federals, for their colonel had posted the men where they would be concealed. However, he made himself known to the Confederates, who withdrew out of range.

Before sunrise the tramp of men was heard in the town, and it was evident to those at the front that the expected brigade had arrived. They had no sooner been distributed at the weaker points when the general commanding the Confederates ordered a part of his force to feel them to determine their strength. After some desultory firing, becoming convinced that the town was occupied by a force strong enough to hold it against him, he withdrew his army.

When all was over the Federal general rode out to inspect Tom Bixby's Quaker soldier. Never before was an officer more delighted. The desired result had been accomplished and he had been vindicated in disobeying orders. He asked Tom what he could do for him, and Tom told him whatever he did must be for Schmitt, whose tobacco sign had won.

Tom was given a commission, and Schmitt was appointed to a sutlership, which he found very profitable.

Salt Water Cataracts.

There are a good many salt water cataracts in existence. They may be found in Norway, southern Chile and British Columbia, where narrow fiords, or arms of the sea, are obstructed by barriers of rock. The rising tide flows over and filters through such reefs into the great natural reservoirs beyond, but the water is held back at the ebb until it breaks over the obstruction in an irresistible torrent. Most curious of all is the waterfall at Canoe Passage, where the island of Vancouver approaches the British Columbia mainland. Here the flood tide from the gulf of Georgia to the southward is held back at a narrow cleft between two islands until it pours over in a boiling cascade eighteen feet high, with perhaps double the volume of the Rhine. At the turn of the tide, however, the waters from the north rush back into the gulf, producing a cascade of equal height and volume. The waterfall actually flows both ways.

The Pearl Scarfpin

It Proved a Dead Giveaway.

By WILLARD BLAKEMAN

Jack Herkimer was a very pleasant fellow. He was popular with both men and women. Flaxen haired, blue eyed, a boyish face on a massive figure, good natured, careless of everything except the feelings of others, he drew about him so many friends that he found it difficult to avoid distressing them from an inability to accept and return all the favors they lavished upon him.

One day Jack was sitting in a street car when a young lady got in. She sat for a few moments oblivious to the fact that persons are not expected to ride in street cars for nothing, then made a dive for her portmanteau, supposed to be contained in the bag she carried. There was a succession of dives, each more spasmodic than the last; then she arose and started to leave the car without stopping it.

Jack interposed. "Pardon me," he said, placing himself in front of her, lifting his hat and smiling benignly; "if you are without change for your fare I will pay it for you. There is no need to get off."

He held in his hand a quantity of large change and picked out a nickel from among the coins. The young lady, apparently reassured, refrained from her attempt to commit suicide for the want of 5 cents and sat down. But she was still too flustered to thank Jack for the loan. The conductor received the fare, passed on, and the young lady sat trying to regain her equanimity. Presently a thought struck her all of a sudden. It was that it behooved her to make some arrangement for the payment of the debt. She was a young woman and had not the experience adequate to the occasion.

"How am I to—to get it back to you?" she asked Jack.

"There's no need to get it back to me at all," he replied, with that winning smile of his. "But if you insist upon doing so"— He hesitated. He would have liked to add, "I'll call for it if you'll give me your address," but it occurred to him that if the young lady did not consider this taking an advantage of her youth there were doubtless members of her family who would, so he finished the sentence by giving his own address, at the same time begging her not to take the trouble to return so small an amount.

By this time the girl had so far recovered her composure as to say, "Thank you very much." She would have liked to return Jack's smile, for it was catching, but she was only sixteen years old and had been brought up to give no encouragement to a stranger.

Jack, who was feasting his eyes on her beauty, passed far beyond the point where he had intended to leave the car. When the girl arose to alight she was apparently in doubt whether or not it would be proper for her to nod an adieu to the handsome young fellow who had befriended her. She decided in the negative, and Jack, who was about to go out before her in order to hand her off the step, sat still. The episode was ended, but left a very pleasant sensation in the young man's breast.

That night when Jack went to sleep he was paying the girl's fare again and again and assuring her that a nickel was of no consequence and she must not think of returning it to him.

The next day Jack received an envelope addressed in a man's handwriting containing a bit of paper and postage stamps to the amount of 5 cents. On the paper within in the same hand as the address was the word "Thanks." Evidently the girl's father or brother had taken the matter off her hands. Jack felt sorry. He had hoped to receive from the young lady something that would have given him the semblance of an excuse to take another step toward an acquaintance. This return of his loan by one other than the creditor herself ended the matter. And in a week Jack, who had bouquets of smiles thrown at him from pretty girls, forgot all about it.

One day a little box, addressed in a feminine hand, came for Mr. Herkimer by post. Jack was the recipient of so many favors from young ladies that he naturally supposed it to be from some girl with whom he was "spoons." He did not recognize the handwriting, but quite often his favorers who wished to conceal their identity had addressed him through an amanuensis, and he thought nothing of it. Opening the box, he found nestling in cotton a scarfpin set with a single pearl.

