

LOSES A RACE, WINS A MAN AND A MILLION

Thrilling adventures, strange happenings, startling coincidences, peculiar circumstances and odd happenings are the elements which have all combined to make up one of the most remarkable, and at the same time charming, love romances, as pretty as was ever unfolded by the most clever fictionalist.

A yacht race, a raging storm, a lost boat, a heroic rescue and a wedding at 3:00 o'clock (am) in the morning in the parlors of a hotel in St. Joseph, Michigan, the matrimonial Mecca of so many runaway couples from Indiana.

There are still other circumstances which make this love romance a most extraordinary one. Notwithstanding the fact that, no villain appeared with dark plots to upset the carefully prepared plans come and no objecting parents to interpose obstacles, the only adverse circumstances being those over which no man has control, the course of true love in this particular instance did not run smoothly, but the romance culminated in such a manner that the man and his bride will live happily ever afterwards.

This chain of circumstances has been forged by romance to link the lives of Andrew H Crawford, a millionaire, and Miss Evelyn Wright, a daring yachtswoman.

Mr. and Mrs. Crawford are now enjoying their honeymoon in Europe after an acquaintance lasting since the 1st of August (1905), when they met under peculiarly romantic circumstances. The chance meeting of the two grew quickly into a close acquaintance and this later ripened into a fondness that culminated in the romantic marriage.

Both live in Chicago and are members of the Chicago Yacht Club. Both are enthusiastic over yachting and they have many other tastes in common. The groom is the son of the late Andrew H Crawford, who died in 1900, leaving to his younger son, it is said, the sum of \$1,500,000. He resides at 109 Pine Grove Ave. in Lakeview and also has a summer home across the lake near St Joseph, Michigan.

The bride is the daughter of Mrs. Guenevere C Wright of 219 Jackson Park Terrace, who has won considerable fame as a daring and intrepid yacht woman on Lake Michigan during the last several years.

The romance began last summer during the annual race of the Columbia and Chicago Yacht Clubs. This event was one of the most important of lake events in the history of yachting in Chicago and one of the largest fleets that ever passed out of the breakwater went rushing northward that day towards Mackinac and Macatawa. The race was one of the longest and most important in the history of the Clubs and attracted so little attention.

But by all odds, the most interesting fact concerning the race was the determination of Miss Evelyn Wright to take part in it, although she was warned not to do so by many members of the Chicago Yacht Club, of which she is a member (Flag Member). This young woman, the skipper of the Sloop Lady Eileen, was determined to go and did go, and her crew consisted of her cousin, Miss Sally (Sara) Carey, the same young woman who was the bridesmaid at the early morning wedding.

THE SKIRT CREW OF LADY EILEEN

The boats in this race were the Hawthorne, the Alice, and the Mistral. The yawls were the Arcadia, Tannis, Naiad and Siren, and the sloops were La Rita, Minota, and the famous lady Eileen with its “skirt crew”. The numbers of the various yachts were sent to the northern lifesaving stations so that the progress of the yacht race might be recorded.

The start was made in the face of a stiff, nor Easter and the storm signals flying from all lifesaving stations on the Great Lakes. These facts were impressed upon Miss Wright, but undoubtedly undaunted by her own danger she insisted that she be allowed to make the race with the other members of the Club.

“We are fully able to take care of ourselves,” remarked the young woman (Miss Wright) proudly, and her companion (Miss Sara Carey), a frail slip of a girl, seemed eager and anxious to make the trial.

“I have looked forward to this cruise for months”, remarked Miss Wright to members of the Yacht Club who were looking on; “and I will not allow a gloomy sky or stiff breeze to determine if I will make the race and I am sure Sally (Sara) and I will be able to weather the storm with the rest of the squadron”.

When the Lady Eileen passed through the gap a little later for the finish line with a woman's skipper at the tiller, headed for the finish line 330 miles away, there were cheers from scores of yachtsmen as the little craft began tossing on the heavy sea in the first stormy chapter of a love story.

Members of the squadron who were on the lake that night say there was an ugly sea on and that it was all the larger craft could do to keep afloat, even when manned by strong crews. They say it was only by a miracle of good sailing that the Lady Eileen managed to keep afloat that long night.

Miss Sally (Sara) Carey, who figured as one of the heroines in the sloop, was also a prominent figure at the wedding of her cousin. She is a lively young woman, with a vivacious temper and no little pluck and determination. In telling of the experiences that night on the water the young woman waxed eloquent. With flashing eyes and clenched hands, she related the story to an intimate friend.

“It was a risky thing for us to start out in the teeth of that storm. Evelyn and I both knew it, but we had set our hearts on going and we wouldn't let black skies and a wind keep us back”, (said Carey).

“We had been looking forward to that trip for a long, long time. We had talked about it for days. Evelyn and I had been all over the lake in Lady Eileen and we felt fully able to cope with all the difficulties. When the time came for the race, a number of the members of the Yacht Club attempted to dissuade us from going. But, we wouldn't refrain from making the start.”

