

# BOTCHKAREVA FACES RED FIRING SQUAD WITH GROUP OF RUSSIAN OFFICERS

*She Is Stood Up in a Field of Slaughter Where the Bodies of Hundreds of Other Victims Lie Just Where They Fell*

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This story, told by Maria Botchkareva and translated and transcribed by Isaac Don Edry, is published by the Frederick Stokes Company under the title of "Tashka."

## THIS STARTS THE STORY

In the summer of 1917 Maria Botchkareva formed the Battalion of Death, a woman's fighting unit in Russian army, and a peasant girl thus stepped into the international hall of fame. This is her story. In earlier installments she told of the hardships of her childhood, of the brutalities of her married life and of her wish to become a soldier. She told of battles fought and won and of the demoralization of the Russian soldiers after the overthrow of the Czar. It was to share the men into Camr. It was not entirely successful. At last the soldiers force the women to disband and Botchkareva returns to her home. Some time later she is sent for by officers in Petrograd disatisfied with the way the Bolsheviks are running the government and dispatched on a special mission to General Kornilov. On her way back she is captured by Reds.

## AND HERE IT CONTINUES

"A. H. IF I had only known it before, I would have had you shot in company with those fifteen officers," he addressed me.  
"I would not have the heart to shoot at my own brothers, soldier or officer," I remarked.  
"Eh, you are singing already," he turned on me. "We know your kind."  
"All in all," I declared, "you are not better than the officers of the old regime."  
"Silence!" he commanded, angrily. Petrukhn came in with the committee at that instant.  
"I beg you not to yell," he turned to Pugatchov, feeling more confident with the committeemen at his back. "She is in our hands now, and we will do justice. It is for us to decide if she is guilty. Leave her alone."  
There were only ten jurors within reach. The other two members were absent and the ten, being in the majority, decided to go on with the work.

"Whether you find her guilty or not I will not let her get out of here alive!" Pugatchov declared. "What am I?" he added. "I am no enemy either."  
However, this threat worked in my favor, as it touched the committee's pride. They were not to be overriden like that. Pugatchov demanded that I be searched.

"Please, I am at your disposal," I said, "but before you go ahead I want to hand over to you this package of money. There are 10,000 rubles in it, sent to me by Princess Tatuyeva, my former adjutant, to enable me to take the cure at the springs. I kept this money intact, because I hoped to return it to her upon reaching the Caucasus."  
The money had in reality been given to me by Kornilov, to secure my parents and myself from starvation in the future.

The valuable package was taken away without questioning. I was then ordered to undress completely. Petrukhn protested against this, but Pugatchov insisted. The dispute was settled by a vote, the majority being for the undressing. The search was painstaking, but yielded nothing. There was the ticket to Kislovodsk, the letter from Princess Tatuyeva, a little bottle of holy water, given to me by my sister Nadia, and a scapular, presented to me before leaving for the front by one of the patronesses of the battalion.  
"Ah, now we have got it!" exclaimed Pugatchov, seizing the halloved bag. "There is the letter from Kornilov!"

The pad was ripped open and a scroll of paper was taken out on which a Psalm had been written in a woman's hand. I declared that the sin of tearing it open would fall on their heads and that I would not sew it up again. One of the soldiers obtained a needle and thread and sewed the bag together.  
The members of the committee excused themselves for being constrained to have me searched in such a manner.

"What will you do with me now?" I asked.  
"We will have you shot!" answered Pugatchov.  
"What for?" I demanded in despair. The beast did not reply. He smiled.

Petrukhn was afraid to defend me too much, lest he be suspected of giving aid to a spy. He preferred to work indirectly for me, by influencing the committeemen individually. It was decided that the case be submitted to the commander-in-chief, Sabzin, for review and sentence. I believe, on the motion of Petrukhn. This was just a trick to stave off immediate execution, but the expectation among the men was that my death was certain. Nevertheless, I was profoundly grateful to Petrukhn for his humane attitude. He was a man of rare qualities, and among Bolsheviks he was almost unique.

