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Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
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Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
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Baum Henry Nietzsche Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac
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Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whitman Twain
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Won By the Sword : a tale of the Thirty Years' War

G. A. (George Alfred) Henty

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WON BY THE SWORD

A STORY OF THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

By G.A. Henty

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PREFACE

MY DEAR LADS,

In my preface to the *Lion of the North* I expressed a hope that I might some day be able to continue the history of the Thirty Years' War. The deaths of Gustavus and his great rival Wallenstein and the crushing defeat of the Swedes and their allies at the battle of Nordlingen brought the first period of that war to a close. Hostilities, indeed, never ceased, but the Swedes no longer played the leading part on the Protestant side that they had hitherto occupied. Oxenstiern, the great chancellor of Sweden, saw that the only hope of eventual success lay in engaging France in the struggle, and he and the Duke of Weimar went to Paris and pointed out to Richelieu that unless France intervened, Austria must become the master of all Germany, and as the ally of Spain would have it in her power to completely dominate France. Richelieu perceived the opportunity, made a treaty with the Swedes and Weimar, and engaged to grant large subsidies to the former, and to send an army to cooperate with the latter. Then began the second period of this long and terrible struggle, France now taking the place that Sweden had hitherto occupied, and bearing the brunt of the conflict. She emerged triumphant with her territories largely increased, while Austria was crushed and humiliated, and Spain was dethroned from her position as the dominating power of Europe. The success of France was greatly due to the fact that her armies were led by two of the greatest military geniuses of all times, viz., Conde and Turenne, men of very different types, but equally great as commanders, and equally at the time of which we are speaking devoted to the cause of France. Both were men of extraordinary personal courage, and although one was as prudent and careful of the lives of his troops as the other was impetuous and careless at what cost he won his victories, they worked together with a harmony that could have hardly been expected among men so differently constituted. Although, in the subsequent wars of the Fronde they took different sides, their friendship, except during a short period of alienation, was never shaken, and their admiration for each other's genius never abated.

Yours sincerely,

G.A. HENTY

CHAPTER I: A STROKE OF GOOD FORTUNE

A mounted officer, followed by two orderlies, was proceeding at a brisk trot from Paris to St. Denis, in October, 1639, when he came upon a large party of boys, who, armed with sticks, were advancing in something like military order against a wall on the top of a low hill.

"What are you doing?" he asked the lad who appeared to be the leader.

"We are playing at war, sir. We are advancing against the fortress of La Motte. This is the regiment of Turenne."

"And who are you at other times?" the officer asked with a smile.

"My name is Hector Campbell, sir."

"Then you are not French?"

"No, sir; my father was an officer in the Scotch regiment. He was killed at the siege of La Rochelle."

"And who is taking care of you?"

"I live with Angus MacIntosh. He was a sergeant in my father's company. He was badly wounded at La Rochelle, and not being fit for further service, he took a cabaret near the barracks. The officers are very kind. They allow him a sum for taking care of me. Of course I am often in barracks, and have learned the drill, and I have heard and read about battles and sieges, so I am chosen to command."

"And so you know something of the battles in which Turenne was engaged?"

"I think I know about them all, sir, both in Holland and on the Rhine, and have seen plans of the battles. Of course this is not at all like La Motte, which was on the top of a high rock, so that when Turenne was ordered to attack with his regiment after the general's son had failed, he had to pass not only through a heavy fire, but through the huge stones that the enemy hurled down. It was grand; and he did well at all the other sieges. Then, again, there was Saverne. See how he fought there, and stormed the place when even

the Swedes, who are good soldiers, had failed. I think he is going to be the greatest of our captains."

"Turenne is only a learner in the art of war," the other said gravely.

"I think he has learnt more than any of the rest," the boy said boldly; "and all the soldiers love him more than any of the other generals, for he takes such care of them, and does not treat them as if they were dirt under his feet, only meant to obey orders, and go and get killed when told."

"You have heard him very much over praised," the officer said quietly. "I think that he does his best; but he is a young man yet, not older than I am. His advance has been due to fortune rather than to his own merits."

"I don't think so," the boy said sturdily. "Do you think that he would be a lieutenant general at twenty-eight, and that all the soldiers would speak of him as they do, if it were only fortune? Look how he captured Landrecies and Solre, and drove the Austrians back from Maubeuge, and aided the Duke of Weimar to thrash them at Weilenweir, and stormed the main fort of Breisach! He has been successful in all his enterprises, and now it is said he is to command in Italy, where things have been going on badly. The cardinal would not have chosen him had he not considered that no one could do better than he."

The officer laughed. "Well, young sir, I see that you are so well acquainted with the sieges and battles of our time that I cannot argue with you."