“We got through the gap alright and started on the long cruise. For the first few hours we made pretty good headway, but the storm grew in its velocity all of the time. By the time night came on the sea was a heavy one, coming in great green mountains, and our little sloop bobbed around like a cork in a whirlpool. The wind seemed to push and pile the water up to great walls and mountains and nothing

could withstand them. One thing that was noticeable, was the absence of white caps. Usually in a storm on the lake each wave will be crested with white and the waters will seem furiously angry, but that night the lake was sullen, heavy and forbidding”, (said Miss Carey)

“The Lady Eileen shot forward through the sullen waters at a pretty good rate of speed and we were making things go pretty well when a more than unusually big wave dashed against the boat and our yawl boat was washed overboard”.

“One of the worst features of this accident was that when the boat went overboard it took along with it the traveller. This left us in a bad way. We had to contrive a sort of tackle to take the place of the traveller, and with the wind blowing a gale that was no little matter, you may be sure”.

“We were making our way out of their under that gloomy sky the best we could and felt that we were comparatively safe when Evelyn, who had gone to the cabin came out and in some alarm told me that the cabin was leaking! This new danger stirred us not a little and things began to look rather dark for the Lady Eileen and her crew”. (said Miss Carey)

“I was at the tiller, and although I was drenched from head to foot I had to remain there for hours at a time, while Evelyn worked the pumps to keep the sloop from sinking”.

“The waves dashed on deck, the wind blew us about like a feather. I do not think I was ever so near what seemed to be certain death in my life. There we were, two women out on that lake in the dead of night in a little sloop, and that (was) disabled and leaking, (leaving us) both wet, hungry and exhausted”.

“But we had to keep on. There was nothing for us to do but keep up the battle, so we did. It would have been suicidal for either one of us to give over, so I clung to the tiller and steered the boat the best I could, while Evelyn manned the pumps and kept the cabin clear of water.”

“That was a long night and one that will always remain stuck fast in my memory, and I am doubly sure it will never be forgotten by my cousin, for it has been the means of bringing into her life great happiness. Out there under those

black skies that night neither one of us had any idea that the end would be so fortunate.” (said Miss Carey)

“Never was a dawn more welcome to any mortals than to we two wet girls, and although we were on the point of collapse the sight of the harbor of St. Joseph aroused us to greater efforts about 9:00 that July Sunday morning”.

“It was a great relief when we saw some men putting out in row boats to aid us, and it was a high time we had assistance, for I fear we could not have held out much longer period, we both loved the water, but Lake Michigan was no lily pond that night. It was a wonder we were able to weather the storm and would not have been able to do it had we not been fairly good sailors and well used to managing the yacht.”

“Not long before this famous trip we came straight across to Chicago from Grand Haven, and after we came insight of the Chicago harbor lights we had to battle with the waves for 10 hours, before we got in. That little experience stood us in good stead in the later trial”.

“It was amusing to see the way the men took our determination to push on in the race that morning in St. Joseph. They all thought of course that the fearful struggle of there under the starless skies we would be only too glad to give up and call the race off, but we were just as determined that morning as we had been at the start, and after we had rested for a while and our sloop was put in repair we pushed on as though nothing had happened.”

“All we needed was rest, and all and we got that. Neither one of us see why we should leave off at that time, for we have certainly passed through the worst of the ordeal. The news of our fight with the waves preceded us and whenever we went and wherever we went we received much attention. We put in from time to time and the people were all very kind to us. We finished the race in due season and were present at the festivities in Macatawa. It was a great experience, but not one that a person would care to have more than once.” (said Miss Carey)

It is well known how Mr. Crawford picked up the yawl boat that was washed overboard from Lady Eileen and towed it to Chicago, which was the means of the meeting between the two. It makes a pretty little romance, and, what is more, it is a romance in real life.

George R Peare, formerly Vice Commodore of the Chicago Yacht Club, and enthusiastic sailor and the winner of the Lipton Cup for 1902 and 1903 and also the owner of La Rita, the fast sloop that started in the same class with Miss Wright and the Lady Eileen. He heard different members of the Yacht Club tried to dissuade the girl from making the start and also listened to her reply.

She said she had looked forward with many anticipations of pleasure to the race, remarked Mr. Peare in discussing their race, and did not think it wise to allow lowering the skies or a stiff wind to deter her from doing something she had planned to do for so many months.

“I must say that it was a daring thing to do, and there is not a yachtsman in our club but who takes pride in the fact that a woman belongs to the club. She certainly demonstrated good grit in that event by starting out in a vessel of that caliber in the face of known danger. I wonder to this day how those two girls ever came through the waves alive”. (said George R Peare)

“I had a good crew on La Rita but found the sea ugly. It took the best of our efforts of good sailors to weather the sea. It was a strange sort of storm. One thing was noticeable and that was the lack of white caps. Sometimes the sea will be rough and every wave will be white, but to see that night was dull and loggy. But powerful and very nasty to contend with, It seemed to push its way with irresistible force and crafts were tossed about like tiny shells on big green mountains of water”.

“I felt it my duty to keep an eye out for the Lady Eileen, but it was not very long before I lost sight of her, and I did not catch another glimpse of the craft until the next morning. We had passed Saint Joseph's on our way north, but found the sea so heavy that we put back the next morning after the start.”

