

OLD LETTERS.

Old letters! Today I have been looking over these records of the past, and caught eagerly at one that was written by a prospective bride—Muriel Forester, a young girl, before whom life was lying, fair and bright.

And this letter was to bid me to the wedding—and, more important still, to be bridesmaid.

She added that Frederic Ashton was to be groomsmen, and ended with the prophecy that groomsmen and bridesmaids would together need the same service from their friends before the year was well over.

I did not believe it—was sure that I could never marry such a pompous fellow as Fred Ashton.

Moreover, I wanted someone else to be groomsmen.

I had a lingering affection for Charlie Ross, Muriel's cousin, and wondered that her intended husband, Mr. Prescott, had not chosen him.

I went to Fairfield the next day, fervently hoping that something would happen to keep Ashton from accepting.

I was not more pleased with the bridegroom whom Muriel was to marry.

Mr. Prescott was not a great man in any sense. He was feeble minded, tyrannical, and greatly her inferior in education.

To think of high-minded, high spirited Muriel being tied for life to him, was very painful to me.

But I was on the road to Fairfield when I thought of this, and it was of no use to regret it now that all preparations were made.

Muriel had not studied the man's nature, or she would never have been his betrothed.

She seemed endowed with a sharper instinct, however, as the wedding drew near.

Three days before, she came up into my room.

I had never seen her so pale.

She sat down, clenching her little hands together.

'Helen,' she gasped out, 'you may lay aside that dress. I shall not need it.'

I looked up wonderingly. It was her wedding robe.

'What does this mean?' I asked.

'It means that I shall never marry Owen Prescott!' she answered fiercely, almost defiantly, as if she thought I should gain say her words. 'His said that to me which I would never bear from a husband. I think him for having said it before it was too late.'

'But your mother. She will be distracted at losing her son, as she frequently called Mr. Prescott.'

'She will survive it,' answered Muriel; 'she must be content. It is inevitable. I cannot and will not marry him.'

She would not tell me how he had offended her; but she gathered up the jewels he had given her, and crushed them hastily into a box and said—

'Helen, go and give him these. You are my bridesmaid, you know, and must do my bidding.'

And she smiled a bitter smile at the conceit.

'Wait, Muriel,' I said. Do nothing in anger. You will feel differently, perhaps to-morrow.

She gave me such a look; I feel it now as I write.

'Helen, carry these yourself to Mr. Prescott. He is in the room below.'

'And you feel no relenting?'

'Not a jot. I would not marry him if he was a king. Go Helen; I cannot breathe while these jewels are in this room.'

I went, gave him the package, and sprang upstairs again before he could speak to me.

I did not want to hear him.

'Now, Helen, one thing more. Sit down at my desk and write to Fred. Ashton not to come.'

'I, Muriel? It is not our place to tell him. Mr. Prescott is the one.'

'No. He was to come to our house. I cannot see him now.'

'But I will not write to Mr. Ashton. So it was decided to let him come or stay, as fate might direct.'

But it was rare to see and hear Mrs. Forester, who thought herself called to endure a trouble heavier than she had ever borne before.

Such a disgrace, too!

Why, it would be in everybody's mouth. It was really shocking!

So she walked about wringing her hands, or came to sit in the chamber with Muriel and myself, from which every vestige of wedding fire had departed.

But to all her moanings, her daughter uttered no response.

On the night appointed, Fred Ashton came, and Muriel and he sat in secret session the whole forenoon of the following day.

I had thought him the most pompous and disagreeably silent person I ever knew; but after he came from that secret conference, his whole manner was changed.

He was even hilarious, and had a look of triumph that I could not understand.

Perhaps Muriel did; but she told me that Fred did not blame her in the least.

'What a shame!' I said, 'not to be sorry for Mr. Prescott's disappointment.'

The corners of Muriel's mouth drew themselves down with a cruelly exultant air, as she said a bitter word or two about her former lover.

'Well,' said I, 'one morning the following week, I see no use for a bridesmaid, so I will go home again.'

'Home! No, indeed, Helen, you shall not.'

This was Muriel's voice; and another said, 'No, Helen, you shall not go,' and this time it was Fred Ashton's.

I looked up with a saucy air.

'And pray what is it to you?' I asked.

But he had gone, and Muriel was blushing desperately.

Of course, the whole neighbourhood was wide awake, commenting upon the broken-off marriage.

Muriel kept within doors, unwilling that they should make remarks in her presence.

Mrs. Forester, on the contrary, was asking pity and sympathy from all she met, and saying 'Poor, dear Muriel!' at each turn of a sentence, until her daughter felt perfectly sure that she was the laughing stock of the town.

