

AND THE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF CRONJE



PAARDEBURG.



force up to hold the key of the position, and outflanked the left of the British troops, who were holding the northern face of the rim.

The soldiers taken by surprise fell back from the rim, and formed their line with their front to the enemy, who poured into their ranks a terrible, rapid fusillade, which brought down the officers and men in scores. That Majuba was taken by surprise is not questioned, even by those living today who took part in the disastrous affair. Till the foe were on the top, General Colley and his staff never gave a thought of such a daring move on the part of the Boer, or of the loss of the position. Their deadly fire swept away the resistance of the British who fought on the open plateau, while their foes kept to the cover close to the rim. The general and the officers rallied and called upon their men to be firm, and steadfastly the brave fellows responded. In the forefront of the line, encouraging and leading his soldiers, was General Colley, who, sword in hand, fronted the hailstorm of bullets that mowed down his men, and fell, fighting to the last, with his face to the foe, as a gallant soldier. Nearly half the British force were either killed, wounded, or made prisoners. Among the latter was the late Sir Hector Macdonald, who had just received his lieutenant's commission in the 92nd, for his distinguished services in the Afghan campaign.

The news of the Majuba disaster roused up the fire of the empire and

swiftly a well equipped army was in Natal to wipe out the defeat, and such experienced generals as Lord Roberts, Wood and Buller, were ordered to the front but hostilities were brought to a standstill by the Gladstone government, who had been approached by Kruger and his advisors to submit the question in dispute to arbitration, and offered compensation for besieging the 94th regiment in the Transvaal. Against the will and wishes of the army and nation, a patched up treaty was made, which was hardly put into effect before the Boers began to fortify and strengthen all the strategic positions in the Orange Free State and Transvaal, with the full determination, with the aid of the disloyal Dutch of Cape Colony to drive the British flag from South Africa forever and set up a Dutch African Republic. Their hypocrisy and cunning designs were soon made plain to the British by the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes.

The unfortunate General Colley was considered one of the very ablest officers of the British Army and had seen a lot of hard fighting in India and China, but under different conditions of warfare. He was an excellent administrator, courageous and full of resource, but his force to invade the Transvaal and relieve the beleaguered British regiments was ridiculously small for such an immense undertaking. The tarnished glory of British arms, at Majuba Hill, on the 25th of February, 1878, was brilliantly retrieved at Paardeburg nineteen years afterwards.



GENERAL CRONJE
Commander of the Boer Forces at Paardeburg.

- 22 Major Weeks.
- 23 Reginald Cox.
- 24 John A. Harris.
- 25 Ernest M. Bowness.
- 26 Artemus R. Dillon.
- 27 John Boudreau.
- 28 Roland Taylor, (killed)
- 29 Neco Dorion.
- 30 Alfred Riggs, (killed)
- 31 Walter Lane
- Top left hand corner - Chaplain Fullerton.
- Top right hand corner - Charles Hine, (who replaced Leslie McBeth)

The
Harridan-Ormsley Elopement
By Mary Wood
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Katrina Harridan was the sixth of seven daughters, red haired and undersized, but that did not prevent her from being a power in her world. At the young ladies' seminary she was the acknowledged leader as well as the most intimate friend of her twelve classmates, each of whom had the promise of being bridesmaid at her wedding. In this they were prescient, since Thorndyke Ormsley had for some time made her the object of his attentions.

Thorndyke Ormsley did not altogether meet with the approval of the class. They thought him lacking in the dash and daring requisite for a suitable match for their president.

Katrina, however, viewed the matter from a different standpoint. As she confided to her youngest sister Pamela: "There is something restful in Thorndyke's conventionalism. I always know just what to expect from him, and I fancy that I can furnish more of the element of the unexpected than is found in most orthodox families."

She therefore smiled upon her admirer. It followed that she had been graduated but a few months when he made up his mind that to marry her was the only proper course of action. He was too well regulated a young man to propose to Katrina without having first spoken to her father. This was a procedure that the astute morsel of girlhood had foreseen and arranged for.