I was ordered to a railroad carriage used as a jail for captured officers and other prisoners. It was a death chamber. Nobody escaped alive from there.

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Bolshevik cabinet—From left to right, Zlotowski, Michailov, Lyncchalsky, Leon Trotsky, General Nurawow and Nogin. The others are unidentified.

When I was led inside there went up a cry:  
"Botchkareva! How did you get here? Coming from Kornilov?"  
"No," I answered, "I was on my way to Kislovodsk."

There were about forty men in the car, the larger part officers. Among the latter were two general officers. They were terribly shocked at my appearance among them. When my conveyance left, the prisoners talked more freely. To some of them I even told the truth, that I had actually been to Kornilov. None of them gave me any hope. All were resigned to death.

One of the generals was an old man. He beckoned to me and I sat down beside him.

"I have a daughter like you," he said sadly, putting his arm around my shoulders. "I had heard of your brave deeds and came to love you as much as my own girl. But I never expected to meet you here, in this death-trap. Isn't it dreadful? Here we are, all of us, the best men of the country, being executed, tormented, crushed by the savage mob. If it were only for the good of Russia! But Russia is perishing at this very moment. Perhaps God will save you yet. Then you will avenge us."

I broke down, convulsed with sobs, and leaned against the general's shoulder. The old warrior could not restrain himself either and wept with me.

The other officers suddenly sang out in a chorus. They sang from despair, in an effort to keep from collapsing. I cried long and bitterly. I prayed for my mother.  
"Who would sustain her?" I appealed to Heaven. "She will be forced to go begging in her old age if I am put to death." Life became very precious to me, the same life that I had exposed to a hundred perils. I did not want to die an infamous death, to lie on the field unburied, food for carrion crows.

"Why haven't you allowed me to die from an enemy's bullet?" I asked of God. "How have I deserved being butchered by the hands of my own people?"

The door swung open. About forty soldiers filed in. The leader had a list of names in his hand.  
"Botchkareva!" he called out first. "Somehow my heart heaped with joy. I thought I would be released. But the officers immediately disillusioned me with the statement that it was a call for execution. I stepped forward and answered: 'Crushed by the hands of my own people!'"

"Radievaya!" (address).  
The order stupefied me. I remained motionless.

Some soldiers came up, pushed me forward and repeated the order several times. I awoke at last and began to undress.

The old general's name was read off the list next. Then a number of other officers were called out. Each of them was ordered to cast off his uniform and remain in his undergarments.

The Bolsheviks needed all the uniforms they could get, and this was such an inexpensive way of obtaining them!

Tears streamed down my cheeks. The old general was near me.  
"Don't cry!" he urged me. "We will die together."  
Not all the prisoners were in our group.

Those remaining kissed me farewell. The parting among the men was alone sufficient to pierce one's heart.  
"Well, we will follow you in an hour or two," those who were left behind said bravely.  
After I took my boots off I removed the lion from my neck and fell before it on my knees.  
"Why should I die such a death?" I cried. "For three years I have suf-

fered for my country. Is this shameful end to be my reward? Have mercy, Holy Mother! If not for the sake of humble Maria, then for the sake of my destitute old mother and my aged father! Have mercy!"  
Here I collapsed completely and became hysterical.  
After a few moments an officer approached me, put his hand on my shoulder, and said:

"You are a Russian officer. We are dying for a righteous cause. Be strong and die as it behooves an officer to die!"  
I made a superhuman effort to control myself. The tears stopped. I arose and announced to the guards: "I am ready."

We were led out from the car, all of us in our undergarments. A few hundred feet away was the field of slaughter. There were hundreds upon hundreds of human bodies heaped there. As we approached the place the figure of Pugatchov, marching about with a triumphant face, came into sight. He was in charge of the firing squad, composed of about 100 men, some of whom were sailors, others soldiers and others dressed as Red Guards.

