

It was long after midnight when a girl on a foaming horse galloped into a little settlement on the Illinois side of the Mississippi and was stopped by a soldier sentry at the ferry landing. The girl wanted to cross the river; she must cross the river, she told the sentry, for she had to see Judge Fagg, the Provost Marshal of Missouri, before morning. It was a case of life and death—she had already ridden from Rockport, thirty-five miles away, since 9 o'clock, and it was imperative that she go on. A permit? No, she hadn't one; but this was a particular case. Couldn't they cross her without a permit?

The sentry lit a lantern, perhaps to see if the girl's face was as sweet as her thrilling, insistent voice. He saw that it was, even by that indifferent light, from the black, waving hair to the parted red lips. He saw, too, that her eyes were large and flashed earnestly; and perhaps his refusal would have come harder could he have known how intensely sky-blue those eyes were. But as it was the sentry regretted his orders and hammered on a nearby door to rout out his officer. The officer came forth, half dressed and ill-humored, for he had been sleeping soundly and the early morning air was cold.

"Sorry, miss, but we can't do it. These are war times, and we have strict orders to pass no one without a permit. Get a permit and the ferry will take you."

"But that would take too long—I would be too late!"

"Don't know about that. Can't help it, anyway. You'll have to get a written permit—or swim the river." The officer was trying to be facetious.

The girl's heart raced within her. Oh, these brutal soldiers! But she stilled her anger. "I suppose I could swim the river. Is it very wide here?"

"Only about a mile and a half, not counting the sand-bar in the middle." The officer was plainly amused.

"The sand-bar? In which direction is that?" The girl spoke quickly, as though suddenly interested.

The sentry lifted his lantern and pointed, wishing as he did so that he was an officer so he could kick somebody. "Right out there, miss; but no one can swim the river, of course."

The uplifted lantern had revealed the girl's face more clearly to the officer and his tone changed.

"I'm very sorry, miss, that we can't let you cross, but orders are orders—in war time. Perhaps if you go for a permit at once you will be able to cross in time for your purpose."

The girl turned her horse. "Thank you," she said, speaking to the sentry. "I'll see if I can get a permit." Then she rode back through the settlement and disappeared in the darkness.

The officer went back to his bed, the sentry returned to his post, but the girl had turned her horse and was making her way up the river. Here were the "bottom lands," and soon she had to dismount and lead her horse through the heavy timber. What was she going to do? She was going to swim the river! It really was a case of life and death, and her hot Southern blood was up. Shortly after the war had broken out she and her mother had moved from Missouri into Illinois, for they both sympathized with the South, and that well-known sympathy had gotten them into trouble. The girl, Cassandra Manly, had been engaged to Norton Bright, a fellow college-mate, when the guns of Sumter awoke the country to the tragedy of war; but Bright joined the Union forces, was made captain of his company, and Cassandra, in her hot partisanship for the South, broke off the engagement and would have nothing more to do with him. Her contemptuous treatment of him appeared to madden Bright, and after he had seen David Richey, a neighbor's son, in the girl's company once or twice his spite and jealousy caused Richey's arrest. Judge Fagg, Provost Marshal of Missouri, released Richey, for the charge against him was unfounded, his sympathy, in truth, being with the North, though he had not yet proved it by joining the Northern army. But now Richey had decided to obey the impulse of his real feeling and had come over to Illinois to bid good-by to his old Southern girl playmate before he marched away to fight against the stars and bars. Here Captain Bright had followed him with another trumped-up charge and had arrested him at the Manly house in Rockport, and just by accident Cassandra had overheard Bright and his lieutenant discussing his case. They would not take him back to Missouri; they would give him a "trial" on the morrow and shoot him at sundown. Cassandra had nearly fainted at the fearfully cold-blooded plot. But her weakness lasted but a short time, for she realized that something must be done, and done at once, if Richey was to be saved. She could think of nothing except to go to Judge Fagg and get a reprieve, for the Judge knew Richey and had released him before, and Bright and his men being Missouri troops, were still under the jurisdiction of Provost Marshal Fagg.

So here she was, after her thirty-five mile ride from Rockport, in the darkness of the early morning, laboriously threading her way through the heavily wooded "bottoms," with her mind made up to swim her horse across the river. It was a wild undertaking, but Union or rebel, she was determined that she would save Richey if it were possible to do so.

At last she reached a point up the river from which, allowing for natural drifting, she thought the horse could swim to the sandbar. For they must get to the sandbar to rest, for the horse was already wearied by its night run.