Then, the wedding-gate? Such an expense for nothing!

Muriel advised her mother to sell it—at which Mrs. Forester cried.

'Then, for pity's sake, have a wedding and use it yourself, mamma,' said the daughter, now baited almost beyond endurance by her mother's foolish plaints.

It was astonishing what a long time it took for Mr. Frederic Ashton to understand the bearings of Muriel's case.

Night after night the secret conferences were renewed, at which times I was wholly at the mercy of Mrs. Forester compelled to hear the story repeated, with the same doleful remarks, over and over again.

Every day, too, he looked out at Mr. Prescott, with a strange, triumphant smile, that must have been unendurable to the latter.

Yet I knew nothing of the truth, and could only make a faint surmise, that might have been far from it.

Muriel kept her own counsel, and I had no one but Mrs. Forester to ask, and did not choose to do that.

Fred Ashton was gone one morning, when his absence was perfectly unexpected; and Muriel called me into her room to help her to make a new dress.

She locked the door, and unburdened herself of a secret.

Fred loved her.

As if that was a secret to me!

But there was another behind it, and that was the love of Muriel for him.

She besought me not to tell her mother; there would be no end to the talk.

If they could only be married, and no one hear of it until they were gone away, it would be grand.

And I sat down to the plain, neat traveling dress which was to supersede the rich white satin.

I wondered in my heart who her this was to be a happier marriage than the other would have been and I came to the conclusion that it would.

Fred Ashton was not the stiff and solemn being I had thought him.

He was witty, generous, good-tempered, and not at all exacting.

Could Muriel ask more?

I told her what I thought of him, and she was excessively gratified, because she had thought so long that I had disliked him.

It was this that had prevented an earlier confidence.

I entered into all her plans, and we worked well until Fred's return.

Mrs. Forester thought he came purposely to condole with her in her grief at Muriel's misfortune, and received him gladly.

One look at my face convinced him that I was to be trusted, and we all passed a happy evening.

'I have a friend coming here, Helen,' he said to me, after Mrs. Forester had retired. 'Perhaps you know him. Charlie Ross.'

I started, and foolishly blushed.

What in the world was he coming for? I wondered and wondered in vain; but the train brought him next day.

Muriel had ordered a dress for me like her own, and just at nine the next morning when we had packed and corded our trunks, a handsome carriage stood at the door.

We were ready dressed, and Fred handed Muriel down stairs, and Charlie Ross and I were soon standing in the church beside the bride pair.

Mrs. Forester knew it only ten minutes before, when Fred drew her aside and overruled all her objections to the suddenness of the matter, by explaining that he was obliged to travel north in order to take possession of some property left him by a relative.

She was too astonished to cry—too pleased at his accession of riches to scold Muriel.

The wedding passed off very pleasantly, and our tour was a delightful one.

What was our surprise on our return to find Mrs. Forester on the point of marriage herself!

It was very romantic, and quite suited her style.

The bridegroom elect was an old lover whom she had once discarded.

He had been married, had recently lost his wife, and had come opportunely to soothe all Mrs. Forester's griefs about Muriel.

Mr. Prescott has never married, but Charlie Ross and myself have been for many years.

And so I lay away Muriel's faded letter, and am just going down to dine with her and talk over the old story.

BORN.

Halifax, Sept. 29, to the wife of Max Well, a son.
St. John, Sept. 30, to the wife of W. H. Reid, a son.
Woodville, Sept. 21, to the wife of Edson Wood, a son.
Edmonton, Sept. 9, to the wife of Rev. P. K. McRae, a son.
Salem, C. Co., Sept. 29, to the wife of John Willis, a son.
Grand Pre, Sept. 16, to the wife of Edw. B. Leard, a daughter.
Amherst, Sept. 26, to the wife of Wm. Fanning, a daughter.
Lunenburg, Sept. 23, to the wife of Angus Smith, a daughter.
Lunenburg, Sept. 15, to the wife of Elijah Berringer, a daughter.
Tatamagouche Bay, to the wife of Hugh McDonald, a daughter.
North Sydney, Sept. 11, to the wife of Thomas Grant, a son.
Fort Dufferin, Sept. 25, to the wife of William Currie, a son.
Lunenburg, Sept. 24, to the wife of Joseph S. Veinot, a son.
Hantsport, Sept. 23, to the wife of Ezra McCumber, a son.

