

# A Narrow Escape

Thrilling Episode of the Civil War Told by F. A. Mitchel.

There is a manor house in Virginia which was once the scene of a narrow escape from a tragedy. Judge Prescott has inherited the place from a long line of ancestors and lived there with his wife and a daughter, Charlotte. When the civil war came on the judge was too old to enter the Confederate service, but he sent his son, while he hid the cause secretly on his plantation. Indeed, while the locality was occupied by the Union troops no more information found its way into the Confederate lines from Judge Prescott's home than at last the Federal general in command stationed a guard there consisting of a lieutenant and eight men. This made the old secessionist furious, and his wife and daughter were in constant fear that he should do something to cause the Yankees to send him north to prison.

and beckoned the captain to enter. There in the bed concealed under the clothes was a figure. The captain started to pull off the covering, but Chandler stopped him.

"Here," said the latter, and, going to the foot of the bed, he pushed up the covering far enough to display a dainty pair of white feet and ankles that could not possibly have belonged to any man.

"Humph!" said the captain. "That's a game at which no gentleman will betray another. Good night, lieutenant. I'm sorry to have disturbed you."

With that he withdrew. When the young couple heard their horses' hoofs clattering down the road they gave silent thanks to heaven for the escape.

The manor house in which this episode occurred still stands, one of the historic residences of the Old Dominion, but the name of this family is not and never was Prescott. The former lieutenant, a white haired old man, lives there, surrounded by his children and grandchildren, but his name is not and never was Chandler, else it would not do to tell this secret, which has been carefully kept. The old lady who figured in it as a young woman is very sensitive about it and has managed thus far to hide it from her descendants. From her youth she has been used to passing the room in which she so narrowly escaped a distressing complication and a possible death, but she never passed it without a shudder. She was never known to sleep in it.



A Dainty Pair of White Feet and Ankles.

This occurred when the armies were in winter quarters, so that Chandler remained at the Prescott manor house for some time after the marriage. If stolen fruit is sweet, fruit taken while in danger of life must be sweeter. Judge Prescott had known that his daughter had married the hated Yankee. It is quite possible that he would have turned her out of doors. Had he caught her in his room, which she frequently visited, he would surely have killed her.

The young bridal couple had passed a honeymoon on the edge of a precipice and had resolved a dozen times that they would cease to communicate when one night, between 12 and 1 o'clock, while they were in the husband's room, they were awakened by a noise in the hall. Chandler unlocked the door and saw a captain of cavalry, followed by several of his men, holding a light over his head.

"Are you the officer in command here?" asked the captain.

"I am."

"Well, this house is still a nest of spies. A man caught with a statement of every corps in this army in his boots has escaped, and the negro says he is hiding in this house. I'm making a search."

"I'll join you in a moment," said Chandler, and, closing the door, he began a hurried consultation with his wife. What could be done? With the house full of armed men searching for a fugitive it would be impossible for her to leave the room without being seen. The scandal would be nothing to the wrath of her father, who would surely come to a knowledge of the fact. Indeed, he might see her come from her husband's room. The only hope was for her to remain where she was. Possibly an apartment occupied by a Federal officer would not be searched. If the captain of the search party insisted on doing so, then, indeed, all would be lost, for no concealment could be effected from the others. Chandler put on his clothes and joined the searchers. Every room, nook and corner in the house was visited except the apartment in which was the terror-stricken bride. Then the captain said:

"As a matter of formality, lieutenant, I must search your room."

"Do you expect to find a spy in my quarters?" said Chandler, smiling.

"Certainly not with your knowledge, but were I in his place I should feel safer there than anywhere else."

The captain put his hand on the knob, and the lieutenant thrust him back.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed the former angrily.

"Are you a Union officer, harboring a Confederate spy?"

"No," replied Chandler in an undertone, "but there is some one in this room whom it would ruin if caught."

The captain hesitated.

"For heaven's sake, go away!" said Chandler.

"I can't take the risk," replied the captain. "I must see for myself."

"If you are convinced that the person in there is not a man, will you be satisfied?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Wait here a moment." Chandler went into the room and in a few moments returned to the door

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## THE LOTTERY OF DEATH.

