

THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE

红色英勇勋章

Stephen Crane

顾 问 方 平

主 编 孔庆华

副主编 陈 艳

张德玉

注 释 魏福平

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导 读

这部小说是美国 19 世纪后期著名小说家和诗人斯蒂芬·克莱恩(Stephen Crane, 1871—1900)的名作。他生于新泽西州,就学于纽约州的哈得逊河学院,曾为《论坛报》和《先驱报》撰写文章。他认为生活是艰辛的,作品大多数描写穷人或社会底层人的生活。就像一个画家,他试图展现给读者的是某个事件或人物的全部而不仅仅是细节。他的作品风格也因其生动的色彩和丰富的想像力而得到充分的体现。虽然他从未参加过战争,但在年仅 23 岁的时候(1895 年),就因发表《红色英勇勋章》(The Red Badge of Courage)而一举成名。他的作品受到广大读者的高度赞赏,被人们称为“当代主要的印象派作家”。

小说以美国南北战争(1861—1865)为背景,讲述了一个农妇的独生子亨利·弗莱明由于对战争的奇妙幻想,渴望过军旅生活,而不顾母亲的劝阻毅然参加北方军(即联邦军)的故事。

亨利最初的军营生活是平静的,几个月后才接到开往前线的命令。由于从未听到过枪炮声,第一次面临战斗时,他的心情特别紧张。虽然激烈的战斗场面满足了他的好奇心,使他感到无比刺激,但死亡的威胁在关键时

刻同样使他产生了动摇。初次参战的矛盾心理很快在炮火声中消失。当他所在的部队遭到南方军的突袭时,受了其他士兵惊慌情绪的影响,他也仓皇逃离战场。北方军重新获胜的消息使他悔恨不已。为了弥补过错,他不顾生命危险,千方百计打探部队在前线的消息,途中不幸被一名被战争吓疯了的士兵打伤了头部。当他被一个过路的士兵送回原来的兵团时,他没有透露受伤的真情。伙伴们丝毫没有怀疑他是逃兵,而认为他是在战斗中挂了彩,因为他头部的伤口等于一枚“红色勋章”,从而对他负伤仍坚持战斗的勇敢精神敬佩不已。亨利深受良心的谴责,感到万分羞愧,他暗下决心一定要立功补过。

部队再次发起进攻,但被击溃。在战友们都停止射击的时候,亨利仍在疯狂地射击。他的勇敢行为得到战友们的高度赞赏,他被视为英雄。从某种意义上来说,这使亨利克服了对战争的恐惧心理,忘却了初次临战逃脱的羞愧,同时也赢得了自我。

后来,亨利再次立下大功。在一次与敌人短兵相接的混战中,他突然看到炮火中旗手中弹倒下,心中油然升起的对战旗狂热的爱使他奋不顾身地冲上前去,接过战旗,领着部队勇猛冲锋向前。他英勇无畏的气概赢得了上级军官的高度评价。经过长时间心理上的矛盾斗争和战斗的洗礼,亨利最终摆脱了临战脱逃的内疚,重树起对未来的美好憧憬。

故事是简单的,但通过对书中主人公亨利内心世界的细致描写以及对战争场面的鲜明刻画,作者既创造了战争的混乱和单调状态:接连不断的关于战争就要到来,而迟迟未来所引起的谣传,亨利行军归来的脏样和士兵

临死前让人无法形容的哀号；也抓住和展现了战争的特殊美——蓝天下迎风飘扬的军旗，晨曦中士兵冲向战场时闪闪发光的钢枪。

小说从一个士兵的角度去描写战争，突出战斗环境中个人的具体感受，带有感情主义色彩。这种写法对 20 世纪反战作家如海明威等发生过影响。劳伦斯·霍兰德（Laurence Holland）评论说：“在观察复杂模糊的人性特征和让读者自己通过亨利对自身经历的反应来判断亨利的所作所为是否得当方面，克莱恩特别现代。”克莱恩不到 30 岁就离开了人世，但他却被认为是促进形成当代美国小说风格的一批大胆创新作家之一。约翰·贝瑞曼（John Berryman）得出结论说克莱恩是美国为数不多的可以和霍桑、詹姆斯和福克纳齐名的优秀天才作家之一。