Jack ran over all the girls to whom he had recently made love—that is, all he could remember—with a view to getting a clew as to the sender. He formed an opinion that she was one of three, but he could not tell which one. He would await developments, being well aware that no woman was likely to so favor him without in due time getting credit for her gift. Whenever he met a suspect he would put out feelers with a view to testing her as to whether she had sent the scarfpin. But week after week passed and there was no clew. Jack wore his pearl ornament for several years, studying the face of every woman who fixed her eyes upon it, hoping for a betrayal, but found no one who gave any indication whatever that she had bestowed the favor.

One September day Jack, who had gone to Europe with the American summer hegira, was in a compartment of a railway carriage in Germany on his way to Hamburg when an elderly man handed a lady into the car, then got in himself. The girl was a beauty, and it seemed to Jack that he had seen her before. It was some time before the gentleman got his hand baggage stowed away in the racks and the lady had settled herself in her seat. Then she looked about among her fellow passengers. Jack from the time he had received the mysterious scarfpin had never worn any other. He saw the girl's eyes hovering upon him and finally light on the ornament. Immediately the blood left her cheeks, then rushed back a crimson flood.

There was no more doubt in Jack's mind that the young lady was the donor of the scarfpin than that she was present before him. But who was she? Certainly not one with whom he had been on intimate terms. He was quite young enough to remember faces, especially of those with whom he had an acquaintance. But no racking of his brain served to bring forth the identity of this lady who had sent him an anonymous gift. And yet something had passed between them, for he was sure he had seen her before.

The train was an express and connected. As soon as it was well under way the conductor came through for tickets, and the first person he approached in the compartment was the young lady in question, who referred him to the gentleman who accompanied her.

If it were not for suggestion our world would be a very dull one. Seeing the girl ask for her ticket brought back to Jack Herkimer a picture of her when, three years younger, she had started to leave a street car in America for lack of fare. The riddle was solved. She had rewarded him for what she doubtless considered a favor of importance, sending the reward anonymously.

Jack was a man of quick resource. What he would do flashed upon his brain with electric rapidity. He began to fumble in his pockets for his ticket—that is, in every pocket except where it was. The conductor stood before him, waiting. Jack continued the search until, pretending that the ticket was not forthcoming, he said to the conductor in the only language he knew, English:

"I've lost my pocketbook, with my money and my ticket as well."

Naturally, every eye in the compartment was turned to the unfortunate man, the girl's included. She was not the unsophisticated creature she had been when Jack had paid her fare, and it did not take long for her to become aware that he was enacting this scene on her account. To conceal a smile she turned her face to the window.

"You are an American, are you not, sir?" said the young lady's companion.

"I am."

"If you will tell me what you require I will be happy to oblige you."

"I need only my fare to Bremen, where I will take steamer for home."

"In that case the matter is simple. I sail on the Crown Princess tomorrow morning."

"I go by the same steamer. I have the documents by which to obtain all I need from the purser."

The gentleman paid Jack's fare. Jack asked for his name and address and was given a card bearing the name of Farnsworth. Then the passengers, having lost all interest in the matter, settled down to their various ways of passing the time. There was one person who, not being deceived by this audacious imposture, continued to look through the window at the scenery as though she would not lose any of it for a fortune. At last she turned, but carefully abstained from meeting the gaze of the unfortunate man who had lost his valuables.

Americans abroad come at once to a friendly footing. Jack Herkimer was profuse in his thanks to Mr. Farnsworth and, taking a seat opposite him, talked about everything he could think of, expatiating especially on that confidence those born under the stars and stripes have in one another, and so ingratiated himself into the favor of the old gentleman that the latter at last said, "Permit me to introduce you to my daughter, Mr."—

"Herkimer. I am John Herkimer of Troy, N. Y."

That was the trying moment of Miss Farnsworth's life. She felt a great impulse to fix her eyes on Jack's scarfpin, and Jack threw open his coat that she might get a good view of it. A half vexed, half amused smile played over her features like a fitful breeze among flowers. Jack gave no outward sign of ever having met her before, but there was a happy triumph within that was as plain to Miss Farnsworth as it was unobservable to the others present.

As soon as the steamer was reached Jack, after a pretended visit to the purser, paid his indebtedness and tipped the head steward to put him at table beside the Farnsworths. After such adventures with a young lady and a week's voyage ahead of them it would be absurd to suppose that the principal actors would cross the Atlantic ocean without a love affair. Indeed, the gift of the scarfpin made it plain to Jack that a conquest had been made long before, and he found love-making dead easy. Fortunately he had found a girl he wanted and, as he expressed it, "wanted her bad." An engagement occurred on the steamer, and the wedding followed in due course of time.

A Natural Inquiry.

Helen was a very inquisitive child who greatly annoyed her father each evening with endless questions while he tried to read the newspaper. One evening, among other things, she demanded, "Papa, what do you do at the store all day?"

Exasperated at her persistence he answered briefly, "Oh, nothing!"

Helen was silent a moment, and then asked, "But how do you know when you are done?"—Harper's Magazine.

How Do You Make a Circle?

The intelligence of people may be gauged by asking them to make a circle on paper with a pencil and noting in which direction the hand is moved. The good student in a mathematical class draws circles from left to right. The inferiority of the softer sex as well as the male dunces is shown by their drawing from right to left. Asylum patients do the same.—London Family Doctor.