"I did not mean that, sir," the boy said in some confusion. "I was only saying what our soldiers think, and it is natural that I, being only a boy, should make him my hero, for he went to the wars when he was a year younger than I am, and at fourteen carried a musket as a volunteer under Maurice of Nassau, and for five years he was in all the battles in Holland, and raised the first battery that opened on Bois-le-duc."

"And do you receive no pension as the son of an officer killed in battle?"

"No, sir. When the living soldiers often have to go months without their pay, the sons of dead ones can hardly expect to be thought of. But I don't care; in two years I shall be old enough to enlist, and I shall go to the frontier and join Hepburn's Scottish brigade, who are now, they say, in the French service."

"They are fine soldiers—none better," the officer said. "But why does not the colonel of your father's regiment ask for a commission for you?"

"The regiment is not in favour with the cardinal," the boy replied with a smile. "They are too Protestant for his eminence, and the colonel is not a man to ask favours if he is likely to be refused."

"Well," the officer said, "it is clear to me that you are a lad of spirit, and that you have done your best to prepare yourself for your profession as a soldier by studying military history, and I think it hard that, as the son of an officer who died in battle for France, France should have done nothing for you. I have some little influence myself. What is the name of this cabaret that Sergeant MacIntosh keeps?"

"The Scottish Soldier, sir. It is near the gate of the barracks of St. Denis."

"Do not go out tomorrow afternoon. I will have a talk with him, and maybe I can be of some assistance to you."

So saying, he touched his horse's flank with his heel and rode on, while the boys continued their play. The next afternoon the lad remained at home, to the surprise of the sergeant.

"What keeps you in today, Hector? It is rare indeed that you are indoors in the afternoon."

"An officer came along while we were playing," the lad said, "and asked me some questions. I told him who I was. He said that he had some influence, and might be able to assist me."

"What sort of assistance?" the sergeant grumbled. "He must have influence indeed if he can get you a pension."

"I don't think it was that," the boy said. "I said that I should like to enlist as a volunteer."

The sergeant laughed. "Well, they do take volunteers as young as you are, Hector, but they must be cadets of a noble family. You will have to wait another couple of years before they will enlist you, much less take you as a volunteer."

There were a good many Scottish soldiers sitting in the room, when an officer rode up to the door and dismounted.

"It is a general officer," one of the men said, looking out of the window, and as the door opened and the officer entered, all stood up and saluted.

"Sit down, men," he said. "I am not here to disturb you, but to have a talk with Sergeant MacIntosh. Have you a room, sergeant, where we can speak privately?"

"Yes, general," the sergeant said, saluting again, and led the way into a little room generally devoted to the use of noncommissioned officers. The officer caught Hector's eye, and beckoned to him to follow.

"Do you know me, sergeant?"

"Yes, general, you are Viscount Turenne."

Hector gave an involuntary exclamation of horror at the thought of the freedom with which he had the day before discoursed with this famous commander. Military officers at that time did not wear any set uniforms, and indeed there was very considerable latitude among the soldiers, and it was only because he was followed by two attendants that the boy had taken him to be an officer, probably a young captain. The quietness of his dress had not even led him to believe that he belonged to a noble family.

"This lad tells me that he is the son of Captain Campbell of the Scottish regiment?"

"That is so, general."

"And also that you were a sergeant in his father's company, and have since taken care of him."

"I have done the best I could for him, general; but indeed the officers of the regiment allow me quite as much as the lad's food costs."

"He seems to be a careful student of military history, sergeant?"

"That he is, sir. I don't think there has been a battle, or even a skirmish, in the past ten years which he cannot tell you the ins and outs of. He will sit here for hours as quiet as a mouse when some soldiers from the wars come in, and sometimes he gets books lent him with the plans of battles and sieges, and when he is not doing that he is in the barrack yard watching the men drill. I believe he knows all the words of command as well as any captain in the Scottish regiment. As to handling his musket, I have taught him that myself, and the use of a sword, too, since he was ten years old, and the men of his father's company have taken pleasure in teaching the lad all they knew in that way."

"He reminds me of my own boyhood," the general said. "I like his looks, and it seems to me that he has the making of a good officer. All the officers of the regiment are men of good Scottish families, and as such can serve in any capacity. I have often need of a young officer who can carry my messages on a field of battle, and can be trusted to understand their import and deliver them faithfully. Now, Campbell," he said, turning to the lad, who was standing with flushed face and eyes beaming with delight and gratitude, "I will give you the choice. I will either appoint you a volunteer for a year, in which time, if your conduct is satisfactory, I will name you lieutenant, or I will take you directly into my own household. My object in either case would be to produce an officer likely to be useful to his Majesty."