尽管克莱恩获得如此殊荣，他本人却认为自己因《红色英勇勋章》而成名“纯属意外收获”，因为他更热爱诗歌。他曾发表过《黑骑者》（1895）和《战争是仁慈的》（1899）两部诗集。他的诗写法自由，不顾传统的音节和韵律，风格质朴简洁，常常通过寓言式的意象揭示生活的某个真理。近年来他的诗作受到重视，评论界开始认为他与女诗人艾米莉·狄更生同为美国现代诗歌的先驱。

本书虽然写于 1895 年，但语言流畅，通俗易懂，是文学作品中的佳作，适合于大学生和具有相当水平的英语爱好者阅读。

魏福平

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CHAPTER 1

The cold passed reluctantly^① from the earth, and the retiring fogs revealed an army stretched out on the hills, resting. As the landscape changed from brown to green^②, the army awakened, and began to tremble with eagerness at the noise of rumors. It cast its eyes upon the roads, which were growing from long troughs of liquid mud to proper thoroughfares^③. A river, amber-tinted in the shadow of its banks, purred at the army's feet; and at night, when the stream had become of a sorrowful blackness, one could see across it the red, eyelike gleam of hostile camp-fires set in the low brows of distant hills.

Once a certain tall soldier developed virtues and went resolutely to wash a shirt. He came flying back from a brook waving his garment bannerlike. He was swelled^④ with a tale he had heard from a reliable friend, who had heard it from a truthful cavalryman, who had heard it from his trustworthy brother, one of the orderlies at division headquarters. He adopted the important air of a herald in red and gold.

"We're goin' t' move t'morra^⑤— sure," he said pompously^⑥ to a group in the company street. "We're

① reluctantly: 不情愿地 ② As ... green: 当夜色从昏暗变成清晨的一片葱绿时 ③ from long troughs of liquid mud to proper thoroughfares: 从条条泥水洼道到宽阔的大路 ④ swelled: (情绪等)高涨, 升涨 ⑤ We're goin' t' move t'morra = We are going to move tomorrow ⑥ pompously: 炫耀地; 自负地

goin' 'way up the river, cut across, an' come around in behint 'em. ”

To his attentive audience he drew a loud and elaborate^① plan of a very brilliant campaign. When he had finished, the blue-clothed men scattered into small arguing groups between the rows of squat^② brown huts. A negro teamster who had been dancing upon a cracker box with the hilarious^③ encouragement of two-score soldiers was deserted. He sat mournfully down. Smoke drifted lazily from a multitude of quaint^④ chimneys.

“It’s a lie ! that’s all it is — a thunderin’ lie !” said another private loudly. His smooth face was flushed, and his hands were thrust sulkily^⑤ into his trousers’ pockets. He took the matter as an affront^⑥ to him. “I don’t believe the derved old army’s ever going to move. We’re set. I’ve got ready to move eight times in the last two weeks, and we ain’t moved yet. ”

The tall soldier felt called upon to defend the truth of a rumor he himself had introduced. He and the loud one came near to fighting over it.

A corporal began to swear before the assemblage. He had just put a costly board floor in his house, he said. During the early spring he had refrained^⑦ from adding extensively to the comfort of his environment because he had felt that the army might start on the march at any moment. Of late^⑧, however, he had been im-

① elaborate: 详尽的;复杂的 ② squat: 低矮的 ③ hilarious: 兴高采烈的 ④ quaint: 古怪的,奇特的 ⑤ sulkily: 生气地,绷着脸地 ⑥ affront: 公开侮辱;轻蔑 ⑦ refrained: 忍住;自制以避免 ⑧ Of late: 最近以来

pressed that they were in a sort of eternal camp.

Many of the men engaged in a spirited debate. One outlined in a peculiarly lucid^① manner all the plans of the commanding general. He was opposed by men who advocated that there were other plans of campaign. They clamored^② at each other, numbers making futile bids for^③ the popular attention. Meanwhile, the soldier who had fetched the rumor bustled^④ about with much importance. He was continually assailed^⑤ by questions.