Under a huge sycamore she stopped and taking the skirt of her riding habit, which she had removed on entering the woods, she rubbed the horse down and blanketed him with it. Then she waited for daylight, and at last it seemed to be coming. Slowly the landscape lightened, until she could distinguish objects. The time had come! She rolled her skirts around her waist and pinned them securely. She then freed the horse's mouth of the bit, mounted leg astride, and taking the usual surcingle, passed it across her lap and buckled it tight, thus fastening herself to the saddle. Now she was ready. For a few moments she sat on the horse, looking out over the river. She heard the water whispering along the shore as

though trying to warn her; and she knew, as she heard it, what a desperate chance she was taking. If the river were a mile and a half wide it would be a long swim to that central sandbar. And who could tell what sort of a horse she had? He might prove anything but a swimmer. Well, she must risk it—there was no other way, and Richey must be saved. It was light enough now for her to make the venture, though the farther shore was still scarcely distinguishable and a faint gray haze lay upon the water. She bent over and patted the horse's neck and then urged him down the crumbling bank to the river. He took to the water well at first, but at breast high it seemed to frighten him. He snuffed at it, stopped, and then with a loud snort began to back. The girl's heart sank—he was going to fall her. But she patted him softly again, telling him that he must go, and the animal seemed to understand, for after dipping his nose into the stream as if to assure himself that it was only the stuff he drank every day, he suddenly plunged forward and was soon swimming. And what a swim for horse and rider! In the hazy half-light of that early morning the great flood of the mighty Mississippi seemed like some wide, moving sea. The sandbar, somewhere out in the middle of that waste of waters, could not be seen in the dim light. What if they had lied to her and it wasn't there? What if she drifted too far down stream and so missed it? These fears and a hundred others raced swiftly through the girl's mind as she clung tightly to the horn of the saddle, feeling the cold water washing against her limbs and listening to the snorting exhalation and the brief, sharp intake of the horse's breath.

Some horses swim low in the water, with just the eyes and ears and nostrils free; but this horse was holding himself well up, so that the water hardly touched to the top of the saddle. And how splendidly he swam! The heavily wooded shore behind them was slowly receding, and as the girl strained her eyes looking ahead she could make out more plainly each moment the rugged bluffs and hills of the Missouri side. But the water was fearfully cold and the fresh wind of the river chilled her through. Would they make it? They must make it! She called beseechingly to the horse as he stopped swimming for a few moments and drifted with the current and the noble animal, as though understanding the dire necessity, began swimming strongly again.

They were well out in the stream by this time—the increased force of the current told her that. But where was the sandbar? Was there a sandbar? If they had lied, Oh,

if they had lied—And then she almost laughed in bitter mirth; for what could she do if they had lied? She was out in the river now, and there was no going back. Go back? Let poor Richey be shot? Never! Not if she knew that moment that there never had been a sandbar and that the river was a thousand miles wide! The horse was drifting again and the shorter, sharper intake of his breath told that he was beginning to tire. Where was the sandbar?

At last she made it out—a gray shadow on the waste of the level waters. Thank God! they were well above it, too. She moved the reins gently against the horse's neck and he turned toward it. It seemed an hour before he struck the sand, but at last he did and stood panting on the little island.

It grew lighter and lighter as she sat there in the wet saddle, waiting for the horse to recover his wind and his strength. She wished that she could release the animal of her weight, but the cold water had numbed her so that she was afraid to get off. But she felt sure that he would carry her over now, for it was not so far to the other side. As she looked across she could see the scattered houses of Missouri—and her heart rose hopefully at the mere sight of her goal. Over there, back of those brown hills, was Judge Fagg and the reprieve!

The light increased, and looking down the river she saw that the ferryboat had swung out from the Illinois side and was crossing on its first morning trip. The people on the ferry had evidently seen her, for she caught the wave of something white, and heard a faint halloo. But she watched them with a grim smile, and stroked the horse's head proudly and lovingly. A few moments later she judged the horse ready, and once more rode him into the water.

