

# THE BRAD HIGHWAY

A Tale of 19th Century England, Full of the Thrills of Adventure and Spirit of Romance

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Peter Vibart, an English school-teacher, is recruited upon his uncle, Sir George, to be a business agent in a remote village, where he is to be in charge of a school. The village is a remote one, and the school is a small one. The school-teacher is a young man, and the village is a remote one. The school is a small one. The school-teacher is a young man, and the village is a remote one. The school is a small one.

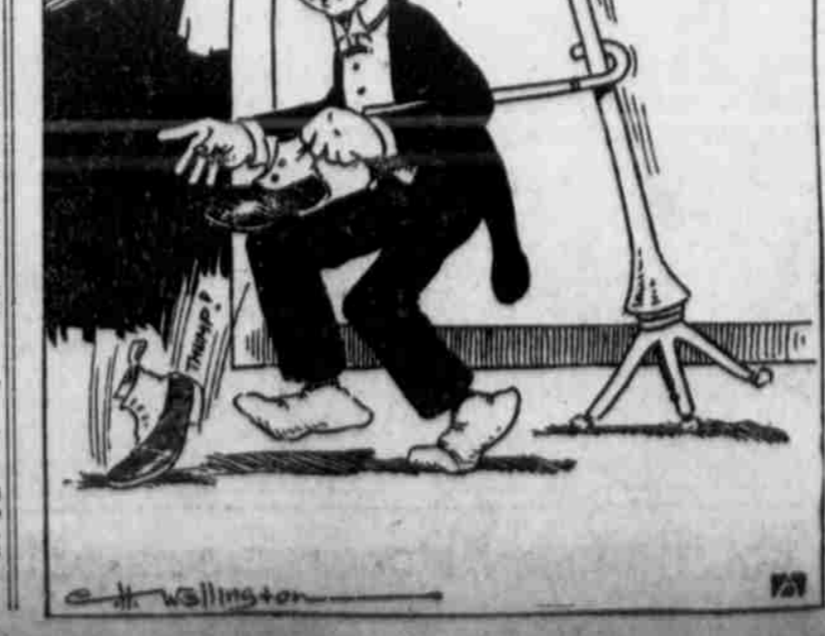
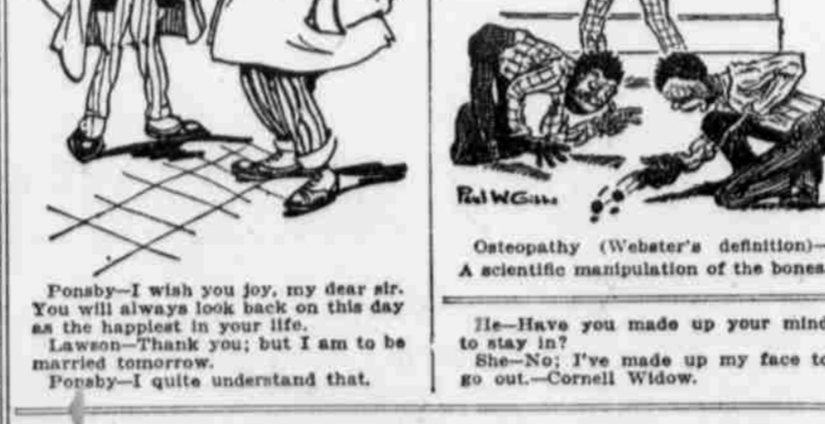
By JEFFERY FARNOL

CHAPTER III—Continued.  
Now presently, as I lay thus, a soft glow, a brightness that seemingly played all around me, wherefore, lifting my heavy head, I beheld a ray of light that pierced the gloom, a long, gleaming vista jeweled by falling raindrops, whose brilliance was blurred, now and then, by the fitting shapes of wind-tossed branches. At a slight of this strength revived, and rising, I staggered on toward this welcome light, and thus I saw that it streamed from the window of my cottage. Even then, it seemed, I journeyed miles before I felt the latch beneath my fingers, and fumbling, opened the door, stumbled in and closed it after me. For a space I stood dazed by the sudden light, and then, little by little, noted that the table and chairs had been tidied, and that the fire had been mended, and that candles burned brightly upon the mantel. And thus I saw but dimly for there was mist before my eyes; yet for the moment that the girl had leapt up on my entrance, and now stood fronting me across the table.