“What’s up, Jim?”

“Th’ army’s goin’ t’ move.”

“Ah, what yeh talkin’ about? How yeh know it is?”

“Well, yeh kin b’lieve me er not, jest as yeh like. I don’t care a hang^⑥.”

There was much food for thought^⑦ in the manner in which he replied. He came near to convincing them by disdaining^⑧ to produce proofs. They grew much excited over it.

There was a youthful private^⑨ who listened with eager ears to the words of the tall soldier and to the varied comments of his comrades. After receiving a fill of discussions concerning marches and attacks, he went to his hut and crawled through an intricate^⑩ hole that served it as a door. He wished to be alone with some new thoughts that had lately come to him.

① lucid: 明了易懂的 ② clamored: 吵闹, 喧嚷 ③ numbers making futile bids for: 独立主格结构, 意思为: 有几个人让大家安静但没有听的。

④ bustled: 匆忙; 奔忙 ⑤ assailed: 质问; 困扰 ⑥ care a hang: (口) 一点也不在乎 ⑦ food for thought: 引人深思的事 ⑧ disdaining: 不屑(做某事) ⑨ a youthful private: 年轻的士兵 ⑩ intricate: 复杂精细的

He lay down on a wide bank that stretched across the end of the room. In the other end, cracker boxes were made to serve as furniture. They were grouped about the fireplace. A picture from an illustrated weekly was upon the log walls, and three rifles were paralleled on pegs. Equipments hung on handy projections, and some tin dishes lay upon a small pile of firewood. A folded tent was serving as a roof. The sunlight, without, beating upon it, made it glow a light yellow shade. A small window shot an oblique^① square of whiter light upon the cluttered floor. The smoke from the fire at times neglected the clay chimney and wreathed^② into the room, and this flimsy^③ chimney of clay and sticks made endless threats to set ablaze^④ the whole establishment.

The youth was in a little trance of astonishment. So they were at last going to fight. On the morrow, perhaps, there would be a battle, and he would be in it. For a time he was obliged to labor to make himself believe. He could not accept with assurance an omen^⑤ that he was about to mingle^⑥ in one of those great affairs of the earth.

He had, of course, dreamed of battles all his life — of vague and bloody conflicts that had thrilled him with their sweep and fire. In visions^⑦ he had seen himself in many struggles. He had imagined peoples secure in the shadow of his eagle-eyed prowess^⑧. But awake he had

① oblique: 斜的, 倾斜的 ② wreathed: 盘旋, 萦回 ③ flimsy: 劣质的

④ ablaze: (一般用作表语)着火 ⑤ omen: 预兆, 征兆 ⑥ mingle: 混合

⑦ visions: 想像, 幻想 ⑧ prowess: 英勇, 勇猛; 无畏 ⑨ blotches: 瑕疵

regarded battles as crimson blotches^⑨ on the pages of the past. He had put them as things of the bygone with his thought-images of heavy crowns and high castles. There was a portion of the world's history which he had regarded as the time of wars, but it, he thought, had been long gone over the horizon and had disappeared forever.

From his home his youthful eyes had looked upon the war in his own country with distrust. It must be some sort of a play affair. He had long despaired of witnessing a Greeklike struggle. Such would be no more, he had said. Men were better, or more timid.^① Secular and religious education had effaced^② the throat-grappling instinct, or else firm finance held in check the passions.

He had burned several times to enlist^③. Tales of great movements shook the land. They might not be distinctly Homeric, but there seemed to be much glory in them. He had read of marches, sieges, conflicts, and he had longed to see it all. His busy mind had drawn for him large pictures extravagant in color^④, lurid with breathless deeds^⑤.

But his mother had discouraged him. She had affected^⑥ to look with some contempt upon the quality of his war ardor^⑦ and patriotism. She could calmly seat herself and with no apparent difficulty give him many hundreds of reasons why he was of vastly more importance on the farm than on the field

① Men were better, or more timid: 人(在这样的情况下)要是不怕才怪呢。

② effaced: 除去;消除 ③ burned several times to enlist: 按捺不住想报名参加
军 ④ extravagant in color: 极为丰富多彩 ⑤ lurid with breathless deeds: 充满了令人叹为观止的壮举 ⑥ affected: 假装 ⑦ ardor: 热情;热忱 ⑧ ethical:
道德的;伦理的 ⑨ impregnable: 不可动摇的;坚定不移的

of battle. She had had certain ways of expression that told him that her statements on the subject came from a deep conviction. Moreover, on her side, was his belief that her ethical^⑧ motive in the argument was impregnable^⑨.