b. r. a daughter.
Windsor Forks, Sept. 20, to the wife of Leslie Taylor, a daughter.
Springhill Mines, Sept. 26, to the wife of D. C. Matheson, a son.
Hickwood Mills, Sept. 23, to Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay, a son.
Munquodobit Harbor, Sept. 17, to the wife of Amos Guild, a son.
Hantsport, Sept. 28, to Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Barry, a daughter.
Somerville, Mass., Sept. 16, to the wife of Fred Boyd, a daughter.
Lunenburg, Sept. 18, to the wife of Capt. Edward Lyle, a daughter.
Bridgewater, Sept. 25, to Mr. and Mrs. George Arthur, a daughter.
Windsor Forks, Sept. 26, to Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Johnson, a daughter.
Yarmouth, Sept. 31, to the wife of Rev. Edwin Crowell, a daughter.
Bridgewater, Sept. 22, to the wife of Forrester Forbes, a daughter.
West Manchester, Sept. 21, to the wife of Duncan W. Cummings, a son.
Kingston, Ont., to the wife of Capt. D. I. Eaton, R. C. A., a daughter.
Munquodobit Harbor, Sept. 22, to the wife of John Rowling, a daughter.

MARRIED.

Quincy Mass., Sept. 21, Arthur W. Ryder to Ellen May McPhail.
Great V. N. S., Sept. 27, F. Lawson Jinks to Miss Winnie Johnston.
Esfield, Sept. 27, by Rev. Fr. Young, Peter Murphy to Miss McDonnell.
Bass River, Sept. 20, by Rev. W. H. Ness, Alex. Fulton to Miss Fulton.
Amherst, Sept. 27, by Rev. J. L. Batty, Wm. S. Batty to Miss L. Floyd.
Amherst, Sept. 25, by Rev. W. J. Mihan, Adolphus White to Leah Cormier.
Parrsboro, Sept. 27, by Rev. Fr. Butler, Lawrence Hannon to Sarah Gilderson.
Shag Harbour, Sept. 23, by Elder Wm. Halliday O'Carroll to Mary Smith.
Boston, Sept. 24, by Rev. Wm. B. Forbush, Willard S. J. Frey to Iz. D. Jenkins.
Omaha, U. S., by Rev. Campbell Fair, Cecil Victor Brock to Jessie May Munro.
Beaver Brook, Sept. 20, by Rev. L. W. Parker, Fred Loughead to Annie Crowe.
Mapleton, Sept. 23, by Rev. Joseph Siller, Sidney J. Matinson to Grace M. Lodge.
Amherst, Sept. 25, by Rev. J. L. Batty, Hampton L. Briggs to Blanche McGlashan.
Port Hawkesbury, Sept. 13, by Rev. W. Purvis, Robert McKinnon to Mary Waid.
Bridgewater, Sept. 20, by Rev. H. Burgess, John Giddon to Lydia May Cross.
Wentworth, Sept. 27, by Rev. J. B. Heal, George Good to Isabella J. Warwick.
Caledonia, Sept. 20, by Rev. C. F. Cooper, J. William Douglas to Annie Edna Cole.
Pugwash, Sept. 26, by Rev. A. D. McIntosh, Frank Brown to Miss Catherine McLeod.
Wolville Highlands, Sept. 20, by Rev. Mr. Spidel, W. J. Duncanson to Minnie Miner.
Port Greenville, Sept. 22, by Rev. D. H. McQuarrie, Clarence Clements to Lily Wilson.
Halifax, Sept. 20, by Rev. C. McKinnon, J. Creighton Mitchell to Margaret J. Smith.
Parrsboro, Sept. 20, by Rev. D. H. MacQuarrie, Wm. E. Gilbert to Lizzie Schroeter.
Hopewell, C. P., Sept. 25, by Rev. F. D. Davidson John E. Atkinson to Lucy Donville.
Wolville, Sept. 27, by Rev. F. McDonald, Don Carlos Hinton to Margaret Archibald.
Gro's Point, C. B., Sept. 25, by Rev. T. C. Jack, John McPherson to Sarah A. Morrison.
Coversdale, Sept. 28, by Rev. J. Millen Robinson, William H. Edgett to Jennie B. Steeves.
Mount Pleasant, Cumberland Co., by Rev. A. F. Baker, John Pritchard to Theresa Chase.
Munquodobit, Sept. 17, by Rev. F. W. Thompson, Wm. R. Hinton to Susanah Hamilton.
Liverpool, Sept. 21, by Rev. J. B. Hemmison, Wendell P. Smith to Carrie Blanche Hemmison.
Salmon River, Digby Co., by Rev. Alph. Cote, Benjamin G. Gaudet to Ev. Angeline Deveau.
Pubnico, Sept. 18, by Rev. L. E. Duchesneau, Mr. Alex. Pelletier to Madeleine D'Entremont.
Cumberland, Sept. 20, by Rev. W. E. McLeod, George Clark to Martha A. Brown.
Mitchell, Ont., Sept. 27, by Rev. R. Whiting, Miss Henrietta Phinimore to Rev. J. W. Akins.
New Minas, Sept. 20, by Rev. B. N. Nobles, S. Homer Daniels to Daisy Blanche Tomlinson.
Campbellton, Sept. 13, by Rev. J. A. Ives, Alexander Hammond to Emily Murray Price.
St. John, Sept. 28, by Rev. Louis B. Wallon, John N. Morgan to Flora Parker Bishop.

