

VALUYEV'S GREATLY SHOCKED BY STORY BOTCHKAREVA TELLS

Russian Girl Soldier Returns to the Front and Makes Agreement With Soldiers Permitting Her Girls to Fight in Their Own Sector



LEON TROTSKY

But, Later, When the Russians Are Preparing to Return Home, They Resolve to Kill Her for Preventing the Peace They Seek

(Copyright, 1919, by Frederick A. Stokes Co.) (This story, told by Maria Botchkareva and translated and transcribed by Isaac T. Hovey, is published by the Evening Public Ledger, Inc., under the title "Yashka.") THIS STARTS THE STORY In the summer of 1917 Maria Botchkareva formed the Battalion of Death, a woman's fighting unit in the Russian army, and a peasant girl thus entered into the international hall of fame. This is her story. In earlier installments she told of the hardships of her childhood, the brutalities of her married life and the realization of her wish to become a soldier. She told of battles fought and won and of the demoralization of the army that followed the overthrow of the Czar. It was her desire to shame the men into action that prompted the formation of the battalion and she succeeded, but only for a short time. Leaving her girls at the front she goes to Petrograd and proceeds to tell Prime Minister Alexander Kerensky of conditions.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES I RETURNED to the front. The trains were frightfully crowded, but fortunately I had accommodations in a first-class compartment. At Molochevno I reported to General Valuyev, commander of the Tenth Army, and hunched with the staff. The general was painfully surprised to learn of the punishment I had received at the hands of the soldiers. "Did they beat you?" he asked incredulously, finding it hard to imagine soldiers maltreating Yashka. "Yes, Gospodin General, they did," I answered. "But why?" "I told him of the German I had wounded as he came over in the company of several comrades. "God, what has become of my once glorious army!" he cried out. As I unfolded to him the remaining phases of the episode he punctuated my story with exclamations of surprise.

At the end of the meal General Valuyev informed me that I had been promoted to the rank of captain. He pinned an extra star on my epaulettes and congratulated me. I was provided with a car and driven to corps headquarters, where I reported to my commanding general. He and the officers of the corps staff were anxious to know of my latest developments in the rear. I conveyed to them the impression made upon me by Kerensky and Verkhovsky two days before. Their appearance is witness to the fact that all is lost," I said. "And how about the transfer?" the general asked. "The battalion is waiting for you to return and take it to a more congenial sector."

I answered that orders would soon arrive for the transfer, and showed the certificate of my right to command without a committee. The general was glad for my sake. Meanwhile, my girls learned of my arrival. They formed a riotous mob to give me a cheerful welcome. My presence seemed to have buoyed up their depressed spirits. After commending the women on their reception I went with them to mess. It was my custom to eat the same food as the girls. Only I seldom ate with them. Before eating I usually supervised the mess, satisfying myself that everything was plentiful and in good order. I knew from experience that here is nothing like food to keep up a soldier's heart.

Was it the promotion that put me in a happy mood, or my return to the girls, to whom I had grown deeply attached? I don't know. But after dinner it occurred to me that it would be the right thing to let the girls have some fun. So I suggested a game and my soldiers took it up joyously. As the game proceeded many men gathered around the circle in which we were going on. They watched anxiously, clearly desirous to play, too, but not daring to join in for fear lest I order the girls away. I was a great pleasure to observe how these grown-up children longed to participate in the sport. But I looked indifferent. Finally they sent several delegates to express their desire to me. "Gospodin Captain," the men said, "not very boldly, we want to speak to you."

"All right, go ahead," I answered, "only don't address me as officer. Call me plain Yashka or Botchkareva." "May we be allowed to take part in the game?" they asked, encouraged by my words. "Yes; but on condition that you do not molest my girls; consider them as fellow soldiers only," I declared. "The men swore that they would behave, and the girls were not at all displeased at the new arrangement. They played for two or three hours, and the men kept their pledge. When the game ended they left with quite a different feeling toward me. It was a feeling of respect and even love, instead of their former one of hostility. The battalion remained in the reserve billets for several days. There developed, as a result of that game, a new attitude on the part of many soldiers toward us women. Companies of them would come over and join the battalion in sports or singing and various entertainments.

was slain early in the war. For this invention I had only a slight foundation—a rumor that reached me of the death in battle of Afanasi Botchkareva. Of course it was an alleged excuse. But I used it previously and afterward on a number of occasions, and it finally gained large circulation and wide credence.

It was exhilarating to be able to do some real fighting again. It is true we were a mere handful, scarcely 200 girls. But we raised quite a storm, our machine guns rattling and No. 7 Man's Land was turned into a boulevard for promoting agitators and drunkards into No Man's Land truly. The news spread rapidly among the front of the activity of the women's battalion, and I believe that for hundreds of versta our little sector was the only fighting part of the line. I was naturally very proud of this distinction.

For several days this state of affairs continued. Finally the Germans became so annoyed that they ordered their artillery to bombard my position. There had not been any artillery fire at our sector for some time and the opening of the big guns caused tremendous excitement. Many of the men were caught in the bombardment and were killed or wounded. The battalion's casualties were four dead and fifteen wounded.