As he afterward complained to Katrina: "I cannot understand it. Your father was brusque, nervous, quite unlike himself. All that I could get him to say was that you were too young and that he entirely disapproved. When I tried to argue, Pamela came in, and he intimated that the interview was closed."

"Katrina buried her face in his shoulder. 'Oh, dear, oh, dear!' she wailed. 'What shall we do?'"

Thorndyke attempted to comfort her, and he found the process so agreeable that he prolonged it for some moments before saying soothingly: "Do not be discouraged, dear. I will call on him again. He must be made to see reason." As a happy thought struck him: "Why don't you speak to him yourself? You girls have always seemed to get your way pretty thoroughly. He will say 'yes' to you."

"He won't," Katrina's voice, though smothered, was decisive.

"Why not?"

"Because I won't let him." Without giving her lover time to recover from the shock she hurried on: "Papa has lost a great deal of money these last years. He has really a hard time to get along, so that another wedding is out of the question. You don't know what a wedding costs. We have had five. So we do. There would be the presents and dresses for those twelve bridesmaids, the flowers, music, caterer, trousseau—oh, it is awful!" and she clasped her hands despairingly. "Papa is always so good. He wanted to mortgage the house, but I said 'no.'"

Light had begun to dawn upon Ormsley. "Let me, Katrina," he began.

Two red spots appeared in Katrina's cheeks. "And have you all ashamed to look you in the face? Never! Pamela and I have decided never to marry unless we elope."

Thorndyke Ormsley stiffened. "That is impossible."

Katrina began to cry in earnest. "I always knew that you were so proper, but I never thought you were so horribly proper that you cared more for what people would say than you did for me," she sobbed.

Her lover could not resist her tears. "You know that I love you better than anything else in the world," he said tenderly. "It is not entirely on my own account that I object. There is Aunt Harriet. She would be utterly scandalized by an elopement. Is it right to distress her when she has done everything for me and I am all she has?"

At this virtual capitulation Katrina's tears ceased to flow. "Then if I get Aunt Harriet's consent you will be

willing to elope?" she asked guilelessly. "I would do anything to marry you," he answered, with unusual recklessness.

Katrina threw her arms around his neck. "Then it is as good as settled." "You don't know Aunt Harriet," Ormsley admonished.

"Yes, I do. And, what is more, I wager that if you do exactly as I tell you she herself will suggest an elopement."

So the two put their heads together. Most men would have wished themselves in Ormsley's place. He must have been sensible of his privileges, for he left the house more in love than ever and vowed to play his part in the comedy. Katrina refused to admit the possibility of a tragedy.

Miss Harriet Ormsley lived in a big old fashioned house called the Larches. She had the only victoria in town, her butler always stood behind her chair at dinner, and her parlor maid wore French caps. In all respects her establishment was most correct. But its rhythmic order and the mind of its mistress were alike disturbed by the strange behavior of young Mr. Ormsley. For three or four days he had eaten scarcely anything, although his aunt ordered his favorite dishes, and Jenkins served them to a nicety. Instead of going out of an evening he brooded over the fire or feverishly paced his room. His rapid footfalls could be heard long after the rest of the family had retired.

Miss Harriet loved her nephew, as she had his father before him. When he had successively refused to take a tonic, see a physician or consider a sea trip alarm overcame her usual stiffness, and she implored an explanation. Thorndyke gave it reluctantly. He loved Katrina Harridan. Katrina loved him. Her father objected. That was the end of it.

Miss Harriet listened in amazement. An Ormsley, her nephew, refused by a Harridan, a mere upstart in society! It was ridiculous, preposterous!

Thorndyke refused further discussion of the subject. His aunt lay awake most of the night, and as the clock chimed the hours of the early morning so did her indignation grow.

It was almost at boiling point the next day when Katrina was announced. Before her hostess could speak the girl threw herself in her arms.

"Oh, dear Miss Harriet," she cried, "of course Thorndyke has told you. I suppose I ought not to be here, when I am forbidden to have anything to do with him, but it can't be wrong to come when he is away."

