

PROPOSED & ACCEPTED BY WIRELESS TELEGRAPH



*Will you marry me?
answer at the club
Bob*

rushed out through the baggage sheds into Madison avenue, leaped into his auto, which he had ordered by telegraph and, ignoring law, he threw on the power and shot down the street swaying dizzily into Forty-second street and rushing down Fifth avenue at a speed that caused early morning pedestrians to flee in terror. Ten minutes later the auto dashed up in front of the Ashton residence, and the family had gone. Phil had been wrong about the time of sailing. The man at the door was sure the boat sailed at 9 o'clock.

There remained 42 minutes to reach Pier 51 in the North river, and Bob started after the record. He would have made the pier easily, but at the Broadway and Twenty-third street intersection a policeman pulled him down. Seven minutes of raging, arguing, and pleading were lost and then the auto started down Fifth avenue again, hitting the speed as soon as out of sight of the policeman who had caused the trouble. Bob was raging inwardly. He swung down Fourteenth street, scattering the growing rush to work, and tore down the Hudson. The trucks and heavy wagons interfered with his progress as he neared the river and, swerving across into Jane street he made the last spurt. The auto stopped with a jar outside the pier shed and Bob, leaping out, rushed through and to the pier itself. The lines had been cast off, the gang planks drawn in, and amid the handkerchief shaking crowd at the rail Bob failed to catch a glimpse of Mary. Nor did she see the excited man rushing around trying to get a tug to take him to the liner.

Missed His Love by Two Minutes.

Half an hour later a exhausted Bob started back up town. He was sad and bitter. He thought he had lost his love by a two minute margin and he was tempted to run

MARY ASHTON and "Bob" Collins of New York will be married in the cathedral at Rheims next week as the climax of a wireless telegraph romance.

Collins lost, won, lost and won the girl in five days—and then, across the ocean from the Etruria, three flashed by wireless telegraph three letters that turned Collins from the unhappiest young man in New York into the "happiest man on earth" and started him flying towards the Lusitania, the next boat to sail, that he might get near enough to the girl who wrote the three letters to receive the kiss which should, by all means, accompany the word and which cannot be sent wireless.

The wireless romance commenced in New York years and years ago when Bob Collins and Mary Ashton attended the same kindergarten in upper Fifth avenue. Later Mary, who had become transformed into Miss Ashton, went away to Wellesley and Bob went to New Haven.

They still tell stories around Mory's of Bob and his doings and carryings on, and the Yale faculty records contain mention of his name in connection with certain inquiries of which the public knows nothing.

Couldn't Outgrow His College Age.

But—at any rate Bob came back to his home a man, a graduate, ready to take up his life work, and instead of taking it up he remained chiefly interested in football and track events and the eight oared race, which, it is said by those who know, is bad for a man after he has left the school. About that time, too, Mary was "finished." She returned to her home, looking forward to social triumphs and not backward to her school days, and backed by the family money and her own undoubted beauty she at once stepped into her place with a train of satellites.

Bob, big, husky, pipe smoking, careless Bob, who couldn't outgrow his college period, one day met Mary—and the expected happened. Bob forgot track teams, he forgot baseball, football, the crew. He even forgot Mory's and the varsity and all he could think of was a healthy, happy, sunbrowned girl—the same girl with whom he had played "good morning dear teachers" and "I put my right foot in, I put my right foot out, I give my right foot shake, shake, shake, and turn my self about" at kindergarten. He remembered, strangely through the mist of years, the peculiar grace of that right foot and of the turning about of the black haired, black eyed girl and he tried to imagine this same glorious young woman turning herself about.

Became a "Pink Tea Boy."

So it came to pass that Bob suddenly forsook the Yale club and his other "hang outs" and became a "pink tea boy," much to the disgust of his fellows, who sucked their bulldog pipes vigorously and discussed his downfall.

The story might have been an extremely ordinary one only Miss Mary Ashton wasn't at all an ordinary girl. She had ideals of men and she had ideals of girls—and Bob somehow, didn't fit into her ideals at all. To be frank she thought Bob was a useless member of society and, having

a lot of money of her own, the fact that he was rich was of minor importance to her.

Last fall, while they were together on a yachting cruise down the sound, Bob asked Mary the question which he had been planning to ask for several months and he received a shock which upset him. She used two letters instead of three and Bob left the yacht at Newport without explanation and, running up to New Haven joined out with the "gang," and was received with open arms.

The details of his proposal and Mary's refusal are unknown—but everybody understood that she had rejected him and—it is known—most of them were sorry, for they felt that the young people were well matched.

He Wouldn't Be a Friend to Her.

So Mory's knew Bob again and the Lambs rejoiced at his return to the fold—nor regretted that he had ceased blustering at the hem of a skirt and begun to turn into a black sheep again. He did not write, or call, or go near Mary's house again—and she was hurt. She had offered to be a friend to him, and he had rejected the offer.

One principal reason that Bob never went near the Ashton residence after that was the fact that a certain Englishman, of good family and in line for a title when some gouty old relative died, had usurped his place in the house. Of this Bob learned from other men and thereupon proceeded to act like a sophomore with a new check from home.

