DESERET EVENING NEWS.

Published every day except Sunday at 4 p. m. Subscription price, in advance, $10.00 per year, $5.00 six months, 25 cents per week, prepaid or delivered by carrier.

DESERET SEMI-WEEKLY NEWS.

Published every Tuesday and Friday. Subscription price, in advance, per year, $5.00, six months $2.50, three months, $1.00; prepaid or delivered by carrier.

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A FALSE PROPHECY.

Would he prophesie tell us
We shall not cease?
Then that waited our failing
In the ways below?

Smoking, smoldering Topheth,
Sleeping, hopeless pillow
Dreary, make-sure prophecy
Fear, skin-peeling cancer!

Knowing not the Father,
What the prophecy? Grapes of earth mere gathers
Only thorns and thistles!
—George Macdonald in Cosmopolitan.

TORPEDO CUSHING.

HE WAS THE CUSTER OF THE UNION NAVY.

Intrepid Deeds of the Free Lance Sailor in North Carolina Waters—Held Robbs and Nerves Escapes—His Torpedo Exploit with the Ram Albemarle.

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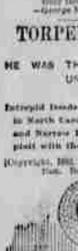

CUSHING was born in Wisconsin. Custer made Michigan his adopted home before he was twenty years, so the northwest claims those two heroes. The remarkable daring and impetuosity of the chief of the army was fairly paralleled by the chief of the navy. Custer had long flowing hair of the yellow golden hue; Cushing has not long golden hair, but it clings to the scalp and neck. Cushing was not picturesque in figure like Custer, although he possessed strong individual peculiarities of person. He boasted no Custer locks, his form slender and his face grave and thoughtful. His step and motion were springy and quick, and with his prominent high cheek bones, his piercing eye and restless habits he seemed to be another like some captified Indian in pristine guise.

Cushing was three years younger than Custer and entered upon blockading service like a meteor coming out of obscurity. He spent four years at the Naval academy and resigned on the eve of the war. He volunteered in May, 1861, and served as a petty officer in the north Atlantic blockading squadron until July, 1862, when a lieutenant's straps were given him for acts of bravery in his routine duties. Four months later and just as he scored twenty years he led his first expedition, a gunboat sail into New River inlet, North Carolina. His vessel was the little wooden steamer Ellis. Bird sat on a gunboat. With that he crossed the bar at high tide and entered a narrow river wholly in possession of active enemies. Ten miles from the bar the Ellis made a landing, pickets and guards were thrown out, the town of Jacksonville seized, with an important mail from Wilmington—a port virtually open to the world by reason of skillful blockade runners constantly passing in and out—and two schooners with a quantity of small arms were made prizes. The Confederates speedily learned of the raid and attempted to cut off all escape by closing the river between Jacksonville and the bar.

The Ellis dropped down stream with its prize schooners, but night came on before the bar was reached and the pilots refused to go on. Cushing answered the Ellis and prepared to fight. In the morning the enemy was sighted in position in the most dangerous pass of the river, and two cannon belonging to the little fleet. Cushing hoisted his battleflag, cut in shore, and in an hour's sharp action drove the Confederates from the bluffs and passed within the public city of Utah. The expedition was barely out of that danger when the Ellis ran aground and couldn't be lightened. Cushing took the schooners down the river inlet with the ammunition and stores of the gunboat and accompanied by all but six of his followers, and with a crew of only half a dozen prepared to defend his stranded ship. The following morning the enemy placed three guns on the bluff and speedily disabled the Ellis. Cushing then trained her guns upon the Confederate battery, set her on fire, and with his men pulled in an open boat to the schooners, a mile and a half away, with Confederate marksmen plying shots from the bluffs at the tempting target.

A few weeks after the affair in New river Cushing crossed the bar of Lockriver with a force of twenty-five men in three cutters. The purpose was to capture the pilots who served the blockade runners entering Wilmington. It was nightime, but the raid had been discovered, and after passing a mile or two up the river the cutters were fired upon from a bluff. Heading the boats, the crews were formed in column, and at Cushing's command, "Forward—double quick—charge!" they rushed up the banks through a strip of wood to a clearing fitted by campfires and occupied by a small earthen fort. With three cheers and a yell the sailors dashed upon the works, and the enemy ran off into the darkness. The raiders marched up the river bank, encountering more Confederates and expending all their ammunition fighting them off. They then returned to the boats and escaped with the loss of but one man in the night's exploits.

THE RAIDERS DASHED FROM THE WOODS.