"I should certainly not have adopted that course had it not been that you appear already to have learned the duties of a soldier, and to be acquainted with the ordinary drill and with the necessities of a soldier's life. If you enter my household you will find it no child's play, certainly no life of ease and comfort. I do not spare myself, nor do I spare the officers immediately under me. In a regiment you would learn better, perhaps, the duties of a regimental officer, but with me you will have more opportunities of learning the art of war, and of some day becoming a distinguished officer, always supposing that you are not shot down in battle or die of fatigue and hardship. Which do you choose?"

"Oh, sir, how can I thank you for your goodness? There is nothing in the world that I should like so much as to be in your service."

"So be it," the general said. "I shall obtain an appointment for you as lieutenant attached to my household. At first, you will simply have to carry messages for me; but when I have learnt more of your character I shall employ you as one that I can trust."

"Sergeant, here is a purse, use the contents in furnishing the lad with clothes suitable for his position, and let him call on me in three days at the hotel of the Duc de Bouillon, where I am staying."

"Can you ride?" he asked suddenly.

"Yes, sir."

"I will see to the matter of a horse for you. I shall be leaving at the end of a week to join the army in Italy. And remember always, lad," he added with a smile, "that I am still but a learner in the art of war."

So saying he nodded kindly to him and the sergeant, went out, returned the salute of the soldiers, mounted his horse, which his orderly was holding for him, and rode off.

"Well, well," said the sergeant, who with Hector had followed him out, "the like of this I never saw before: to think that the Viscount of Turenne should visit the cabaret of a soldier, and should have deigned to offer you a position in his household! I can scarce believe that I am not dreaming. How did it all come about, and how have you thus gained his favour?"

"I am ashamed to say, sergeant, that I gained it by my presumption; now that I know who he was, I may say by my insolence. A party of us were having a mimic battle. We were acting as the regiment of Turenne at the storming of La Motte. I was in command, and so acting as Turenne, when a gentleman, who, by his appearance and age, and by the fact that two troopers rode behind him, I took to be a captain in the army, came up and questioned me as to what we were doing. I told him, then he talked about Turenne. I said I thought he was our greatest general. He, that Turenne was only a learner in the art of war. I upheld him, and spoke of the battles and sieges in which he had taken part. Then he asked me about

myself, and I told him my birth and bringing up, and he said he might be of assistance to me, and would call here and see you."

"Well, well, it almost passes belief, Hector, that a boy like you should have dared to enter into an argument with an officer, even if only, as you believed, a captain. And to think that this has come of it, instead of his having laid his whip across your back, as you deserved. Your fortune is made, lad, that is, if you behave yourself. Turenne is a great soldier; and more than that, from what I have heard he is loved by his men more than any other general, and they will do anything for him. His regiment here, though he was but nineteen when he obtained his command, was admitted to be one of the best drilled and the best disciplined of any in the service.

"He saw to everything himself, spent his whole time in drilling them as if he had been only a lieutenant with nothing but his sword for his fortune, instead of a great noble. When he was with de la Valette and Weimar, and the army had to fall back and were well nigh starved, Turenne sold his plate and his carriages to buy food for the men. He had his own baggage thrown out of the wagons to make room for those who were too weak to march; and on one occasion gave up his own horse to a soldier who was sinking from fatigue and hunger, and himself marched on foot. He always leads his troops in battle, and wherever he goes they will follow. He was right in saying that he does not spare himself. The soldiers believe that he does without any sleep when on a campaign, for he is forever going round seeing that everything is in order, that the outposts are properly placed and vigilant, and that the soldiers have food, and such comfort as can be obtained. Now let us go in and tell my comrades of your good fortune. There is not a man in the regiment who will not be glad to hear of it. I will go across with you myself to the colonel's lodging."

"But please, sergeant, do not say a word about my folly; only say that the general, coming across a party of us playing at war, questioned me, and finding that I was the son of a Scottish officer who had been killed at La Rochelle, and that I had worked hard at getting up the history of the wars, and longed much to go into the army, had promised to come round the next day, and said that he might be able to aid me."

"I understand, lad. Yes, it is better that your foolishness should not be known."

The colonel was greatly pleased when he heard of what had happened.

"I had intended myself to have asked for a commission for you when you were a couple of years older," he said to Hector, "but I was by no means sure of getting it, for the cardinal is not partial to the regiment. Turenne, however, stands high in his favour—in spite of the fact that his brother, the Duc de Bouillon, has left Richelieu's party, and is regarded by him as an enemy—so we may be sure that your commission will be at once signed. You must sup with me and the officers of the regiment tonight. There is not one who will not rejoice that your father's son has met with such good fortune, for assuredly you could not have entered the army under better auspices.