The whole corps was aroused to the highest degree and a stormy meeting took place immediately. Then men demanded my instant execution. "She wants war," they cried, "and we want peace. Kill her and make an end of it!" But the members of the committee and my friends insisted that I acted in accordance with an agreement. "She only engages her own battalion in fighting," my defenders argued, "and leaves us alone. It is not her fault that the German artillery could not find the range quickly and killed some of our comrades."

When word reached me of the indignation and threats of the men I decided to organize an offensive of my own and let fighting. I requested our artillery to answer in kind the enemy's fire. The engagement developed into a regular little battle. We were firing furiously. While this was going on and the soldiers in the rear were holding the meeting the news arrived of the overthrow of Kerensky and the Bolsheviks' victory in Petrograd. It was announced to the men by the chaplain and was hailed with such an outburst of enthusiasm that the shouts almost drowned the rattling of the machine guns. "Peace! Peace!" thundered through the ranks. "We will leave the front now! We are going home! Hurrah for Lenin! Hurrah for Trotsky! Hurrah for Kollontay! Land and freedom! Bread! Down with the bourgeoisie!"

As the celebration was attaining new climaxes the ears of the multi-colored soldiers caught the sound of the shooting at my sector. The men were struck with frenzy. "Kill her! Kill her!" We have peace now," they yelled, and stamped in our direction, immediately several girls dashed up to me to tell of the approach of the bloodthirsty mob. Almost simultaneously the commanding general rang up on the field marching general run up on the field wire. "Run! Run! Run! We have peace now," they yelled, and stamped in our direction, immediately several girls dashed up to me to tell of the approach of the bloodthirsty mob. Almost simultaneously the commanding general rang up on the field marching general run up on the field wire.

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LENINE CARELESS OF RUIN Cares Naught for Russia and Misery of Workers London, March 23.—From well-informed sources the Westminster Gazette learns that Lenin, the Russian Bolshevik Premier, charged with the destructiveness of Bolshevism and the ruin which it had brought to the workers in Russia, declared that he

quite realized this fact, but that he cared nothing for Russia as Russia. The sole consideration, he said, was internationalism. That the workers all over the world would be ruined as a result of their taking up Bolshevism he was aware. The only benefit of which Lenin could hold out any prospect was to be reaped at a time "some generations ahead" by those who would then be living.

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AIR HERO'S EXPLOITS ARE DENIED IN TRIAL

British Officer Kicks Props From Under U. S. Aviator's Decorations

By the Associated Press London, March 28.—In the court-martial inquiring into the alleged air exploits of Captain Edmund G. Chamberlain, of San Antonio, Tex., Lord Doune, captain in the British air force, was a witness yesterday. Captain Chamberlain asserted he engaged in a remarkable aerial combat in company with British flyers when making a visit to the British front last summer on a furlough from his own unit with the United States Marines. He has been decorated for the supposed achievement.



The success and popularity of the Chestnut Street Shops plainly show that they possess the confidence of their patrons, and this is attributable to the fact that the very best style and quality of goods are always furnished at prices lower than prevail elsewhere for standard-grade articles. The Shops devoted exclusively to Men's Wear cannot be outclassed by any in the United States, and the Ready-Made Apparel, equaling in all but price, the highest efforts of exclusive merchant tailors, have an air of distinction peculiarly their own.

STRAWBERRIES, fine, big, luscious strawberries, which in other years were looked for at Easter, are already here, not because Dame Nature is ahead of time, but because Lady Moore is behind. Warm, sunny Florida, regardless of feasts, sends her bountiful crops to Henry R. Hallowell & Son's, Broad below Chestnut street, at the regular season, but when Easter does come it will be North Carolina strawberries that will be on your table. Even if you do not like strawberries (does such a one exist?), you could not fail to enjoy the beauty of those at Hallowell's, and would appreciate the care bestowed upon them in packing and shipping North. Put in individual refrigerators and packed on the way, they reach you as though picked an hour before.

BRIDE cherishes her silver wedding gifts more than any other. Years after the happy day she still displays them to her friends, provided they are worth showing, for, though much money is spent on wedding remembrances, little judgment is frequently shown in their choice. A miscellaneous assortment of unmatched pieces never makes a complete service of flat silver or one pattern, any of which the bride may possess if the family clan would adopt the Bailey, Banks & Biddle Company plan. Select one of our handsome services and if your mother will not pay for all of it, let each member give a piece. The bride would thus get a really worthwhile present.

SOME good things cannot be cut down without spoiling, and one of them is the title of a department at Jacob Reed's Sons, 1424-26 Chestnut street—"The Custom-Made Ready-to-Put-on Clothes." This ought to tell its own story; but, like all clever phrases, it needs explaining. Here are in the best style, of extra-fine quality fabrics and workmanship, and are designed to suit the individual tastes of men who generally do not wear ready-made clothing. As the number of garments that are produced in this way is limited, the much-desired air of exclusiveness which usually is only to be had in custom-tailored productions is here to be found, making six points in their favor: exclusiveness, style, quality, fit, finish and price.