At last, however, he had made firm rebellion against this yellow light thrown upon the color of his ambitions. The newspapers, the gossip of the village, his own picturings had aroused him to an uncheckable degree. They were in truth fighting finely down there. Almost every day the newspapers printed accounts of a decisive victory.

One night, as he lay in bed, the wind had carried to him the clangoring^① of the church bell as some enthusiast jerked the rope frantically to tell the twisted news of a great battle. This voice of the people rejoicing in the night had made him shiver in a prolonged ecstasy^② of excitement. Later, he had gone down to his mother's room and had spoken thus: "Ma, I'm going to enlist."

"Henry, don't you be a fool," his mother had replied. She had then covered her face with the quilt. There was an end to the matter for that night.

Nevertheless, the next morning he had gone to a town that was near his mother's farm and had enlisted in a company that was forming there. When he had returned home his mother was milking the brindle cow. Four others stood waiting. "Ma, I've enlisted," he had said to her diffidently^③. There was a short silence. "The Lord's will be done^④, Henry," she had finally replied, and had then continued to milk the brindle^⑤ cow.

① clangoring: 铿锵声, 叮当声 ② ecstasy: 强烈的感情 ③ diffidently: 胆怯地 ④ The Lord's will be done: 这是上帝的旨意。 ⑤ brindle: 有斑纹的

When he had stood in the doorway with his soldier's clothes on his back, and with the light of excitement and expectancy in his eyes almost defeating the glow of regret for the home bonds, he had seen two tears leaving their trails on his mother's scarred cheeks.

Still, she had disappointed him by saying nothing whatever about returning with his shield or on it. He had privately primed^① himself for a beautiful scene. He had prepared certain sentences which he thought could be used with touching effect. But her words destroyed his plans. She had doggedly peeled potatoes and addressed him as follows: "You watch out, Henry, an' take good care of yerself in this here fighting business — you watch out, an' take good care of yerself. Don't go a-thinkin' you can lick the hull rebel army^② at the start, because yeh can't. Yer jest one little feller^③ amongst a hull lot of others, and yeh've got to keep quiet an' do what they ten yeh. I know how you are, Henry.

"I've knet yeh eight pair of socks, Henry, and I've put in all yer best shirts, because I want my boy to be jest as warm and comf'able as anybody in the army. Whenever they get holes in 'em, I want yeh to send 'em right-away back to me, so's I kin dern 'em^④.

"An' allus^⑤ be careful an' choose yer comp'ny. There's lots of bad men in the army, Henry. The army makes 'em wild, and they like nothing better^⑥ than the job of leading off a young feller like you, as ain't never been away from home much and has allus had a mother, an' a-learning 'em to drink

① primed: 灌注 ② lick the hull rebel army: (口)打败整个反叛的军队

③ feller: fellow ④ I kin dern 'em: 我能把它们补好。 ⑤ allus: always

⑥ like nothing better: 最喜欢

and swear. Keep clear of them folks, Henry. I don't want yeh to ever do anything, Henry, that yeh would be 'shamed to let me know about. Jest think as if I was a-watchin' yeh. If yeh keep that in yer mind allus, I guess yeh'll come out about right.

"Yeh must allus remember yer father, too, child, an' remember he never drunk a drop of lick^① in his life, and seldom swore a cross oath.

"I don't know what else to tell yeh, Henry, excepting that yeh must never do no shirk^②, child, on my account^③. If so be a time comes when yeh have to be kilt or do a mean thing, why, Henry, don't think of anything 'cept what's right, because there's many a woman has to bear up^④ 'ginst sech things these times, and the Lord'll take keer of us all.