DIED.

Halifax, Sept. 29, John Dacy 65.
Green Oak, Sept. 19, John Dart 69.
Pictou, Sept. 19, Simon Cameron 87.
Waterville, N. S., Simon Cameron 87.
Lunenburg, Sept. 25, Lewis Hirtle 78.
Hampton, Sept. 23, Maggie Ingledoo 65.
Sheila, Sept. 21, Neil Sutherland 64.
Liverpool, Sept. 21, Wm. A. Kenney 72.
Port Howe, Sept. 23, Joseph O'Brien 62.
Yarmouth, Sept. 5, David V. Landers 75.
St. John, Oct. 2, Margaret Montgomery 70.
Annapolis, Sept. 15, James McLoughlin 66.
Fredericton, Sept. 30, George E. Fenety 87.
South Boston, Sept. 27, Alexander Wells 50.
Jacksontown, Sept. 11, Randolph Hannah 36.
Sussex, Sept. 24, Daisy P. Crothers 6 months.
New Castle, N. B., Aug. 31, Thomas Mullins 69.
North Sydney, Sept. 25, Capt. Danl. McKay 69.
Admiral Rock, N. S., Sept. 20, John Williams 77.
Amherst, N. S., Sept. 29, Joseph W. Trenholm 26.
Weymouth, Sept. 18, Mary, wife of Jas. Cosman 51.
Montreal, Sept. 26, Chas. H. son of James Reardon 26.
Port Hastings, C. B., Sept. 23, Dona D. McQuarrie 2 weeks.
Halifax, Sept. 29, Mabel L. son of Alfred White 2 weeks.
East Noel, Sept. 3, Esther B. child of Douglas Hines 2.
Mill Village, Sept. 27, Eleanor, wife of Benjamin Mack 93.
Minas Pretas, Mexico, Aug. 16, William B. Ruth 35.
St. Stephen, Sept. 20, Ethel M. daughter of Harry Burpee 6.
Maugerville, Sunbury Co., Sept. 15, Mrs. Charles Perley 84.
Noel, Sept. 13, Alton E. child of Capt. P. Bezanson 15 months.
New Glasgow, Sept. 26, Elizabeth, wife of N. P. Old 72.
Springville, Sept. 15, Mary, widow of A. ex. McDonald 92.
Lunenburg, Sept. 21, Adeline, daughter of Wilbur Rawley 34.
Wolville, Sept. 18, Lois R. widow of the late Jas. P. J. 96.
North Sydney, Sept. 25, Lizzie, daughter of John McDonald 35.
Campobello, Sept. 6, Daniel G. infant son of Clement Seelye 2.
Pictou, Sept. 19, Sarah, widow of the late James Thompson 83.
Newton, Kings Co., Sept. 23, Leah M. wife of Andrew S. Pearce 53.
Everett, Mass., Sept. 24, Florence M., wife of Fred McDonald 22.
Windsor, Sept. 23, Lillmore L. infant child of T. W. Marsers 6 months.
Westville, Sept. 22, Emeline R. daughter of Donald McNeil 10 months.
Munquodobit Harbor, Sept. 20, Fred M. son of James E. Annand 4.
Or. Mont., N. B., Oct. 1, William W. son of Stephen H. Estabrooks.
Amherst, Sept. 28, Lyla V. infant daughter of Frank Longhrey 4 months.
Grand Bay, Kings Co., Sept. 30, Margaret, widow of the late Thomas Morrish 30.



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Lve. Yarmouth 3:45 a.m., arr. Digby 11:28 a.m.
Lve. Digby 11:48 a.m., arr. Halifax 5:30 p.m.
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Lve. Digby 3:30 p.m., arr. Annapolis 4:50 p.m.

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Express for Halifax, New Glasgow and Pictou.....7.25
Express for Moncton.....11.00
Express for Moncton, Quebec and Montreal.....13.10
Express for Quebec, Montreal, and St. John.....17.40
Accommodation for Moncton, Truro, Halifax, and Sydney.....22.30

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