Imprisoned Union Officers Chosen by Lot to Be Hanged.

The most singular and appalling of all true narratives of the civil war is Lieutenant Stradling's story of "The Lottery of Death," says the Cleveland Plain Dealer. The Confederate government had determined upon the execution of two Federal captains in retaliation for the hanging as spies of two of their own captains caught by the Union troops. All the Federal captives, prisoners of war in Libby prison, were compelled to draw lots to select two of their number to be hanged. The two fateful black beans were drawn by Captain Sawyer and Captain Flynn of the Fifty-first Indiana Infantry, the first men to draw from the lottery of death. At a two hours' notice they were carted off to die.

Lieutenant Stradling tells the story in graphic, unvarnished English as he had it from Captain Sawyer—how the doomed men were reprieved at the foot of the gallows tree by the hard riding of the bishop of Richmond and the interference of Jefferson Davis; how Lincoln heard the story from Sawyer's wife and at the end of a sleepless night devised a plan whereby the men were finally saved. Lincoln's plan was one of the most pitiless moves war ever forced upon him. He notified the Confederate cabinet that immediately upon the execution of Sawyer and Flynn he would retaliate by hanging General W. H. F. Lee, son of their great commander, and another Confederate officer. This threat frightened the Confederate cabinet into abandoning their plan.

One of Custer's Performances.

It was while Phil Sheridan was fighting Wade Hampton at Trevilian Station, Va., that Custer, taking advantage of the enemy's preoccupation, slipped up a byroad directly in Hampton's rear and seized all his spare horses and wagon trains. Just about the time he had got them some cavalry from Fitzhugh Lee's column galloped up in the rear of Custer, and there he was, caught between two fires; but, although he lost not only his captured wagon trains, but his own as well, and though another body of the enemy immediately attacked him from another direction, Custer was equal to the desperate situation, somehow extricated his little force intact, straightened out his third line of battle and held on until Merritt's brigade charged through to his relief.

General Cheatham's Escape.

The Confederate General Cheatham used to tell this story of his escape from capture at the battle of Belmont, Mo.:

Just as the opposing armies were approaching each other the general espied a squadron of cavalry coming down the road near his position. Uncertain as to which army it belonged to, he rode, accompanied only by an orderly, to within a few yards of it and inquired, "What cavalry is that?"

"Illinois cavalry, sir," was the reply.

"All right, Illinois cavalry," said the general, "stay where you are."

The cavalry obeyed this order, and, unmolested by it, which thought he was one of the Federal officers, General Cheatham rode safely back to his own command.



THOMAS E. WATSON.

Mr. Watson, the People's party nominee for president of the United States, was born in Columbia, Ga., in 1856 and served in congress from 1891 to 1893. While in congress he obtained the first appropriation for the free delivery of mails in rural districts ever passed by that body. Mr. Watson is a writer of exceptional ability, his subjects being largely of a historical and biographical nature. The most noted of his works are "The Story of France," "Life of Napoleon" and "Life of Thomas Jefferson." His home is in Thomson, Ga.

## U.S.A. AND C.S.A. Slept on Old Glory.

Charles Carleton Coffin, who was a war correspondent during the conflict between the states, relates an incident showing the remarkable fidelity of a loyal Unionist to the flag. When Mr. Coffin entered Charleston, S. C., in 1865, just after the evacuation of that city by the Confederates, who had held the place for four years, he observed a small Union flag floating from a window. Coffin knocked at the door, which was opened by a middle aged German resident. The newspaper man told the citizen that he had called out of curiosity to know a man who was so loyal as to fly the stars and stripes while the city was still beset by Confederate spies.

"Come inside and I will show you a still bigger American flag," said the man of the house.

Coffin accepted the invitation. The loyal Teuton brought forth a large flag, somewhat crumpled.

"There," he said, "my wife and I have slept on that flag every night for four years. We had it sewed inside our mattress."

On May 30, 1865, Mary sat in the doorway, looking down the road. Her hair, once black, was now streaked with gray. She had been looking at the roses and thinking of Henry. "Will he come today?" An hour later an old man came slowly up the road and turned up the pathway to the house. Mary, waiting on the doorstep, knew it was Henry, for the face was the face she saw in her dream.