IN STUDYING Oriental rugs the seeker after knowledge is warned not to depend upon patterns for classification, but to look to textures and weaves, a complicated matter. Especially is this true of the rugs of India, where Persian, Mohammedan, Chinese and European influences are constantly struggling with the dreamy mysticism which penetrates all Hindu art, but though the design may be borrowed, yet the design may be Indian feature. A good example of this is at Fritz & La Rue's, 1124 Chestnut street, is a fine 12x8-ft. Khanbar Rug, so absolutely Mongolian in design that only close scrutiny reveals its origin. On a beautiful old rug, in subtle shades of blue, white and red, are the Chinese symbols in apricot and darker blues, while the borders shade into buff.

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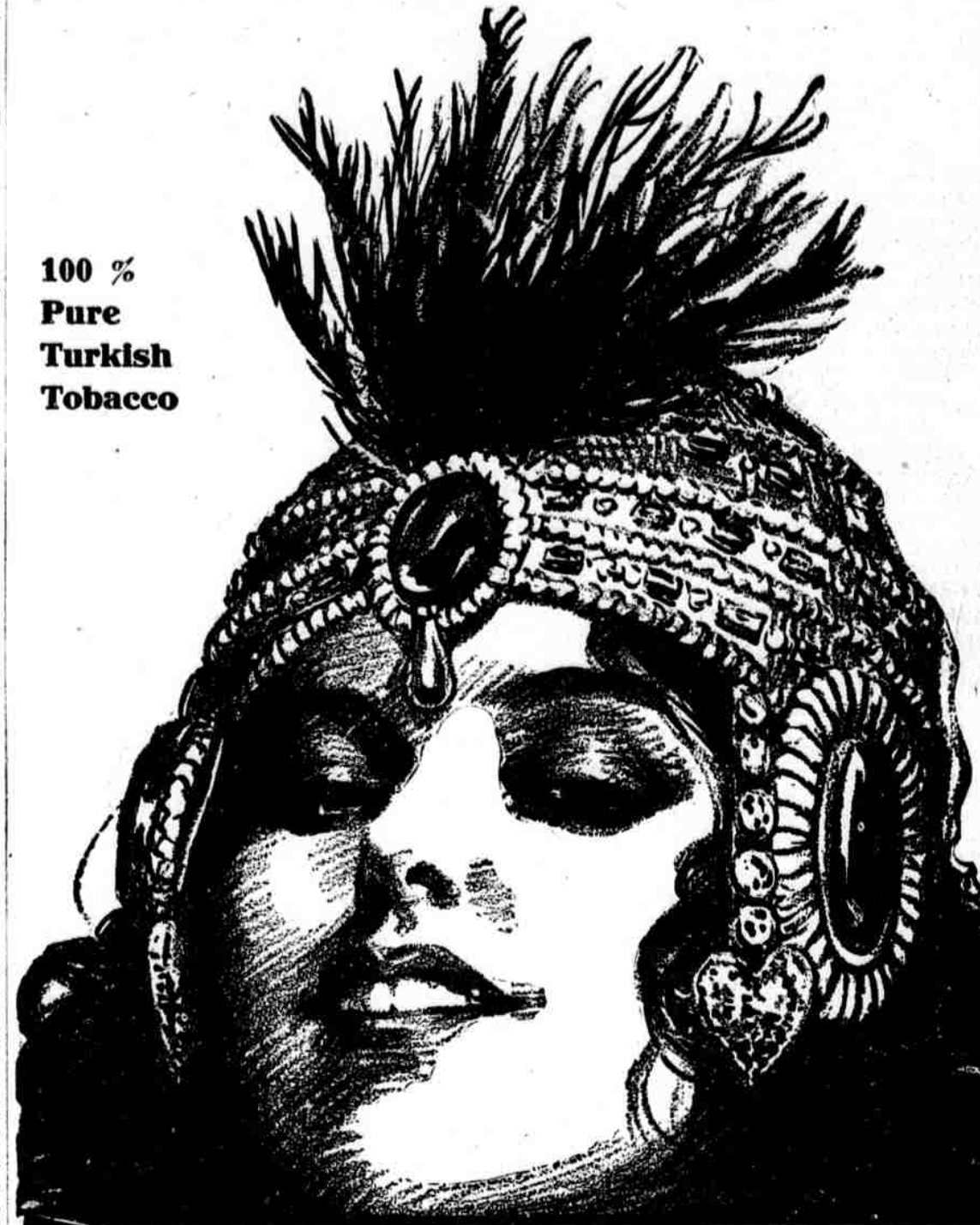
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Advertisement for Helmar Turkish Cigarettes. Features a large illustration of a woman's face wearing a turban. Text includes: '100% Pure Turkish Tobacco', '15 cents for 10', 'HELMAR TURKISH CIGARETTES', 'SOME good things cannot be cut down without spoiling...'

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