"It is just like Turenne to have thus come forward to assist the son of a brave soldier killed in action. As a rule, I am sorry to say that the officers of our army concern themselves but little with the affairs of the soldiers under their command. Of course in our regiment it is different, as we have many gentlemen of well known Scottish families serving in the ranks, and most of the others are our own clansmen, or come from our dales. We all cling together as countrymen among strangers, though indeed we can hardly regard them as strangers, seeing that Scotland and France have ever been allies, and that our Queen Mary was a French princess. And now that Scotland has given kings to England, and English troops fought side by side with the French under Henry of Navarre against the Spaniards and Guises, and, although not in strict alliance, are alike enemies of the Spaniards, we can scarce feel ourselves as strangers here. Besides, is not a French princess wife of King Charles?"

"I do not say that either England or France has altogether forgotten the long wars between them, but that is a very old story now, and as long as Spain threatens to extend her power over all Europe, so long are we likely to remain good friends. If the power of Spain is once broken, old quarrels may break out again, but I trust that that will not be in my time, for assuredly the regiment, although willing to fight against all other enemies of France, would refuse to march

against our countrymen. Now, Sergeant MacIntosh, I know that you must be anxious to get back to your inn. You will have a busy time this afternoon unless I am greatly mistaken. Leave Campbell with me.

"In the first place, it will be as well that he should not be down there, for the fun is likely to get fast and furious. There is not a man in the regiment who knew his father but will be drinking the lad's health, and it were better that he should go tomorrow through the barracks and shake their hands, than that he should be among them there. You can tell them that I have taken the boy off, so that they may not think that he stayed away on his own account. We will see him fitted out. It is a matter that touches the honour of the regiment that the son of our old comrade should make a fair show in the household of the viscount."

"The general has left me a purse for that purpose, colonel."

"It was a kindly thought, but let the lad start with it in his pocket. It is our duty to see that he has everything befitting his father's son."

As soon as the sergeant left, the colonel said, "Now, Campbell, do you go into the anteroom. I shall be ready to go out with you in half an hour."

Orderlies were then despatched to the various officers' lodgings, and in a few minutes they assembled. The colonel told them what had happened, and said that in his opinion it concerned the honour of the regiment to see that their comrade's son was properly equipped.

All those who had known Captain Campbell were greatly pleased with the news, and there was not a dissenting voice when the colonel proposed that there should be a general subscription of two days' pay. He himself, however, and Captain Campbell's friends, gave a much larger amount, and the total was amply sufficient for the equipment of a young man of good family joining the army. Hector was then called in and informed of what had taken place, and heartily congratulated by the officers. He was greatly affected by their kindness and the proof of the estimation in which his father had been held.

"We had always intended to do this," the colonel said, "when the time came for your entering the army, for we felt that it would indeed be a discredit to the regiment were you to go into the world without the equipment that a Scottish gentleman should have. Now, Captain Mackenzie and Captain Home, I will ask you to act as furnishers. You know what is required for a young officer on the staff of a general like Viscount Turenne, who would be called upon to accompany him to court, and must do him no discredit; besides which, he must of course have clothes for a campaign. He will not need arms, for I have kept for him his father's sword and pistols. See that the tailors undertake to get his clothes ready quickly, for he is to accompany Turenne to Italy in four or five days. One suit at least must be finished in two days, for on the third he is to wait upon Turenne, who is staying at the hotel of the Duc de Bouillon, and he may possibly be presented to the cardinal."

The dress of a French gentleman in the reign of Louis XIII differed but slightly from that worn at the same time by the cavaliers of Charles I. It consisted of a loose cloak of cloth, silk, satin, or velvet, according to the occasion and the wealth of the wearer. It generally hung loosely on the shoulders, but two or three of the top buttons were sometimes fastened; the sleeves were loose and open from the elbow. Sometimes the cloak was richly embroidered. Over it fell a collar of rich lace, with Vandyke border. Beneath it was worn a short tightly fitted doublet embroidered in front, with puffed sleeves, and with a belt or sash round the waist. The breeches were very full, reaching to the knee. For walking or riding, loose high boots turned down at the top and trimmed with lace or frillings joined the breeches; while in court dress, silk stockings and shoes with rosettes were worn. The swords hung from a richly embroidered baldrick going over the right shoulder.

Officers of the different regiments were distinguished by the colour of their sashes, which was the only point of regimental uniformity. When on a campaign doublets were usually worn of thick buff leather; armour was still used, but was far less cumbrous than it had been, consisting for the most part solely of shoulder pieces and cuirass, with plates covering the upper part of the arm, thick buff leather gauntlets being considered sufficient protection below the elbow. Four suits were ordered for Hector: one for court, another