

THIS WAS THE CIVIL WAR

An Incredible Episode of War

By MERTON T. AKERS
United Press International
This is the story of John Singleton Mosby, Edwin H. Stoughton and Antonia Ford — one of the more incredible episodes of the incredible Civil War.

The time was the early morning of March 9, 1863, the place Fairfax Court House, Va., a village now on the edge of metropolitan Washington.

Mosby was a captain of partisan Confederate cavalry. He headed about 100 scouts who operated in the twilight zone between the two armies and who disbanded and lived as civilians between exploits. Later the guerrilla leader would become a colonel, much more famous as a partisan leader and after the war, a friend of Gen. U. S. Grant.

At the start of the Civil War Mosby was 28 years old and a country lawyer in Bristol, Va. He learned his profession from his defense attorney while awaiting trial for shooting a fellow student at the University of Virginia.

John Esten Cooke of Gen. J. E. B. Stuart's staff, described Mosby as "thin and wiry, and I should say about five feet nine or ten inches

in height. A slight stoop in the neck was not ungraceful. The chin was carried well forward; the lips were thin and wore a somewhat satirical smile; the eyes, under a brown felt hat, were keen, sparkling and roved curiously from side to side. His voice was low. He rarely sat still ten minutes."

Stoughton was 25 years old and one of the youngest of the Federal brigadier generals. He commanded the outposts around Fairfax. He came from a wealthy Vermont family of considerable social standing and was cited for bravery as colonel of the Fourth Vermont Infantry during the Peninsula campaign. He was a West Pointer in the class of 1859, being graduated 17th in a class of 22.

In the winter of 1862-63 he was living a comfortable, even luxurious, life at Fairfax C. H. His parties were famous. As a companion he had a runaway Cambridge, Mass., girl of 20 whom he had made a staff major with all the privileges which went with the rank.

Stoughton gave a big party for Sunday night, March 8. His mother and sister came down from Washington. All

the officers attended and as many women of Fairfax as would come. Champagne sparkled in quantity. The guests danced to the music of a regimental band. It was a gay party and broke up only well after midnight.

About 2 a.m. Mosby and 29 of his troopers rode into town. They split into groups. One group took over the tent of telegrapher Robert Weibrecht and restrained him from spreading the alarm.

Cavalry Colonel

Another went to the house of Sir Percy Wyndham, a cavalry colonel Mosby especially wanted to capture. The Britisher fighting on the Union side had publicly called Mosby a horse thief, a name which carried special opprobrium in the days of equine transportation. But Wyndham had been called to Washington and missed being captured.

A group headed by Mosby went straight to the house where Stoughton had his headquarters. Pounding on the front door, they announced they were carrying dispatches for the general. A sleepy staff lieutenant let them in and then was looking down the muzzles of Mosby's sixshooters.

Upstairs the raiders went to Stoughton's bedroom. He was sleeping soundly after the evening's festivities.

Mosby pulled back the bedcovers, raised the general's nightshirt and slapped his rear.

As Mosby recalled it, this was the conversation:

"Get up, general, and come with me," Mosby ordered.

Stoughton, not fully awake, replied:

"What is this? Do you know who I am sir?"

"I reckon I do, general. Did you ever hear of Mosby?"

"Yes, have you caught him?"

"No, but he has caught you."

"What's this all about?"

"It means, general, that Stuart's cavalry have taken over Fairfax and General Jackson is in Centreville," Mosby lied.



AMBUSHING UNION COURIER—Early on the morning of March 9, 1863, John S. Mosby and 29 of his troopers staged a daring raid on this Union-held village. It was a raid that resulted in the capture of Gen. Edwin H. Stoughton, Austrian Baron R. R. Wardener, two captains, 30 privates, and

58 horses. The attack was typical of those engineered by Mosby before, and till the war's end. This drawing, from the Library of Congress collection, is a sketch of Mosby and his raiders ambushing a Union Courier. (UPI)

"Is Fitz Lee here?"

"Yes," Mosby lied again.

"Then take me to him. I know him at West Point."

(Stoughton left no version of his own conversation.)