"Henry!"

"Mary!"

That is all those two said as they clasped hands and sat once more on the grassy bank where the roses bloom. But heart spoke to heart in a love and joy deeper than all world, and deeper than all thought.



GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH AT SEVENTY-NINE.

This picture of General Booth and his two little grandchildren was taken on the occasion of the seventy-ninth birthday of the founder of the Salvation Army. General Booth laid the beginnings of his army in 1865. He began by preaching in the slums of English towns and rendering material as well as spiritual aid to those he drew about him. This has since been the unswerving policy of the Salvation Army—to feed the hungry and comfort the despairing. General Booth is a strict vegetarian and a model of frugality in his manner of living.

# Sheridan's Ride

Sole Survivor of "Little Phil's" Escort Tells Story of Famous Dash.

The graphic story of the thrilling ride of Sheridan to stop the retreat of the Union troops at the battle of Cedar Creek, in the Shenandoah valley, in 1862 gains an added interest when heard from the lips of an officer who accompanied the general on that noted ride. This is Major Spera of Council Bluffs, Ia., the sole survivor of the escort of twenty men who made that eventful ride on the morning of Oct. 19, 1862, when the magnetic leadership of Sheridan turned a disastrous rout into a brilliant victory.

"Early in the morning," says Major Spera, "as we were responding to 'Boots and saddles' at Milltown we heard firing and discussed the matter among ourselves.

"As we rode out of town and reached the top of a hill we noted men coming toward us on the double quick. It looked to me mighty like the rout at Chancellorsville, and when Sheridan saw the men there was something doing.

"Just a month before he had licked Early's men unmercifully at Winchester, and Early had been trying to take his revenge ever since. I was ordered to take twenty of my best men and follow Sheridan to the front. Before we could get them picked out, with the remainder of my command to form a cordon across the road, Sheridan, on his big black horse Rienzi, was tearing for the front.

"I was riding a good sorrel, and you may know something about the pace he set us when I tell you that my horse, an unusually good one, died a week

later from blood fever brought on by that furious ride.

"All along the road we saw men in retreat. There might have been 1,000 or there might have been 10,000, for all we knew. We were too busy riding to count. Here and there the men had stacked arms and were making coffee. The only information we had had as to the retreat was from the chief commissary, Colonel Kellogg, who had informed us that everything was lost in the front and that the men were rapidly retreating.

"Sheridan set his teeth when he heard this and did not pause for more. As we passed groups of men drinking their coffee he would turn in his saddle and shout:

"Face about, boys! We'll sleep in the old camp tonight! Face about!"

"This was the signal for a general cheer from the boys. They dropped their cups of hot coffee, kicked the coffeepots out of their way, made a dash for the guns and wheeled into line after their general. All along the line it was the same. The men seemed to be inspired by the sight of Sheridan and his confidence in himself and in them. The victory of the march before was still fresh in their minds, and they felt certain that once Sheridan got to the front he would again lead them to victory.

"Sheridan spurred his horse anew, and when he reached the front he seemed to be needed pretty badly. We had lost twenty-four pieces of artillery, all we had, and the men were demoralized.

"Fortunately for us, the enemy were so busy congratulating themselves over their capture of the artillery and in rummaging the wagon train of supplies, where they found whisky and proceeded to become intoxicated, that they did not dream of a rally on our part.

"They discovered their mistake when they heard the cheers of our men for Sheridan as he rode up and down the line reforming the ranks. They supposed these cheers were due to reinforcements, and before they could gather their scattered forces Colonel Miller charged them at right angles, and Custer, with 2,000 sabers, charged them from the right, where the enemy had attached Emery and had supposed him too badly beaten to rally.

"The battle raged all afternoon and late into the evening. When it was over we found that we had taken over 1,000 prisoners and had recovered all our artillery and twenty-two pieces belonging to the enemy. In fact, we got all their artillery but one piece, and Captain Hanley captured that afterward at Jackson."—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.



SHERIDAN WAS TEARING FOR THE FRONT.