The fact of the matter is that Mary, having pecked

Bob off about his business, suddenly awoke to the realization that, after all, Bob was the only man in the world for whom she cared. The more she saw of the smooth, well dressed Englishman, with his quiet voice and soft manner, the more she missed Bob's cheerful laugh and the sight of his huge, awkward body sprawling over chairs.

No Sympathy from Her Brother.

And, the night that the Englishman asked her to be his wife she looked up at him and tried to picture Bob's jolly face and curly hair, and failed. She asked the Englishman to wait for his answer one week and that night she lay wide awake thinking. At breakfast the next morning her eyes were red and her brother Phil, a freshman at Yale and a great admirer of Bob, mentioned the fact with great brotherly feeling.

"Been crying your eyes out because you're going to marry that big stiff of a Britisher, have you?" he said.

"Phil!" remonstrated his mother.

"Well, she has," remarked the boy. "She's just marrying him because she's at outs with Bob. I don't see why in thunder she couldn't marry him."

"I've not been crying and I'm not in love with Bob and I haven't accepted Mr. Marsden yet," said Mary severely.

"Aw, get out," said Phil. "If you haven't you're going to."

"Philip," said his father. "You should not speak that way to your sister."

That ended the argument.

It happened that Phil had run down from New Haven to say good-by to his mother and sister, who were sailing on Thursday for a visit to Northern Italy, and the English suitor, discovering this, had changed his plans so as to sail with them on the Etruria. Mary had calculated at first on escaping him during the voyage, but he had made the arrangements before he proposed and she had known that he would get his answer when three days out from New York.

Mary had made up her mind. If Bob came to see her again before she sailed she would say no to the Englishman. If he failed to come she would say yes.

His Fate Depended on His Presence.

On Wednesday, the day before she was to sail, Phil was preparing to run back to New Haven. He came plunging down stairs with his golf bag and his suit case, gave his mother and sister a bear hug and a kiss each and began to get ready to rush for his train.

"Phil," said Mary a little tremulously, "if you see Bob please tell him I am sailing tomorrow."

"Say, Sis," said Phil, hugging her, "why the thunder don't you pass up that Britisher and marry Bob?"

"Please don't talk that way Phil," she said, a little weakly.

"All right," said Phil, with a sudden idea breaking upon his mind. "I'll see old Bob tonight, and tell him to trot along down here, that you're sorry."



Mary Ashton

"Phil Ashton! If you do anything of the sort I'll never speak to you again," said Mary indignantly.

"All right. Have your own way," said Phil. "I've done my best to make you happy."

He fell back upon his brotherly dignity and shortly thereafter said good-by and ran off to catch his train.

Her Brother Intervenes.

But Phil was determined. He scoured New Haven for some trace of Bob and finally found him after midnight with a crowd of fellows at one of the society houses. Phil, being a freshman, could not enter, but his card brought Bob hurrying out to the door.

"I wanted to see you on important business," announced Phil.

"Fire away," said Bob.

"Let's take a walk so I can tell you."

They walked half a block and then Phil said:

"Bob, Mary's just dying to see you again. She sails at 10 o'clock this morning on the Etruria."

"Did she say she wanted to see me?" demanded Bob, grabbing him by the arm.

"No, she told me not to say so."

"All right, Phil, old man, thanks. I'll see you when I get back."

Like a shot Bob was gone. Half an hour later he was rushing toward the Shore line station only to find his train gone and two more hours to wait.

It was 3 o'clock and no train until 6. He must be in New York by 8 and the train would land him there, he knew.

At 6 an excited man climbed on to the train and sat puffing nervously cigar after cigar until the train loomed across the viaduct, into the tunnel and rushed humming down into the station at Forty-second street.

Wild Chase in an Auto.

Bob was off the front platform of the first sleeper before the train came to a halt. Leaping across tracks he

down the policeman who had stopped him.

That night friends who spoke to Bob at the club went away and said nasty things about his beastly temper. Nor was that temper improved the next morning or the next, the day on which, although he knew it not, Mary Ashton was going to say "Yes" to her Englishman.

At breakfast on Wednesday morning Bob Collins was reading a newspaper, or rather jerking it to pieces and filling in the intervals by abusing the waiter. Suddenly his eye fell upon a word. Like a man inspired he leaped to his feet and ran from the club breakfast room out to the telephones.

An instant later he was demanding of the telephone girl to connect him with the Cunard offices.

"Hello, Hello," he said. "Is there a wireless plant on the Etruria?"

"Yes," responded the man at the other end.

"Thanks. That's all I want to know," said Bob and, an instant later he was hurrying across town to the offices of the company.

As a result there flashed from New York to a station on the New England coast this message:

"Miss Mary Ashton, Etruria—Will you marry me? Answer at club. Bob."

"That's the first wireless proposal I ever heard of," said the operator.

"I'll prevent a loveless marriage," remarked Bob.

Hour after hour Bob wandered miserably about the club. Every ten minutes he walked up and looked suspiciously at the clerk as if suspecting him of holding out a telegram. He loathed alone in an agony of suspense.

Then he tried to inquire casually for a telegram at the office, after which he telephoned the wireless people to see if any message had been received.

At 3 o'clock he gave up and went out for a walk, cutting all his best friends whom he met. He walked around town for half an hour, then he was drawn back to the club.

"Message for you sir," said a boy as Bob sat down.

Bob tore open the envelope and read: "Y-E-S." He caught the Saturday boat.