

英文小叢書

一個兵士
的回家



Hawlin Garland 著

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Illustration by [illegible]

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Hamlin Garland

他是 1860 生的 美國威士康星省 人。他少時的生活過在他父親的農場上，故對於農民的狀況自小便獲得深刻的印象。他的少時教育也是從鄉村學校受得的。

他生平的興趣在於改良社會的計畫。1885 年時，他開始做詩和小說。他的第一部名著，Main Travelled Roads，是 1890 年出版的，內中包含

着他的最好的作品。他的描寫是赤裸的，深刻的，令人想起俄國大胆寫實派描寫農奴艱苦的那種作品。此外，我們又覺得他的作品中含有一種憐憫的深情，這並不明白表出，而讀者自然感着，因為他的最强的特色就是‘含蓄’。

美國著名批評家 Howells 批評他道：“Garland書中的模型並不算美，却是醜的，而且往往是可笑的，然而往往令人心碎。……他有一種勇氣，把一件事實毫無潤色毫無塗飾的交給讀者，這正是盎格羅撒克遜作家當中最難得的一種特色。”

一個士兵的回家是他的代表作之一。它最能顯出俄國寫實派的長處，也最能看出他的含蓄不盡的作風。內中包含許多俗語，將農民的

口吻如實形容出來，初學者不免艱難，但與注解對看，細細讀去，將來讀別的俗語的小說便容易了。

THE RETURN OF A PRIVATE

（ 一 個 兵 士 的 回 家 ）

THE RETURN OF A PRIVATE

The nearer the train drew toward La Crosse¹, the soberer the little group of “vets”² became. On the long way from New Orleans³ they had beguiled tedium with jokes and friendly chaff; or with planning with elaborate detail what they were going

1. 美國 Wisconsin 省西部之一區。

2. “vets,” privates 之略呼。

一個兵士的回家

火車愈近刺克羅司，那一小小集團的兵士便愈清醒，在從新奧爾良來的長杳的路上，他們已拿笑話和親密的談諧來消磨厭倦；或者藉詳細規畫他們如今戰後所要做的

3. 美國著名之商業城，在東南部濱海處。

to do now, after the war. A long journey, slowly, irregularly, yet persistently pushing northward. When they entered on Wisconsin¹ territory they gave a cheer, and another when they reached Madison², but after that they sank into a dumb expectancy. Comrades dropped off³ at one or two points beyond, until there were only four or five left who were bound for⁴ La Crosse County.

Three of them were gaunt and brown, the fourth was gaunt and pale, with signs of fever and ague upon him. One had a great scar down his temple, one limped, and they all had unnaturally large, bright eyes, showing emaciation. There were no bands greeting them at the station, no banks of gayly dressed

1. Wisconsin, 美國 Michigan 湖西之省。

2. 在 La Crosse 之南。

事。一段長的旅程，緩慢地，不規律地，然而固執地向北推進的。當他們進入威士康星的境界，他們歡呼了一聲，及達馬的孫，又是一聲，但自馬的孫之後，他們就沉入一種沉默的期待中了。弟兄們在途中一處兩處地點下去了，終至只剩四五個，是到刺克羅司區去的。

其中三個是瘦而焦黃的，第四個則瘦而蒼白，身上帶着熱病和瘧疾的痕跡。一個太陽穴下帶有一個大癍，一個跛脚，而他們大家都有不自然地大而光明的眼睛，顯示着憔悴。沒有軍樂隊在車站歡迎他

3. drop off —— retire or disappear.

4. bound for —— on the way to.

ladies waving handkerchiefs and shouting "Bravo!" as they came in on the caboose of a freight train into the towns that had cheered and blared at them on their way to war.¹ As they looked out or stepped upon the platform for a moment, while the train stood at the station, the loafers looked at them indifferently. Their blue coats, dusty and grimy, were too familiar now to excite notice, much less a friendly word. They were the last of the army to return, and the loafers were surfeited with such sights.