Miss Harriet found herself patting Katrina's head.

"Do not cry, my dear," she said with difficulty, due to a remarkable stricture in her throat. "It is a deplorable situation, but your father cannot be an entire—He must be made to see reason. I will call and explain."

This conclusion was far from reassuring to Katrina. Yet the young diplomat managed to murmur with a fair assumption of gratitude: "That is so good of you, dear Miss Harriet. If Thorndyke and I are ever happy, it will all be due to you."

On her way home Miss Harridan found it imperative to call at her father's office—or, rather, to call on the office boy. Tommy Jenks was her staunch admirer, for she had a way of treating him as if he were already a member of the firm.

"Tommy, if Miss Harriet calls to see father during the next few days just tell her that he is engaged. She would only worry him. Do you think that you could keep her out—for me?" She smiled engagingly.

The office boy was flattered by this proof of confidence. "Sure I can, Miss Katrina," he declared stoutly. "Just you trust to Tommy Jenks."

Miss Ormsley called at the office several times. At each visit Tommy blandly assured her that Mr. Harridan was out.

"It is impossible," she declared indignantly. But the office boy played his role to perfection.

Katrina's next visit to the Larches found its mistress in a state of mind quite at variance with her usual elegant calm. "Your father, in coalition with his impudent office boy, has refused to see me. He shows regard neither for my age and position nor for the happiness of my nephew."

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troops. He encountered the Boer commandos, three hundred strong, well posted on the Ingogo River. The Boers' loss was about fifty killed and wounded and the British lost about the same number.

The accurate shooting of the British had a marked effect on the Boers who all day long kept close under cover of the slopes of the hill, never attempting to rush the hill-top as they subsequently did some days later at Majuba Hill.

The belated reinforcements now began to arrive on the scene, the first being the famous 2nd Gordon Highlanders, fresh from the Afghan war of 1878, in which they won great renown under Sir Frederick (now Lord) Roberts. General Colley decided to resume the offensive, so as to relieve the besieged garrisons in the Transvaal. He made, this time, his dispositions to turn the flank of Laing's Nek, instead of making a frontal attack. He at once saw that Majuba Hill overlooked and commanded Laing's Nek and to seize it, he marched during the night of the 25th, with a force of three companies

of the 92nd, two of the 53rd and 60th, and a party of the naval contingent. After a toilsome daring march, the force occupied the mountain top and this point of vantage appeared to the general and staff impregnable.

So it was, had proper precautions been taken to fortify the paths on all sides. According to General Sir William Buller, K. C. B., in his biography of General Colley, the staff were lax of this important duty, deeming the position impossible and safe from assault. All that was done was to erect some small stone rangars round the rim of the saucer shaped top, and to post the troops at various points. On the daylight appearing the next morning, the Boers were astounded to see the redcoated sentries lining the rim of Majuba, which flank movement threatened to entirely destroy the whole force. Consternation was visible in their camp for a time, and they began to janspan their cattle and send their waggons to the rear as quickly as possible, but they determined, also, before re-creating, and to give time for their waggons to get clear, to try the effect of a direct assault upon Majuba. To conceal their bold movement, the main body opened a long range fire on the summit of Majuba, while the assaulting party, three to four hundred strong, crept silently along the foot hill slopes, being under perfect cover, at the angle to be assailed, and which unfortunately the British neglected to properly guard and strengthen during the previous night.

On the opposite side, the sloping paths were strongly guarded by the Rifles halfway up the mountain sides, and here the Boers never appeared. As soon as the evening reached the projecting knoll, they noticed that the picket of a few soldiers were standing in an exposed position, oblivious of the close proximity of their foes. The leader of the Boers ordered a number of his men to hold their rifles at the "present," step out of cover and fire rapid volleys. The manoeuvre was skillfully executed, the whole picket fell dead or wounded in an instant, and in a few minutes the foe had sufficient



MAJUBA HILL.



The Surrender of General Cronje to Lord Roberts at Paardeburg.

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