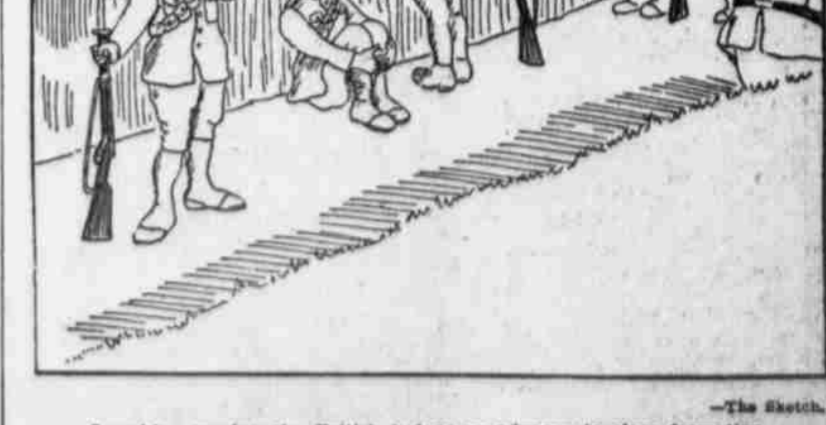
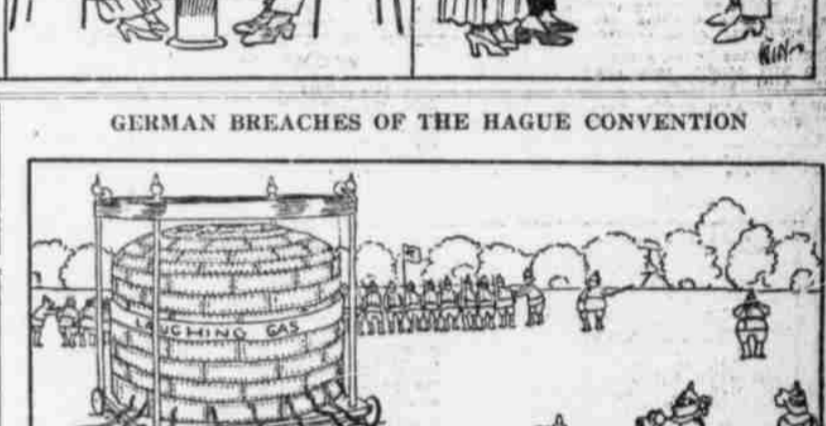
CHAPTER IV.  
She was on her knees beside me, bathing my battered face, talking all the while in a soft voice that I thought wondrously sweet to hear.  
"Poor boy!" she was saying, over and over again, "poor boy!" And, after she had said it perhaps a dozen times, I opened my eyes and looked at her.  
"Madam, I am 25," said I. Hereupon, she rose in hand, drew back and looked at me.  
A wonderful face—low-browed, deep-set, full-lipped. The eyes were dark and swiftly changeable, and there was a subtle witchery in the slanting shadow of her lashes.  
"Twenty-five!" she repeated, "can it really be?"  
"Why not, madam?"  
"So very young!" she said, "prepared for?"  
"Why—I began, greatly taken back. Indeed, I—that is—"  
But here she laughed and then she smiled, and sighing, shook her head.  
"Poor boy!" she said, "poor boy!" And, as I would have retorted, she stopped me with the sponge.  
"Your mouth is cut," said she, "after a while, and there is a great gash in your brow."  
"But the water feels delicious!" said I.  
"And your throat is all scratched and swollen!"  
"But your hands are very gentle and soothing."  
"I don't hurt you, then?"  
"On the contrary, the—the pain is very slight, thank you."  
"Yet you fainted a little while ago."  
"Then it was very foolish of me."  
"Poor—," she hesitated, and looking up at her through the trickling water, I saw that she was smiling.  
"I am a fellow of a woman's hand. And her lips were very sweet and her eyes were soft and tender—as for an Amazon."  
And when she had washed the blood from my face she went to fetch clean water from where I kept it in a bucket in the corner.  
Now, at my elbow upon the table lay the knife, a heavy, clumsy contrivance I had bought to use in my carpentry, and I saw, mechanically, picked it up. As I did so the light gleamed evilly upon its long blade.  
"Put it down!" she commanded; "put it down! It is a hateful thing!"  
"For a woman's hand," I added, "so hideously unbecoming!"  
"Some men are so hatefully—hideously unbecoming!" she retorted, her lip curving. "I expected—him—and you are terrible like him!"  
"As to that," said I, "I may have the same colored eyes and hair and be something of the same build."  
"Yes," she nodded. "It was your build and the color of your eyes and hair that startled me."  
"But, after all," said I, "the similarity in only skin deep and goes no farther."  
"No," she answered, kneeling beside me again, "no, you are—only 25!"  
"I said this but eyes were hidden by her lashes."  
"Twenty-five is 25!" said I, more simply than before. "Why do you say that?"  
"The water is all dripping from your face and chin—stoop lower over the basin, yet," said I, as well as I could on account of the trickling water, for she was bathing my face again, "and you must be years younger than I!"  
"But then, some women always feel older than a man—more especially if he is young."  
"Thank you," said I, "thank you with the exception of a scratch or so, I am well!" But, as I moved, I caught her hand clumsily against the table, and with a sudden pain of surprise, "What is it—your hand?"  
"No, thank," she said, "obediently I stretched out my hand to her."  
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"No, thank," she said, "obediently I stretched out my hand to her."

# SCRAPPLE

### AGAINST THE LAW



### THE PADDED CELL



(CONTINUED TOMORROW)