"Don't forgit about the socks and the shirts, child; and I've put a cup of blackberry jam with yer bundle^⑤, because I know yeh like it above all things. Goodby, Henry. Watch out, and be a good boy.

He had, of course, been impatient under the ordeal^⑥ of this speech. It had not been quite what he expected, and he had borne it with an air of irritation^⑦. He departed feeling vague relief.

Still, when he had looked back from the gate, he had seen his mother kneeling among the potato parings. Her brown face, upraised, was stained with tears, and her spare form was quivering. He bowed his head and went on, feeling

① lick: liquor ② shirking: 偷偷逃跑; 开小差 ③ on one's account: 因
为某人的缘故 ④ bear up: 支持; 支持下去 ⑤ bundle: 包裹, 包袱
⑥ ordeal: 折磨, 煎熬 ⑦ irritation: 恼怒, 生气 ⑧ bid adieu: 告别, 辞行

suddenly ashamed of his purposes.

From his home he had gone to the seminary to bid adieu^⑧ to many schoolmates. They had thronged about him with wonder and admiration. He had felt the gulf now between them^① and had swelled with calm pride. He and some of his fellows who had donned blue^② were quite overwhelmed with privileges for all of one afternoon, and it had been a very delicious thing. They had strutted^③.

A certain light-haired girl had made vivacious fun at his martial^④ spirit, but there was another and darker girl whom he had gazed at steadfastly, and he thought she grew demure^⑤ and sad at sight of his blue and brass. As he had walked down the path between the rows of oaks, he had turned his head and detected her at a window watching his departure. As he perceived her, she had immediately begun to stare up through the high tree branches at the sky. He had seen a good deal of flurry^⑥ and haste in her movement as she changed her attitude. He often thought of it.

On the way to Washington his spirit had soared. The regiment was fed and caressed^⑦ at station after station until the youth had believed that he must be a hero. There was a lavish^⑧ expenditure of bread and cold meats, coffee, and pickles and cheese. As he basked^⑨ in the smiles of the girls and was patted and complimented by the old men, he had felt growing within him the strength to do mighty deeds of arms.

① felt the gulf now between them: 感到他们之间的差距(有多大) ② donned blue: 身着蓝色的军装 ③ strutted: 昂首阔步(无比自豪的样子)

④ martial: 好战的;尚武的 ⑤ demure: 庄重的;严肃的 ⑥ flurry: 慌张,不安

⑦ caressed: 善待 ⑧ lavish: 过分丰富的;大量的 ⑨ basked: 处在令人愉快
的环境(或气氛)中 ⑩ monotonous: 单调的;毫无变化的

After complicated journeyings with many pauses, there had come months of monotonous^⑩ life in a camp. He had had the belief that real war was a series of death struggles with small time in between for sleep and meals; but since his regiment had come to the field the army had done little but sit still and try to keep warm.

He was brought then gradually back to his old ideas. Greeklike struggles would be no more. Men were better, or more timid. Secular and religious education had effaced the throat-grappling instinct, or else firm finance held in check the passions.

He had grown to regard himself merely as a part of a vast blue demonstration. His province^① was to look out, as far as he could, for his personal comfort. For recreation he could twiddle^② his thumbs and speculate on the thoughts which must agitate^③ the minds of the generals. Also, he was drilled and drilled and reviewed, and drilled and drilled and reviewed.

The only foes he had seen were some pickets^④ along the river bank. They were a sun-tanned, philosophical lot^⑤, who sometimes shot reflectively at the blue pickets. When reproached^⑥ for this afterward, they usually expressed sorrow and swore by their gods that the guns had exploded without their permission. The youth, on guard duty one night, conversed across the stream with one of them. He was a slightly ragged man, who spat skillfully between his shoes and possessed a great fund of bland^⑦ and infantile^⑧ assurance. The

① province: 职责 ② twiddle: 捻弄; 摆弄 ③ agitate: 使不安; 使焦虑

④ pickets: 警戒队员 ⑤ sun-tanned, philosophical lot: 一群饱经风霜的很理性的人 ⑥ reproached: 呵斥 ⑦ bland: 和蔼的; 满不在乎的 ⑧ infantile: 幼稚的; 孩子气的