We were surrounded and taken toward a slight elevation of ground, and placed in a line with our backs toward the hill. There were corpses behind us in front of us to our left to our right, at our very feet. There were at least a thousand of them. The scene was a horror of horrors. The poisonous odors were choking us. The executioners did not seem to mind it so much. They were used to them. I was placed at the extreme right of the line. Next to me was the old general. There were twenty of us altogether.  
"We are waiting for the committee," Pugatchov explained the delay in the proceedings.  
"What a pleasure!" he rubbed his hands, laughing. "We have a woman today."  
"Ah, yes," he added, turning to us all, "you can write letters home and ask that your bodies be sent there for burial, if you wish. Or you can ask for other favors."  
The suspense of waiting was as cruel as anything else about the place.

Every officer's face wore an expression of implacable hatred for that brute of a man, Pugatchov. Never have I seen a more bloodthirsty perpetrator. I did not think that such a man was to be found in Russia.

The waiting wore me out soon and I fell again on my knees, praying to the little lion and crying to Heaven: "God, when have I sinned to earn such a death? Why should I die like a dog, without burial, without a priest, with no funeral? And who will take care of my mother? She will expire when she learns of my end."  
The Bolshevik soldiers broke out laughing. My pleading touched their sense of humor. They joked and made merry.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

**"FIRST TO FIGHT" MAN DEAD**  
Tinkham, Who Led First Contingent, Victim of Pneumonia  
New York, April 5.—Edward Lasey Tinkham, of Montclair, N. J., who commanded the first fighting unit of Americans to carry the American flag to the French war front in May, 1917, and later was commissioned an ensign in the United States naval aviation service, died of pneumonia at Ravenna, Italy, on March 30, it was learned today.  
Tinkham's contingent which bore the Stars and Stripes to the front was composed mainly of Cornell undergraduates and departed for the fighting lines armed with carbines and uniformed in khaki.

**"REDS" CAUSE EXODUS**  
Emigration and Movement to Country Among the Germans  
Munich, April 5.—(By A. P.)—A further manifestation of the movement which is spreading among many of the

better classes in Munich and other parts of Bavaria was the formation here yesterday of the "Council of Emigration," under the auspices of the League of South American Emigrants. Many people are preparing to leave the cities and settle in the rural districts of or in other German states.  
The freight houses here are overflowing with household goods which cannot be transported on account of the shortage of rolling stock. The activity of the authorities in billeting soldiers and other government employes and civilians also has induced many persons to leave Munich.

**WOULD BANISH HAPSBURG**  
German-Austrian Assembly Passes Bill, Including Confiscation  
Copenhagen, April 4.—(By A. P.)—The German-Austrian National Assembly has passed the bill introduced March 27 to banish members of the Hapsburg family and confiscate their property, according to Vienna advices.  
Other bills, doing away with certain titles of nobility and abolishing capital punishment, except under martial law, also have been passed.

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This same gentleman, who practices and teaches at a great dental school in Philadelphia, has given invaluable aid to our chemists, keeping them posted on the latest results of scientific research and suggesting modifications of our formula.

**A New York Dentist—** of whom you all think highly because of his valuable contributions to your science, also has checked up our experimental work and in his own laboratory has worked out a number of difficult problems we have encountered.

We fully appreciate the ethical standards of your profession and we have no purpose to enlist your aid in the marketing of Mennen's Cream Dentifrice, but we do want you to judge the scientific theory on which our Dentifrice is based and to know how sincerely we have tried to produce a Dentifrice in accord with the most advanced thought of dentistry.

We had a pretty good dentifrice formula several years ago—nothing remarkable, but fully as good as any other dentifrice. It wasn't good enough to be called Mennen's.