Only the Federal provost marshal, L. L. O'Connor, and Col. Robert Johnston, Fifth N.Y. Cavalry and post commander, among the higher officers, escaped. O'Connor was checking outposts and Johnston fled to an out-house without even a night-shirt.

Mosby's bag for the night was one general — Stoughton; one nobleman — Baron R. B. Wardener, an Austrian visiting Wyndham; two captains, 30 privates and 58 horses.

O'Connor broke the bad news to Maj. Gen. Samuel P. Heintzelman, the Federal corps commander, at 3:30 a.m. in this dispatch:

"Captain Mosby, with his command, entered this town this morning at 2 a.m. They captured my patrols, horses, etc. They took Brigadier General Stoughton and horses, and all his men detached from his brigade. They took every horse that could be found, public and private, and the commanding officer of the post, Colonel Johnston, of the Fifth New York Cavalry,

made his escape from them in a nude state by accident. They searched for him in every direction, but being on the Vienna road, visiting outposts, I made my escape. All our available cavalry forces are in pursuit of them."

Now Antonia Ford comes into the picture.

She was the daughter of a Fairfax merchant. A blonde with brown eyes, she was a rabid Secessionist, a friend of Mosby and Stuart, holding a major's "commission" from the latter as aide-de-camp.

Soon after the raid a woman detective appeared in Fairfax, passed herself off as a Secessionist and won Antonia's confidence. Miss Ford even showed her "commission" to the detective.

So the Federals took her off to Old Capitol Prison in Washington four days after the raid. Her father and several other prominent Fairfax residents went along. They soon were released but Antonia was not so fortunate. She was held for months, despite efforts to obtain her release. One of those who worked the hardest for her release was Union Maj. Joseph C. Willard, one of the founders of Willard's Hotel,

who had been stationed earlier in Fairfax.

After she was released she went to Richmond where Cooke saw her.

"She was thin and white as a ghost," he wrote, adding that her condition was the result of bad food in prison. Her imprisonment did not all go for naught, however.

Later she was married to Willard and presided as hostess for years at his hotel.

Stoughton's military career was brief after his capture. While he was in prison his general's commission expired. He was released in May 1863 and soon resigned.

When President Lincoln heard of the Fairfax capture, he said:

"Well, I'm sorry for that. I can make new brigadier generals, but I can't make horses."

Mosby died in 1916, never admitting Antonia Ford was the spy who triggered his Fairfax raid.

Obsolete Words Abound in New Reference Bible

New York — "Flowers" mean impurity. "Polled" refers not only to what Dr. Gallup and others have done, but also to what befell mighty Samson, namely a haircut.

And "charger," believe it or not, was what the head of John the Baptist was carried on when it was brought in to Herodias' daughter.

No, this is not a new language, but an archaic one.

Such obsolete words as these are strewn through the King James version of the Bible and in an effort to clarify matters for the reader, the American Bible society today published a new English Reference Bible.

Study Edition

The volume, in preparation by Biblical scholars since 1946, was developed to provide an inexpensive study edition of the Bible.

Hundreds of ministers, theologians, editors, writers and laymen, in 28 denominations, were polled to determine what would be needed in a Reference Bible.

The new edition offers alternative translations based on older and more accurate Hebrew and Greek manuscripts than were available to the translators of the King James version more than 350 years ago, plus a list of words which, while accurate when used, have changed meaning in the intervening centuries.

Other features include improved spelling, type set in paragraphs instead of traditional verse division, section headings to suggest contents of paragraphs, indentation for poetry, footnote references at the bottom of each page and a highly legible type face.

Lewis, Clark Choir Sets Local Concert

Portland — The 60-voice A Cappella Choir of Lewis and Clark college of Portland will be in Medford Friday, March 22, under the sponsorship of the First Presbyterian church.

The choir is on its 15th annual tour of towns in Oregon, California and Nevada, under the direction of L. Stanley Glarum, member of the music faculty of Lewis and Clark.

The program will open with two numbers sung in Latin, "Tenebrae Factae Sunt" by Ingneri, and "Improprium Expectavit Cor Meum" by Eberlin, followed by "Kom Süsser Tod" by Bach, and "Die Mit Tranen Saen" by Sehn.

