

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE AND GRASP ON PURSE ONLY SURE REIN ON MAN, DECLARES MRS. FRENCH

Former International Belle, Divorcee, Won Back Husband and \$5,000,000 in Court

HARNESS a man with a marriage certificate, tie up his money, and thereafter he will be fairly safe from pursuit. This is the sort of marital strait-jacket the vivacious Ida Marcella French, daughter of Robert J. Wynne, Postmaster General in President Roosevelt's Cabinet and United States Consul General in London from 1905 to 1910, prescribed for her husband, Captain Hugh Ronald French, of the Seventh Dragoon Guards of England, before agreeing to a reconciliation following a divorce scandal that went through the English courts from bottom to top.

The \$5,000,000 fortune of Captain French has been settled upon his wife, who has come back to America to spend part of it at Palm Beach before returning to London for "the season."

And with her came memories of a glittering romance which had its first step in a wedding ceremony in the presence of three Kings. Later came an English sportswoman to enter the life of Captain French. The next chapter was the unopposed battle for divorce, the allegations of misconduct and cruelty.

Then the war—and a sudden decision on the part of Captain French to oppose the effort toward separation. Counter-charges flew. An American architect was named.

In the midst of it all Captain French was wounded. In a little hospital in France where Mrs. French was ministering to the suffering, word came that her husband was torn by shrapnel from the enemy's cannon. She went to him and romance started anew.

But this time, she said, she played along lines which she considered "safe." She had her fortune settled upon her with the understanding that the income was to be a half-and-half affair until one of them should die.

Marriage Certificate and Purse Halt Chase
And so the former Ida Wynne, still young but self-possessed, agreed upon her arrival here to tell all about it.

She sat in her sumptuously furnished apartment in millionaires' half-acre in West Fifty-seventh street, New York, her face sparkling under a lovely plumed hat, her body graceful and lithe in a thousand-dollar frock of black and peacock green.

And quite frank about things was this new owner of the French millions, which were inherited by her husband at the age of fourteen from the third Lord de Freyne, his grandfather and owner of the Brahmaputra Tea Company, which was handed down to him by his founder, Hugh Mair, of Lochmond Castle.

"I think you will agree," said Mrs. French, sitting upon the edge of the big upholstered chair, "I think you will agree that the only two reins on a man are his purse and a marriage certificate, and when they are tied up he certainly won't be chased after very much. Do you know, I believe that when a woman knows she cannot marry a man and realizes his money is tied up in such fashion that she can't get very much of it, she just says, 'What's the use?' and leaves him alone. She might go about with a man, under conditions like these, just for the enjoyment of his company, but I believe he will be safe from danger and be preserved for his wife."

War Wound Brought About Reconciliation
Mrs. French fingered her long string of pearls with the ease of one who feels free of worries—love or financial ones.

"It was right in the midst of my divorce suit that Captain French was wounded during the war," she continued, "and when it was reported that he might die, I went to him and nursed him back to health. He then asked me to come back and be his wife again. It certainly was a hard decision for me to make."

"One doesn't sue for divorce, you know," she smiled rather pointedly—unless she wants to marry some one else, does she?"

"Frankly, I have been frightfully unhappy, and it seems that happiness lay before me with another man. Perhaps that had something to do with Captain French's request. He knew of this other man. He saw in him a person more eminent than himself, of far more wealth, and he turned completely about and was at my feet. Wasn't that funny?"

"Then he promised to give up his will life, but promises are so easy to make and so hard to keep that I wanted to be sure that our baby, Valerie Marie, and I would be taken care of, and if that could be arranged it would not matter so much if he went in and out the door. So I thought I'd cover every capital and found that the crowd and rules of other persons cannot help much in making a decision like this, but I did what I thought was right."

"I don't know how long I was in England, during my presentation at the English court. He was dashing and handsome and wonderful, and I remember almost as soon as I had seen him that I told mother I would be late more to marry a young man than I would be to marry an old one, and she said:

"Yes, my dear, it will be too much fun."

"I believe mother knew human nature better than I."

"At any rate, we were married. I had been allowed to make my own decision and we had a most wonderful wedding, with three Kings among the guests."

"Eighteen months of struggle came soon after I had decided to return to the father of my little girl. He was



Mrs. Ida Wynne French, of New York, Washington and London, who framed drastic rules for reconciliation with her husband, Captain Hugh Ronald French, of British Seventh Dragoon Guards



The former London belle in an unconventional pose aboard a trans-Atlantic liner



Mrs. French arriving in New York from England



Mrs. French (right) with her sister, Mrs. Ruth Wynne Smith, of Washington

Having Fortune Settled on Her Keeps Others From Pursuing Him, She Avers

Wynne, you are the most beautiful woman who ever came from America." Crown Prince George of Greece and Prince Louis Murat were her devoted attendants whenever she was in Paris. She graced their boxes at the opera, at the races, and many were the entertainments they gave in her honor. Two Russian Grand Dukes—Boris and Cyril—vied with one another for her smiles. All, at one time or another, were regarded as suitors for her hand.

Among those she met at the court levees at Buckingham Palace was Captain French, crack officer in a crack regiment which enjoyed the proud distinction of being called the Princess's Own. He was a son of an old Irish family, of which Lord de Freyne, his brother, was the leader; wealthy, and with a military record of distinction. He, too, was smitten by the charms that had captivated the court.