Cushing's services were not wholly those of a free lance for between times he was on routine duty with the fleet, sometimes volunteering and again being chosen by superiors for fugitive exploits. In the summer of 1863 it was known on the blockading fleet that some Confederate steamer was frequent in some river in eastern North Carolina, and some torpedo boats in Cape Fear river around Wilmington, and on the night of June 23 Cushing set out from his ship Monticello in a cutter with two officers and fifteen men and crossed the bar, passing some forts and the town of Smithville without discovery. On the way his boat nearly collided with a blockade runner putting to sea, and also with a Confederate gunboat. The night was dark and it required the wakefulness of a fort full known as the Brunswick battery, when the moon suddenly emerges from a cloud and disclosed the strange craft to the enemy's sentinels as she flitted were fired at the cutter and the gunboat was alarmed. Cushing directed his men to pull to the opposite shore and proceed up the river. When within sight of Wilmington the boat was hidden in a marsh, and the party lay all next day with the sight of masts of Confederate steamers.

After dark the cutter took to the water and captured two contrabands filled with men, who proved to be fishermen from Wilmington. Cushing impressed them for guides and reconnoitered all the batteries and forts on the river. In his wanderings he struck the highway between Wilmington and Fort Fisher, and he waited to capture the mails between those points. The carrier from Fort Fisher was secured, but the Wilmington man on approaching the party in the road saw the stratagem and turned back. Cushing mounted the horse of the captured postman and chased the fugitive almost to Wilmington. While Cushing was away on his chase some of the sailors confiscated clothes with the captive mail man and were in readiness for food for the rebels, who were almost famished. His trip gave him a chance to gossip with the citizens and gain knowledge of the enemy.

After destroying the telegraph Cushing returned to his boat, sent his prisoners adrift and started down the river. He had discovered that the two Raleigh wire a hundred miles, the two North Carolina ironclads lacking her draft enough to admit of passing the bar to attack the Union blockading fleet, and that the Confederate torpedo boats had been destroyed during a storm. On the way from the entire was headed off by a gunboat and several small boats filled with men. It was night and the moon shone, and Cushing managed to run and double on his pursuers until he got a start on them, and by vigorous pewing dashed into the breakers at the Cape Fear inlet, where the enemy dare not follow. The cutter was so heavy that she entered the breakers and escaped to the fleet. On this last two days and three nights were spent in the enemy's territory.

Cushing's next expedition was a raid on a steamer in Stono inlet for the purpose of the same he was after happened to be away when he entered the port. One night in February, 1864, he entered Cape Fear river with one boat's crew and, passing past the guns of Fort Caswell and the Smithville batteries, landed above the village and stopped the mail coming from the headquarters at Fort Fisher, commanding the district, when unmasked and the expresses mailed to deliver up their persons, arms and papers. The prisoners were Wilmington, and two staff officers escaped.

THE ALBEMARLE DESTROYED.

ed to the steamers, one by running away and the other by taking long enough to be discovered and captured. The rebels aboard set the headquarters' shanty afire and escaped, with a Hessian ensign accompanied about them.

There could hardly have been two minutes or to the best man in the north Atlantic squadron to attempt the destruction of the terrible ram Albemarle that had twice defeated our fleet, driven our army and navy from Plymouth and proved a terror especially to the region of the Roanoke sound. Cushing was sent to New York to fit out torpedo boats for the purpose, and of course the courts got news of the design to sinke him in prisons. After many adventures, Cushing reached the mouth of the Roanoke river on the night of Oct. 27, 1864, with an outfit consisting of a steam launch about thirty feet long, mounting one howitzer and carrying forty-seven officers and men were all volunteers. On the bow of the launch was a new contrivance, consisting of a spar four-teen feet long, that could be raised or depressed by means of a cord in the hands of a man standing on the bow of the launch. On the end of the spar was an adjustable torpedo, to be detached and expended under water by means of a line and a lanyard.

The Roanoke was full of picket boats, but the launch managed to clear them and drive up at midnight in sight of the ram as she lay at wharf fully guarded by her consorts. A boom of logs extended all around her water side alone thirty feet from the hull. A body of troops was encamped on the shore with orders to stop the river in such an emergency. The crew of the ram was alert and her guns were loaded and trained. A fire burning on shore made the scene as light as day, and Cushing saw at a glance the desperation of his enterprise. He decided to pass the ram, land and board her, but his movement was detected and a hail given from the ram's deck. Without hesitating a moment he ordered his engineer to back full speed and strike the launch over the log boom. He took his post to handle the internal machine, and while the boat passed over the boom the Confederates opened fire from the wharf and from the decks of the doomed vessel. Cushing's clothes were riddled with shot, and the hand that was to pull the torpedo lanyard was cut by a bullet, but he steadied and handled the lines of the intricate machine so deftly as to place the torpedo under the ram's hull and explode it just as a mission to pass from hail hailed a repeated charge of sabers into the launch.

The ram was nearly wrecked. The boat's crew jumped into the water, Cushing and one other escaping after terrible experiences. Three others and a man were captured. Cushing's flight and escape through a region swarming with armed enemies and embittered by his daring exploit was as marvelous as the operation of the deed itself. After trying the steam machine he had its cock to save steam escape, throw off his accoutrements and plunge into the rolling river. After swimming until exhausted he landed in a swamp within sight of a fort.