The second part will open with a number by conductor Glarum, "Let All People Praise Thee"; "Ave Maria" by Bruckner; "The Three Kings" by Willan; "Praise Thou the Lord" by Gretchenhof, and "Sing Ye Merrily" by Mendelssohn.

The third portion will conclude with "Glory to God" by Tschernokoff; "Regeneration" and "Exaltation" by Christiansen; "Sakura Sakura" by Hairston and "The Invisible Choir" by Glarum.

Soviet Union To Buy Four Swedish Ships

Stockholm — (UPI) — The Soviet Union will buy four Swedish-built 8,000-ton freighters worth \$20 million, a shipbuilding company spokesman said Saturday.

The spokesman for Lindholm Shipyard said the ships will be delivered in 1964 according to a contract signed in Moscow Saturday.

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Your Money's Worth

By SYLVIA PORTER
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Editor's note: Sylvia Porter is on vacation. During her absence a column by Ralph McGill is being substituted. McGill is currently on a tour of African nations, about which he is writing.

A CASTLE AT OSU, ACCRA

Accra, Ghana:—On a high hill, which drops almost to the sea, stands an old castle-fortress. It was built by the Danes in 1661. They handed it over to the British in 1850. (In the United States at this time there was so much concentration on the bitterly developing sectionalism that was to lead to civil war that few Americans even knew about the affairs of Danish kings.) The Danes called it Christiansborg Castle.

Today the Ghanaian government is completing two three-story extensions. They contain 90 rooms and offices, a cinema hall, and a large conference room. The old castle itself, dwarfed by the splendor and the size of the additions, is at the center. About it are the patterns of new architecture, fountains, a car park, hidden by a screen of honeycomb concrete, and a garden where tame deer wander about, muzzling visitors for tidbits. The president and some cabinet officers will have offices in the new structure. Until the British left the old castle, white on its high point of land, it was the residence of the crown's governor.

Christiansborg is heavy with the presence of history. It is one of a series of castles built along the west coast by European nations in the slave trade. They ran from Dahomey to Goree Island off Cape Verde at Senegal. The castles were about as far as Europe penetrated into Africa. The captives came from the inland and were paid for and placed in rooms below the thick main floor level. They waited, then, until the ships came to buy the slaves and take them away.

There are balconies. The battlements are wide enough to walk upon. One can imagine the many governors, the lonely watch officers, and the garrisons of almost two centuries staring toward the sea from those battlements and balconies, wondering about home. Would the next sail be that of an enemy raider or friend?

Death came to hundreds in the long span of years. Yellow fever, malaria, dysentery, typhoid—they were the ruthless killers. Drink and dissipation were almost as deadly. The old records are replete with comments on drunkenness, wenching, and the penalties thereof.

Many of the wretched captives died of disease in the slave quarters under the walls. There is an opening through which the captives were lowered to the beach to be placed in the small boats which took them to the ship. There are old cannon, rusted and eroded by centuries of salt air, wind, and rains. Some still point toward the sea. Others have been placed about the new wings as decorations. The thick-walled old castle, with its cobbled courtyard, its cannon, which are almost amusing in this time of nuclear power, is a poignant and, for all its quaintness and beauty, an ugly, oppressive symbol of history.

With the slave trades steadily restricted by conscience and law, the forts were abandoned or sold. The British took over Christiansborg in 1850. The Dutch held on to theirs, further down the coast, until 1872. In 1874 the Gold Coast was proclaimed a British colony.

It is surprising, somehow, to come upon the dates causing one to realize how late was the European scramble for colonies in Africa. In 1870 only a small portion of the continent was ruled by European powers. In North Africa, only Algeria, Egypt, and Tunisia were so controlled. In West Africa, Europe had had commercial dealings with coastal tribes for more than four centuries. Yet, late in the 19th century French rule in Senegal had been able to move only a few miles inland. The British and Portuguese had done little more.

European colonies were hardly more than enclaves. In the capitals of Europe men drew boundaries on inaccurate maps and made decisions based on a shocking lack of information. Names began to emerge on Africa—Cecil Rhodes and Paul Kruger are two of the best known.

It was 1911 before England, France, and Germany made a treaty and reached agreement about colonial rights and titles. By then events were moving toward a bridge at Sarajevo in central Europe.

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