“It must have been about 9:30 that morning when the Lady Eileen was sighted off of St. Joseph's and as the craft seemed to be in distress several men rode out to her and assisted her into the harbor. I saw Miss Wright at that time, and although she was on the point of collapse, she still displayed great grit.” (said George R Peare)

LADY EILEEN DISABLED

“When I caught sight of the sloop my wonder increased, for it was in bad shape. The traveller had been carried away and the yawl boat had been washed overboard, and that, as every yachtsman knows, is a very awkward thing to have happen. A good sailor can rig up a tackle to remedy the defects, but for a woman, well, that would under ordinary circumstances be another matter, but it seems that Miss Wright is no ordinary woman, for she managed to overcome this accident and bring her boat in all right.”

“Another thing, the boat had been leaking and this source of danger, making its appearance in a critical part of the cruise, presented still another obstacle to the women out there alone on the rough lake. From what I can learn of that voyage, it was one that would have taxed to the utmost the courage and endurance of any two men in our club, yet after the girls had had a little rest, they put out to sea once more and finished the race, arriving at Mackinac in due season”.

“It seems that the Lady Eileen tossed about on the sea along with the other boats in the fleet and with the good say sail ship sailor ship of Miss Wright and her cousin might not have found the cruise such a hard one had not the Sloop begun to leak. After the boat was well out Miss Wright made the discovery that the cabin was filling with water”. (said George R Peare)

“This may have been because the upper part of the boat was dry, but at any rate the little cabin began to fill and Miss Wright had to devote all of her attention to pumping. This left Sally (Sara) Carey, the younger girl, to do the steering and while under some circumstances it might be uncomplimentary to say a yacht woman was seasick, under the circumstances it did it was not strange that the girl did experience a touch of that malady, and with this handicap she kept her place at the tiller all that night, while her companion was busy at the pumps trying to keep the boat from sinking by the weight of the water”.

“This then, was what the girls had to contend with, and as I said before, there is not a man in our club who does not admire her pluck and endurance, and, what is more, there is not a man in the organization but feels thankful that the young woman has found a worthy mate, for both our fond of the water and I have heard that the young man is fully as intrepid as his bride when it comes to matters of yachting. When we heard of the marriage we were all delighted. It was a romance, pure and simple, and the ending in is such as it should be. The story of their meeting and their courting, as well as their marriage reads like a romance”. (said George R Peare)

It seems as though Crawford's guiding star led him in this matter. Two or three days after the race was begun Crawford was cruising about on the lake when he cited a yawl boat drifting about on the waters. He towed the boat back to Chicago and after examining it, found the name Lady Eileen on it. He asked members of the club to whom the yawl belonged and they told him it was the property of Miss Evelyn Wright.

MEETS FUTURE HUSBAND

In due time Miss Wright returned to Chicago and Mr. Crawford was introduced. He returned the yawl to her and she thanked him. In the meantime the pluck of the young woman had been talked about in the club and this had come to the ears of the young man. After the return of the yawl Miss Wright and Mr. Crawford were much together and, in fact, at their first meeting the young man had asked her to take a sail with him on his handsome yacht, which, by the way, was one of the crack yachts exhibited at the world's fair.

From that time on the couple were thrown much together, and having so many tastes in common it is not at all surprising that they should finally be united for life. I have heard the young woman say several times that the man she married must be a good sailor and fond of the water, and I feel sure that her husband is all of that.

It has been remarked in the club several times that if lost yawls will bring about such a happy state of affairs, more of them ought to be washed overboard. There are several eligible bachelors in the club who, if they were only sure they would capture a prize in the matrimonial market, I am sure would be willing to weather a big storm, lose a yawl and undergo considerable danger.

The latest circumstance in the romantic love story of this pair is the early morning wedding in the hotel at Michigan's Gretna Green. The ceremony was performed in the presence of Miss Carey and the hotel clerk, the officiating clergyman being the Reverend H.S. Roblee of the Congregational Church.

The reason for dragging the clergyman from his bed at that hour was that the young woman failed to catch an early train from Chicago, hence was compelled to take a later one arriving at St. Joseph very early in the morning. The groom insisted that the ceremony should be performed, no matter what the delay had been, so the marriage was solemnized.

Mr. Rogers (Roblee?) had been staying at Royalton, his summer home, for some time and his fiancée was to meet him in St. Joseph, where they were to be wedded to the surprise of their relatives and friends.

It seems as though fate had a lot to do with the affair, for Crawford picked up that yawl away out on the lake and that was the means to, of his meeting his future wife. There were numerous other odd circumstances in this case that makes the romance of more than usual interest.

One of the prettiest parts of the romance is where the two met in Michigan's matrimonial mecca, at which time the young man proposed in a unique and delightful fashion. Miss Wright had moored the Lady Eileen among numerous other crafts and as she stepped away from the boat she saw that it was scraping sides with the long rangy Nanny; Crawford's yacht.

The young woman was a bit startled when someone remarked, it's strange how those two boats got together isn't it? The young woman, looking up, blushed when she recognized Crawford who said, perhaps we would be better let them remain that way always."