

might go, provided I would do anything they asked without crying, and wouldn't be "forever changing into fancy clothes."

I bought four identical corduroy skirts and twelve dark-blue shirtwaists made exactly alike. I changed my clothes often and managed to stay fresh and clean, but how I accomplished it the men never knew. The bathtub I had looked forward to using was being used for a coal bin, so I doused as best I could in the cold Mississippi waters.

They made me pay my passage, at first. They forced me to take a chew of tobacco, and to bite the head off a captured fish, but when they found I didn't cry and didn't fuss, they accepted me as one of them, and from then on I was one with Carl and his friends. I won my point right there—on the Mississippi. I became one of his crowd.

They were like him, a high-powered, hard-swearing and lovable crew, and Carl was at his best among them. They were always wrestling or playing practical jokes. They laughed all the time; only Carl never laughed aloud—he just grinned, deepening his dimples, his broad shoulders shaking with inner merriment.

No one, not even Carl's partner, Jim Allison, understood how Carl managed to keep the details of his many affairs in his mind, nor how, in a moment, he could forget them all and enter into the gustiest sort of nonsense. He was always planning, always building dreams for the future, and yet was always ready to drop everything to play with his friends.

There were other "friends," I discovered later, pushing their way toward the magic aura that surrounded Carl Fisher. There was a saying that every man Carl touched on the shoulder became a millionaire. It was to seem to me later that everyone wanted something of him, to show him some new invention, ask his advice or work for him, hoping some of the Fisher magic would rub off on them. There were also those who fawned and flattered, who offered nothing and asked for much, and there would come a time when I was to wonder if perhaps these would win in the end.

But there was no shadow of this on the trip down the Mississippi. Christmas—my first Christmas with Carl—we spent in New