The horse swam even better than before, drifting fewer times, as though he had more confidence in his strength. But as they gradually neared the other side a new fear came to the girl's mind. They could not reach the town landing, but must land farther down; and farther down the bluffs seemed to rise

right out of the water. But the ferry people had spread the news that a woman was swimming the river and already several men and soldiers were running along the bank. As the horse brought her gradually nearer the girl saw that these people understood her danger, and were calling to her to keep up stream as much as possible. Then came the real battle with the river! The current was swifter, the horse was tiring and the inexorable bluffs were menacing grimly. Must they fall after all? Must they lose just at the doorway of the goal? For a little while it seemed so to both rider and watchers; and then the horse seemed to realize himself that the supreme moment had arrived, and he swam fiercely. Five minutes later a soldier caught him by the bridle, and the horse, pawing heroically, gained a footing on the rocky bank!

It was a Union captain who unbuckled the surcingle and lifted Cassandra from the saddle. But her Southern heart had no time to rebel, even when he chafed her cold hands and looked into her brave blue eyes with tremendous admiration. Nor did she refuse his arm up the steep shore, for her legs were cramped and stiff, and her skirts, now let down again, were heavy with water and dragged stubbornly. This was no time to show scorn or disdain; the day was advancing, and she must see Judge Fagg as soon as possible. She cut in sharply on the captain's queries as to why she had made that desperate swim across the river, telling him that she had important business with Judge Fagg, and asking where he lived. The captain was a decisive young man—captains had need to be in those days. Perhaps had Cassandra been less beautiful he might have tarried with more questions; but the flash of those blue eyes told him that quick work counted here. He got a horse for her, he lifted her bodily to the saddle, and with an impulsive pressure of her hand, gave her the brief directions: "Straight through town—a half mile—big white gates—to your left." And she went!

The gray-haired, grim-faced provost marshal listened to Cassandra's story with grave attention.

"Dave Richey? Why, I know his folks—they're Union. I released him before because of that. Why is he under arrest—has he turned rebel?"

The girl flushed at the word "rebel," and her eyes flashed.

"No, Judge Fagg; he is not a rebel! But I am, and proud of it!"

And then she told him the entire story—the broken engagement with Captain Bright, his mad jealousy of



Colonel David Richey walked slowly down one of the little streets of Rockport, Illinois. Lee and Johnson had surrendered—the fearful war had finally come to an end. Colonel Richey had been with the iron-souled Grant, but had not been able to stay with him until the heroic tenacity of the man had conquered over the almost insurmountable difficulties of that long campaign and he had seen the brave Lee lay down his arms. For Richey had been wounded and was just recovering when peace was declared. As he walked down the street that morning he thought of the last time he had been in this little town, and he wondered if he would be able to find Cassandra Manly, and if she was still the fiery Southern she was even when she swam the Mississippi and brought his reprieve. What a brave deed that had been! Had she loved him with all her heart she could not have dared more for him. But now that the war was over, now that there was no South and no North, but only one great country, eventually to be united by the very blood shed

in the struggle of separation; now that Mason and Dixon's line was swept out and the fires of passion had fallen—could he teach her something of the wonderful humanity of Lincoln? He remembered where she and her mother had lived, and he walked slowly on to the house.

Cassandra was standing on the porch as he opened the little street. She recognized him, in spite of the changes that had befallen him, and came forward with a look on her face that told its own story of remembrance. And just as he bent to kiss her, a man ran up the street, calling some news exactly. Seeing the colonel's uniform, the man called the news to them: "Lincoln is dead! Shot last night and died this morning!"

"My God!" exclaimed Richey. Then he felt a heavy weight against him, and looking down, realized that Cassandra was sobbing bitterly.

The girl of the South had been tamed; the great heart of Lincoln had already taught its lesson of love!

"BILLY," THE BLOCKADE RUNNER.

By Barry Palma.

IT WAS close and sultry; no breath of air stirred the pines, and the mullen stalks beside the roadway were drooped flat to earth. Even the drone of the locusts seemed faint and despondent, and the occasional cry of a blue-jay in the woods was far more in the nature of a protest than anything else. All Nature seemed oblivious to strife.

Even Lieutenant Thomas Morley Gray, as he sat smoking very methodically—as he did all things—upon the top rider of a rickety rail fence beside the roadway, appeared as utterly ignorant that two great armies in blue and gray were doggedly facing each other in serried ranks not more than three miles away, notwithstanding that he himself wore a uniform whose color belied his name—a uniform perhaps a little the worse for hard service.

A huge pine shaded his perch, but for all Gray was perspiring and evidently ill at ease. Every few minutes he looked at his watch, and every time 'he

pine tree with you this afternoon because I'm going out riding with Mr. Bennett. Excuse haste and brevity, but he is waiting for me now. I shall show Billy your gauntlets here and tell him to find you, which I'm sure he'll do. Now don't be angry and make me call you 'Tommy Green-Eyes' again.