The train jogged forward² so slowly that it seemed likely³ to be midnight before they should reach La Crosse. The little squad⁴ grumbled and swore, but it was no use; the train would not hurry, and, as a

1. on the way to war——赴戰。

2. jogged forward——艱行而前。

們，也沒有成列的衣服漂亮的婦女們揮着手帕，喊着“好喇！”當他們在貨車的器具車上進到那些在他們赴戰時曾經對着他們喝采和叫喊的市鎮的時候。當火車停在站上，他們向外看望或在月台上稍稍散步時，那些遊手們都冷漠地望望他們。他們那些灰塵的油膩的藍色軍服，現在已經看熟，不能惹起注意，更不能激起一句表示好意的話了。他們是最後回來的一批軍隊，而遊手們是看厭了這種景象的了。

那火車前進的極慢，看情形似乎要到半夜才能達到刺克羅司。那小小的隊伍抱怨，咒罵，但是沒有用處；火車是不肯加緊的，而事實

3. likely——probably。

4. squad——small party of soldiers。

matter of fact¹, it was nearly two o'clock when the engine whistled "down brakes."²

All of the group were farmers, living in districts several miles out of the town, and all were poor.

"Now, boys," said Private Smith, he of the fever and ague, "we are landed in La Crosse in the night. We've got to stay somewhere till mornin'. Now I ain't³ got no two dollars to waste on a hotel. I've got a wife and children, so I'm goin' to roost⁴ on a bench and take the cost of a bed out of my hide."⁵

"Same here," put in one of the other men. "Hide'll grow on again, dollars'll come hard. It's goin' to

1. as a matter of fact——事實上。

2. down brakes——煞車。

3. ain't——have not; ain't got no——double negative, 俗語中常有之。

上，當機頭吹出“煞車”的時候，已經是將近兩點了。

那集團中所有的都是農民，住在離這市鎮數哩的區域的，而且都是窮苦的。

“現在，孩子們，”士兵斯密斯——就是那個有熱病和瘡疾的——道，“咱們是夜裏到刺克羅司了。咱們得找個地方等到天明。我現在是沒有兩隻洋好浪費在旅館裏。我家有老婆孩子，所以我要在板凳上宿一晚，由我的皮熬出一個牀鋪的錢來。”

“我也這樣，”其他人中的一個插進道。“皮是會再長的，錢是來得艱

4. roost——rest, sleep.

5. take the cost of a bed out of my hide, 直譯從我的皮裏取出一個牀鋪的錢來。

be mighty hot skirmishin' to find a dollar these days."

"Don't think they'll be a deputation of citizens waitin' to 'scort' us to a hotel, eh?" said another. His sarcasm was too obvious to require an answer.

Smith went on, "Then at day-break we'll start for home—at least, I will."

"Well, I'll be dummed² if I'll take two dollars out o' *my* hide," one of the younger men said. "I'm goin' to a hotel, ef³ I don't never lay up¹ a cent."

"That'll do f'r you," said Smith; "but if you had a wife an' three young uns⁵ dependin' on yeh⁶—"

"Which I ain't, thanks the Lord! and don't intend havin' while the

1. 'scort——escort.

2. dummed——damned.

3. ef——if.

難的。這種年頭要找一塊錢，簡直是跟人拚命呢。”

“你不想會有個市民代表等着送我們到旅館去嗎，喂？”另外一個道。他的譏諷分明是不要人回答的。

斯密斯繼續道，“那末一到天亮咱們就動身回家——至少我是要回家的。”

“好罷，倘如叫我熬着皮省兩塊錢，我就要死了，”一個比較年青的道。“我是要上旅館的，即使我不曾貯蓄一分錢。”

“那在你是可以的，”斯密斯道；
“可是倘如你有一個老婆和三個小的靠着 you——”

“這個我可沒有，謝謝天主！而且

4. lay up, 貯蓄。

5. young uns——young ones。

6. yeh——you。

court knows itself.”¹

The station was deserted, chill, and dark. as they came into it at exactly a quarter to two in the morning. Lit by the oil lamps that flared a dull red light over the dingy benches, the waiting-room was not an inviting place. The younger man went off to look up² a hotel, while the rest remained and prepared to camp down³ on the floor and benches. Smith was attended to⁴ tenderly by the other men, who spread their blankets on the bench for him, and, by robbing themselves,⁵ made quite a comfortable bed, though the narrowness of the bench made his sleeping precarious.

It was chill, though August, and

1. while the court knows itself——
while judging is sound.

2. look up——seek.

3. camp down——to make a camp