Each grizzled hero bared his head. The roses rooted in his dust Reached out their tender sprays Through starry nights and dewy dawns And sunny, golden days. They showered with petals and perfume That green and silent places And folded both the sleepers there Within their sweet embrace.

Each grizzled hero bared his head, And every furrowed cheek Was brightened by a tear that told The thoughts that none could speak, And so upon Memorial day, In sunshine or in showers, Since then they deck alike the graves Of blue and gray with flowers. —Minna Irving in Leslie's Weekly.

## THE UNKNOWN DEAD.

Those Buried in National Cemeteries Exceed 100,000.

The army of the "unknown dead" buried in the national cemeteries under the supervision of the United States government is an enormous one. According to figures recently submitted to the house by Representative Chaney based on a report from the quartermaster general, there are 152,103 unknown soldiers lying in the national cemeteries.

The total number of bodies in these cemeteries is 253,355, the known number 201,252.

The government maintains no less than eighty-three national cemeteries. It is not generally known that one of these is outside of the United States, being located in Mexico City. More than 1,500 soldiers of the Mexican war rest there, half of them unknown.

Saving His Country.

Noble Prentiss was a man of small stature, and the story goes that at the beginning of the civil war, when he sought to enlist as a soldier, he was found to fall several inches short of the minimum height required by army regulations and was ordered to step aside by the recruiting officer. Mr. Prentiss did so reluctantly, muttering: as he went, "I suppose I'll have to let my country go to Hades because I'm not eight feet tall."

The recruiting officer overheard the remark and called him back, saying, "Young man, you'll do," and Prentiss was enlisted and mustered into the service.—Kansas City Times.

The Woman's Relief Corps.

Two little children who had seen a Memorial day procession decided they would decorate the grave of a favorite pussy that had been buried under the pear tree in the back yard. So they marched toward the spot, one behind the other. The first child, who carried a drum, was the band, and the second, with a tiny flag, was the Grand Army.

Before they reached the grave a lot of old hens ran in front of the procession.

"Shoo, shoo!" cried the band.

"Don't do that, sister," said the second division. "Don't scare them away. They're the Woman's Relief corps."—Judge.

An Unreported Wound.

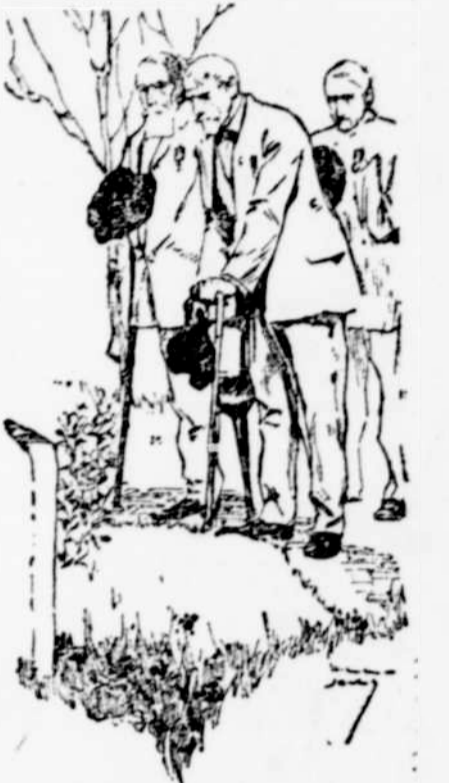
"Mr. Wapleson," said Mrs. Oldcastle, "has a heart of gold." "Dear me," replied her hostess, "is that so? I knew he'd got a hurt in the army so he had to have a silver plate in his jaw, but I'd never heard about the other."—Chicago Record-Herald.

# The Blue and the Gray

Nature's Rebuke to the Spirit of Partisan Prejudice.

Where cedars flanked the village church, Like sentries dark and tall, Two soldiers slumbered side by side Beneath a grassy pall. One from his mossy stone proclaimed That he had fought with Lee, And one had marched the weary road With Sherman to the sea.

There came a band of veterans Upon Memorial day And planted roses on the blue, But left unmarked the gray. But when returning to the spot Another year, behold, Their comrades of the battlefield Rebuked them from the mold!



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