"Trusting Billy may find you soon," "HELEN."

Gray surveyed the cloudless sky for several tumultuous moments. "Now, wouldn't it that—" he began. The sentence died in an inane gurgle, while Gray's face grew wrathfully red and great beads of perspiration stood on his forehead. Then he tore a leaf from his notebook, hastily scrawled a few words and tied it to Billy's collar, where the other note had reposed.

He arose, and, followed by the dog, stalked down the road. When they came to the fork Gray pointed down the left-hand road and said sternly, "Home, Billy. Home, sir." After he had watched the dog trot off dejectedly into the dust he himself went slowly up the other road to sneak his way back to his company's bivouac.

Late that evening Billy scrambled into the hammock where his mistress lay. She saw the note and in the dim light from the window beside her read these words:

"My dear Helen: I trust you'll have a pleasant afternoon. Undoubtedly it will be much preferable to Chaucer beneath the pine. Billy reached me after I had waited several hours for you. The time passed very pleasantly, thanks to the villainous heat and swarms of famine-stricken mosquitoes. Being the soul of devotion, I shall be delighted any afternoon in the future to go through the Inquisition again for the sake of the reward of a similar note, telling me you are riding with the latest arrival in town. THOMAS M. GRAY."

The next afternoon, as Gray was getting his men in order for a threatened attack of the "rebs," Billy again came trotting up with the violet envelope attached to his collar. In the shade of some sumach bushes Gray snatched the time to read the contents.

"Your latest one burst duly received per Billy, Mr. Tommy Green-Eyes. Fraz don't subject yourself to heat and mosquitoes on my account. "HELEN."

The note Billy carried back read as follows: "Thanks. I had no intention of doing so. T. M. G." Then for a week there was silence between them. Gray in his anger cursed the Confederates for lying idle on their arms instead of making things so lively that he would have a chance to cool his rage on them in battle. But instead he was obliged to sit inactive in camp and daily watch Helen Dennison and Hammett the foolish civilian go trotting along the Confederate front on horseback. No wonder he fumed.

But one evening when the whole town was in a ferment over the woe-attested rumor of long impending battle to come on the morrow Gray heard a mighty yelping and ki-yling in the road as he was skirting the camp on a final round of inspection. He turned back to find Billy and a brindle bull terrier hard at it. With judicious kicks he managed to get them apart, and then his heart came into his throat, for attached to Billy's collar was a bit of violet envelope. Gray snatched it eagerly. It had been sadly mutilated in the fray, but a few words in one corner of the paper were still legible.

"I'm in terror over what might happen to-morrow, but just trying to make you jealous," he read, and in another place he made out, "I'm lonesome for you, you foolish—"

Miss Helen Dennison, sitting on the broad veranda of the cottage, saw a strange outfit trotting sedately across the lawn. It was Billy—a wreath of oak leaves about his neck, and tied to his tail a small silk flag which fluttered bravely in the breeze. Prominent on the oak wreath was an envelope addressed to herself.

"My dear Helen," she read, and laughed softly; "I received but the merest fragments of your note, for Billy tried conclusions with a bull terrier with disastrous results. Nevertheless enough remained to give me considerable enlightenment. Billy's appearance when he reaches you—if he doesn't get into other difficulties on the way—is the result of my poor attempt to express my state of mind. We'd better make it as early as possible and spend our honeymoon before your 'rebs' get me."

And Lieutenant Thomas Morley Gray, who strode up the gravel walk at that moment, rubbed Billy's head and blushed furiously as she saw him standing there.

"URGED HIM DOWN THE BANK TO THE RIVER"

THOMAS M. GRAY

David Richey: how Richey had come up merely to tell her good-by before he joined the Union army, and how Bright had followed him with a trumped-up charge. And before she had entirely done the Judge was writing rapidly.

Within the hour Cassandra and the Judge appeared at the ferry, and this time the girl had a permit to cross—and another paper—the reprieve—was pinned under her bodice. The Judge gave her an escort, also, and directed that a good horse be supplied her on the other side. "And I know that brave Southern heart of yours will carry you in time," he said as he bade her good-by. "The South is wrong, but God bless its brave women. Try to think better of us, my girl—we are not all Brights; That Richey boy is worthy of us, and I shall hear proud things from both of you when this war is ended." Then, much to the Union Captain's envy, he kissed her cheek as the ferry started. It was the morning of that tragic day, April 15, 1865, when