

# Midland Daily Telegraph

COVENTRY

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1937

ONE PENNY

## GIRL'S LONE NIGHT SWIM

### Parlourmaid Crosses the Solent

#### AMBITION REALISED AT LAST

A girl in a bathing costume staggered across the sands from the sea at Ryde, Isle of Wight, just before midnight last night in an exhausted condition, and told a taxi driver, "I have just swum from Portsmouth alone."

The distance is some four miles, and there are very bad currents.

The venturesome swimmer is Miss Louise Horna, 21, an Austrian parlourmaid employed by Mrs. Gander Dower, of Palace Gate, Kensington, London, who was on holiday with her mistress at Redwalls, Hayling Island.

Miss Horna explained that she had a tremendous urge to swim the Solent, and had made a previous attempt but was brought back by a speedboat.

Last night she deposited her clothes at the Clarence Pier, Southea, telling the attendant that she was going for a short swim.

This was about 6.30, and then, unaccompanied and without knowledge of the tides, she swam for 5½ hours, the greater part in darkness.

After being given hot food the girl was given accommodation at the police station, and to-day returned to Hayling Island.

### **THOUGHT SHE WAS A SPY?**

"Thank goodness she is safe. I was just going to telephone the police and inform them that the girl was missing," was Mr. Ronald Gander Dower's exclamation when a Press Association reporter told him of Miss Horna's exploit.

"It is a very dangerous bit of water and there is a lot of shipping. The swim and the fact that the girl was unaccompanied as a feat is really magnificent. Miss Horna came to us a few months ago as a servant. She was eager to learn English and her permit will soon be up. She is an exceptionally charming girl and a very strong swimmer.

"We did not know anything about her swimming capabilities until we went down to Hayling Island.

"Now that she is safe, her determination to swim over to the Isle of Wight is rather amusing. Recently she tried to swim out to the fort. She was stopped near the fort by a police launch. The officers spoke to the swimmer and found that she spoke broken English. They immediately ordered her to get into the launch, warned her about the dangers of swimming in the Solent unaccompanied and took her back to the shore. I rather think the officers thought this was a new type of spy scare."

### **LINER PASSED CLOSE BY**

When she addressed the taxi driver, the girl was very cold and suffering badly from cramp. She explained "I have always wanted to do this trip," and collapsed.

The taxi driver put her into his vehicle ran the engine to produce warmth and drove her to a milk bar for hot refreshment. As she recovered she surprised him by producing a ten shilling note from the pocket of her bathing costume.

She stated that the current changed at least half a dozen times and that once she became very alarmed as a liner passed close to her.

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