**An unbroken rule of ours** is to place the name "Mennen" only on products which are needed and which are essentially better than anything else made. Mennen Talcum took the place of starchy powders which were harmful to a baby's skin. Mennen Shaving Cream introduced a radically new type of shaving soap that has become the favorite with millions of men. Mennen's wonderful Kora-Konia supplies the only satisfactory treatment for chafing, severe skin irritations and baby rashes. We could not employ a dentifrice formula which did not measure up to this Mennen standard of essential superiority.

About four years ago we learned that the dental profession had been startled by and had accepted a revolutionary, radical principle which affected the entire practice of dentistry. This principle was based upon the researches and discoveries of H. P. Pickerrill, M. D., Ch. B., M. D. S. (Birmingham), L. D. S. (England), which related to the entire field of dental science—bodily conditions affecting the mouth—the influence of teeth on general health—and the proper dentifrice to be used for a natural preservation of the teeth.

**It is Pickerrill's "The Prevention of Dental Caries and Oral Sepsis,"** which has guided us in working out our present formula. As you know, Dr. Pickerrill attacks the theory of an alkaline dentifrice and proves conclusively, first: that a copious flow of saliva will neutralize the acids of food decay; and second: that a strongly alkaline dentifrice checks the flow of saliva and tends to paralyze the salivary glands, and

therefore interferes with Nature's method of protecting the teeth.

Inasmuch as analysis showed that practically all the popular, well advertised dentifrices were either strongly alkaline or were merely candy-flavored compounds, it seemed to us that the House of Mennen would be doing a service to the public by producing a modern, scientifically correct dentifrice.

**Our big problem—** the one which our chemists, aided by a number of dental scientists who rank as leaders of your profession, have successfully solved, was to produce a non-alkaline dentifrice which would clean, whiten and polish the teeth without scouring or grinding them; which would break down tartar formations and mucin "plaques" and which would stimulate a flow of saliva for a long time.

Considered purely as a cleansing and polishing agent, we believe you will class Mennen's Cream Dentifrice as superior to anything that has been offered to the public. The breaking down of tartar formations and "plaques" is accomplished efficaciously by ingredients of recognized value for this purpose. Mennen Cream Dentifrice introduces into the mouth a fruit acid in solid form which only dissolves in contact with water and does not, as is so often the case, break down and combine with the other ingredients to form a sodium salt and thus defeat its purpose. This fruit acid exerts a stimulating influence on the salivary glands and increases the flow and alkalinity of saliva.

Mennen's Cream Dentifrice has a 20% content of alcohol, serving as an antiseptic deodorant and conditioner of the gums. Aromatic oils add to the pleasure of using Mennen's and leave a pleasant and refreshing after-taste.

**Mennen's is not a cure-all** In presenting Mennen's Cream Dentifrice to the public, we shall make no fraudulent claim, that it cures diseases of the mouth or gums, such as pyorrhea or acid in the mouth. We shall not offer Mennen's as a substitute for regular and frequent visits to a good dentist.

We shall simply claim that Mennen's effectively cleanses, whitens and polishes the teeth; that it breaks down and prevents tartar formations and mucin "plaques"; and that it aids Nature to preserve teeth by increasing the secretion, flow and alkalinity of saliva, which is Nature's agent for neutralizing the acids of food decay.

We shall claim that Mennen's Cream Dentifrice is a radical advance over practically all other dentifrices, which are honestly but wrongly compounded on the alkaline theory which Dr. Pickerrill has so convincingly exploded.

**No uninvited samples** We shall not follow the usual custom of sending samples to Dentists in hopes that they will feel obligated to distribute them among their patients; but it will, of course, be a pleasure to send a full size tube to any dentist who desires to give Mennen's a personal trial.

If any of your patients express an interest in Mennen Cream Dentifrice and have difficulty in finding it at drug stores, because of its recent introduction to the trade, we will supply them through you. Aside from that, we ask nothing of the dental profession, except a friendly interest in our endeavor to give to the public—

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