

# LITTLE RALPH WILLIAMS PERFORMS ACT OF HEROISM IN THE WAIKIKI SURF

"You go and dive for my father, he is drowning, I'll take the woman in."

These were the words of little Ralph Williams, the newest member of the Outrigger club as he strove to save the life of Mrs. Carlson at Waikiki beach Saturday afternoon while he pleaded with his companion to save the life of a man who had sunk beneath the waters and whom he believed was his father.

It was a dramatic rescue from start to finish. Three months ago young Ralph Williams, the son of the new Episcopal rector of St. Clement's, could not swim a stroke. Lately he has been one of the Outrigger youngsters who go out daily to battle the waves. Ralph had just come in at sundown from the big surf and was dragging his board up on the beach, when from far out came cries for help. The boy thought someone was playing in the surf.

Alexander Hume Ford was also on the beach in his bathing suit and, seizing the smallest canoe on the beach by its outriggers, he ran down the strand with it and plunged into the water. Calling to young Williams to follow on his board he paddled for the two heads that bobbed up and down at sea.

It was seen now, by those ashore, that there were three drowning people, two men and a woman. From everywhere people now hurried to the beach. The little canoe and the board raced for the drowning trio. The canoe reached one man and the woman as the man had given up and was going down while the woman floated for a moment and sunk. Ford succeeded in supporting the man and woman by holding on to the canoe until Ralph Williams arrived with the board, when placing the unconscious woman on the board he turned to the man.

"Never mind about me," cried the drowning man. "I'll try to hold on to the board, but there's a man out there, he's gone down."

"My father is out there, there is no one else," cried young Williams. "You go and dive for my father, I'll take the woman in."

Ford knew that he could leave both the man and the woman to such a boy, so he clambered into the cockle shell canoe and paddled out to dive for the man who had given his life in an attempt to save a woman. But the water was murky, and after one leap in the water Ford found that, where it had been shoulder deep a few weeks ago, an ocean current had washed away the sand until it was beyond his depth. Once more he got into the canoe and paddled back, to secure the native diving boys. He found young Williams still handling the two drowning people, the woman on his board and the man clinging to it, the boy pushing the board forward as hard as he could through water beyond his depth. Shal-

low water was reached at last and Duke Kahanamoku came up and took the woman on his board until he could lift her in his arms and wade to the beach, the man in the meantime seeking to care for himself, but tired out he was seized with cramps and again the little canoe had to go to his rescue.

Finally both the drowning people were safely brought to the beach and the native boys were sent out in a canoe to search for the missing body of the drowned man, who it was learned from White, who was rescued, was bugler Shaffer from the Colorado. The two men from the Colorado were in swimming and heard the cry of a woman in distress. They put out in her direction and found Mrs. Carlson struggling in the waves far beyond her depth. White was the better swimmer and took charge of the woman. He knew his chum was drowning, but could not let the woman go. He called for help, but the place was far out and it is probable that the first cries were not heard.

The native boys searched for the body in a canoe, but on account of the muddiness of the water believed that it would be useless to dive and feel along the bottom. A patrol was sent from the Colorado to search for the body, but up to this morning it had not been recovered.

Speaking of the rescue this morning Alexander Hume Ford said: "To realize that a thirteen-year-old boy could display the true grit and bravery shown by young Williams must make every member of the Outrigger club feel proud of the organization that develops such youngsters. The little chap believed that his father was drowning, but he had been given the duty of saving the life of a woman and he stuck to it. Alone for at least five minutes this little fellow in water beyond his depth kept an unconscious woman on his surf board, while a drowning man also clung to the little plank, and he drove that board with its human freight toward shore and reached shallow water before any grown person was successful in getting out to give a hand. It is something for a small boy to have to his credit that, new to the ocean, he has saved two human lives, but, come to think of it, it has invariably been the small boys at Waikiki that have done the life saving. There are the Hustace boys with a score of life savings to their credit, and none of them twenty years of age yet. But I take off my hat to young Ralph Williams. He believed his father was drowning but did not for a moment desert the woman under his charge or swerve a second from his duty. I am proud of the Outrigger club and the manly boys it develops."

Next Saturday night Kauai bowls a tournament with Maui.