Soon after the marriage Captain French was sent to Cairo. There, as in London and Paris, his bride became one of the most brilliant lights of the social world. The novelties of entertainment and the singing and dancing which she brought to the army and diplomatic functions were talked of all over the world. She went to one masquerade dressed as a baby in a baby carriage, pushed by a stalwart Arab through the streets and into the ballroom.

Divorce Suit Suddenly Terminated Happily

Apparently the marriage had brought nothing but happiness. There was nothing on the surface to indicate a rift until Mrs. French suddenly left her husband after their return to London and joined her parents in the United States. In 1912 she sailed for London with her mother and immediately began suit for divorce.

She alleged cruelty and misconduct with an unnamed woman, who, it subsequently was revealed, was Miss Mary Teresa Winifred Gorch, a well-known South of England sportswoman. Mrs. French testified that Captain French, surely was sober, except when on duty, that he had beaten her and dragged her about her room when she refused to arise at 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning to entertain his commissions in discipline. Captain French made no defense, and a temporary decree was

divorce, but demanded the rescinding of the temporary decree already granted. In his fight he didn't mince matters. The guardian of Pleadably had not thought it worth while to defend his name. The trenchman of Ypres accused her of misconduct with a New York architect before and after the issuance of the temporary decree.

Shocks English Court by Snappy Replies

Mrs. French, scornful, sarcastic, shocked the dignity of the presiding justice by replies to his questions that moved the spectators to laughter. She said that her affection for him was merely that of a ward for her guardian and that they had never thought of marriage.

"Have you ever called him Mark?" asked Captain French's counsel. "Many times," Mrs. French answered. "I have also called him 'my darling,' 'my dear,' 'my dearest man' and 'my darling fellow,' but never from the point of view of love. Oh, but there is a great deal in it. It all depends on the intention and the accents of the voice. You can say 'my dearest man' and mean nothing by it, and you can say it in another tone of voice and mean a great deal."

"Did you kiss him?" was another question.

"Yes, I have kissed him good night," was the answer. "He has kissed me, my sister and other friends being present. I have kissed him and he has kissed me. But there was never any love affair between us."

Nevertheless, the Court's decision was in favor of Captain French. The temporary decree was rescinded.

The trial over, Captain French returned to his regiment at the front. Mrs. French remained in London and devoted herself to nursing wounded soldiers at a private hospital in Grosvenor Square. What she saw and heard there changed her whole view of life.

War Record Changed Her Views of Husband

She had seen her husband at the trial, grim and war-worn, a man far removed from the dandy she had married. Through the men whose wounds she dressed she looked into the trenches, heard the shriek of shrapnel and the crackle of machine guns and saw the grotesquely motionless forms spread

provision was made that the inheritance could not be disposed of by Captain French until he was thirty-eight, so we waited for time to pass. "When, finally, he said: 'To show you that I mean what I say, I will give you all—and the million pounds of the French wealth were settled upon my head. We each share the income and when Valerie Marie becomes twenty-one we will each give her a third of our share. If the baby should die, Captain French would continue to receive half of the income. If I should die, my share would go to the baby, and if I should be the last to remain, then the entire estate would come to me."

"Of course, in the wildest flights of my imagination, I had never thought he would give me all. I had already my marriage settlements which he had made as a wedding gift, but that's the sort of man he is; doesn't say much, but gives you a lot, like that," and Mrs. French gave a gay little flourish of her hand.

"The trouble with Captain French, you know, is that he drinks. Every time I see another whisky bottle I think, 'Oh, another row.' He wouldn't come to America because there is prohibition here. Those men just can't get along without it. You might as

well ask them to stop breathing or to wear insululated clothing. Here in America you can feel braced with the good air. But over there in the fog, they just have to have drink; their digestion, I am sure, would not be good without it."

"I never get bored," she admitted, "not for a moment. I often get tired and sleep, but not bored. Never in my life have I had a day when I didn't have to get up early to attend to something. I have two houses in Scotland and two in England, and this apartment in New York, and I keep them all running. My idea of a real holiday would be to go off to some place in the country where there are no phones or telegraph wires, and only wake up when I wanted to."

From Florida to India Her Plans Will Take Her

Mrs. French was disturbed several times by local and long-distance calls. She moved with sprightliness from one room to the other. Tall vases filled with chrysanthemums and others holding American beauty roses stood in various corners of her apartment.

She plans to go to Washington to settle some business matters of her father, and to attend to the closing of

the family house there, then to be in New York for the holidays; to go to Paris and Washington for a few weeks; to return to England and then to India with her husband, and to be back in London for the opening of "the season."

The Wynne-French wedding in 1909 was the culmination of a romance

which had excited the interest of royals and the social leaders of London, Paris and Washington. Going to London with her father when he was appointed United States Consul General, the beautiful Miss Wynne captivated all with whom she came in contact. Soon she became as

popular in Parisian society as she was in English court circles. She had a rarely equalled record of three debuts in as many capitals in one season. She was presented at Buckingham Palace to King Edward and Queen Alexandra. She made her formal entry into the exclusive American and foreign social colonies in Paris and assisted Miss Ethel Roosevelt, daughter of President Roosevelt, at her coming-out reception.

Called "Big Doll Baby" by King of England

King Edward said to her on the occasion of her presentation: "Miss Wynne, you are just like a big doll baby."

When later she met the King at a social function he told her: "Miss

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