In order to escape discovery when daylight came he crawled on his stomach for five hours through briers, brushwood, and logs, and at last sent the good fortune to find a skiff belonging to some Confederate pickets. Where lurks was necessarily discovered long enough for him to cut a from its fastenings and pull to safety a mile or two out of sight. There he was in and patient upon the river, eluding observation until he reached the John Rice fort in the sound, twenty miles distant. Long then his friends, supposing that he was a Confederate spy, or infernal machine, or one refused for some time to receive him. He was quite sick, as was the case of himself, however, that the lessons learned with subject of exploring the hearty choice of sailors rang over the nation and he was promoted up to Fleetwood to celebrate victory.

—George L. Rives.

What has become of the pearl years on the Wisconsin river? For a time it looked as though fresh water clams were going to furnish jewels for the whole country. Perhaps the clam is wise and has quit pearling in order to secure peace and length of days.

Doctors agree and disagree as to what we ought to eat or drink and how to dress, but all all times we may refer. We read, Cuvier and now comes the cheerful intelligence that we spell on a new plan, and some men say that any peculiarity of spelling is allowable so long as it is rational. Professor F. J. Child, of Harvard, says: "One of the most useful things just now is to break down the respect which a great English public has for the established spelling. Some have a religious awe and some have an earthborn passion for it. At present I don't much care how anybody spells. Any particular, individual spelling is likely to be more rational than the ordinary." As Professor Child is the foremost American authority on the English language, his opinion is most interesting. Mr. Lounsbury, the English professor at Yale, says that "no reflection among college tutors is more common in our respect for the proved orthography of the English tongue."

Fifty Thousand Schools to Lose.

A letter was recently sent out from Boston to the 1,000 city, county and village school superintendents in the United States. In this letter the superintendents were asked to present the plan for the celebration of Columbus Day on Oct. 21 to the teachers and pupils under their jurisdiction and report the number of schools in which the pupils organized their celebration of assuming the leadership of the local celebration.

Though these superintendents 50,000 public schools have already announced their determination to participate in the first great American public school festival.

Even many remote sections and sparsely settled communities so reported have yet been received. There is, however, no reason to doubt that our more than 200,000 public schools will be very largely represented in the local observances of Columbus Day.

There will of course be some schools lacking energy and enterprise which will permit themselves to take no part in this memorable event. The percentage, however, will not be large. We hope that no school in this county will be included in this latter class.

A Word for Drivers.

As soon as the weather is warm enough in the spring to enable children to play in the open air there are constantly recorded in the newspapers of every city and large town instances of the youngsters being run over, maimed and, in frequent cases, killed outright by passing teams. As once a cry goes up about "the slaughter of the innocents," the unhappy driver of the miscreant team is arrested for reckless driving, taken to a police court and fined and imprisoned, and happy if he escapes a conviction of manslaughter.

While every right minded and humane person feels that really careless drivers should be summarily punished, this matter is not so one sided as it appears in the sensational local report. The blame was given to that of an innocent, helpless child, harmlessly crossing or playing in the street, and a brutal, heartless teamster, car driver or coachman, utterly careless and cruel, driving recklessly over the poor innocent before it has time to get out of the way. While there are no doubt some bad and even intemperate drivers, it is just to say that this lamentable thing does not often happen in cases where children are run over. It may come to be clearly and distinctly the child's—and primarily its parents'—own fault.

In the more crowded streets of every large city, and especially in the tenement districts—the slums, where most of these accidents occur—the small children actually live out of doors—the streets swarm with them from morning till late at night. These children, generally untaught and precocious in evil, have no place to play but the streets. They can many carriage and cart drivers of all sorts by running before the horses.

It is a common thing to see—of the little miscreants lie in wait until a loaded team comes along at a good pace, and then suddenly dart out from the sidewalk and place itself directly in the way of the straining horses, glorying in the trouble and struggle of the driver, who is often unable to pull his horses almost upright in order to keep them from trampling the triumphant gamin, who impudently glares in the kindness and terror he has caused. An observant person can hardly walk three blocks on the sidewalk of any crowded street without seeing this done more than once.

It is to be hoped that there will soon come be a city who enough to make and enforce an ordinance forbidding children to play in the streets. Let them keep to the sidewalks; they will not be run over there.

A Lesson.

Mother (impressively)—The paper says that two bad, wicked boys, who were robbing birds' nests, were struck by lightning.

Small Boy—Yes'm. Trees is awful unsafe in a storm.—Good News.

An Observation.

We have noticed that when you tell a woman her daughter is just the image of her when she was that age the mother looks pleased and the daughter looks scared.—Exchange.

Tobacco is man's most universal luxury; the fragrant aroma of MASTIFF PLUG CUT starts people to pipe-smoking, even those who never used tobacco before.

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