

UNCLE OWEN'S WIFE

By COL. JOHN K. MUSICK.

CHAPTER XV. DE MIDNIGHT APPEAL.

The marriage of Uncle Owen was a surprise to everybody, but it was a thunderbolt to Lucretia and her son, John Redgrave, who were sitting at the table.

"That was much easier said than done. If they went, where should they go? Lucretia Redgrave being a second wife, she would not be allowed to go with them."

"Yes, and bringing another scandal," said Uncle Owen. "Hain't we got scandal enough on our name? Why, I'm not ashamed of my family."

"But the matter prevailed on him to let her try her plans, though he did so reluctantly, and went to the village to engage a man to carry her."

"When Uncle Owen brought his wife home Mrs. Redgrave gave them a cold welcome. The next day she began to work on a plan to get her son back."

"Well, I reckon you want the keys of the house, so you can look after the things yourself? I have been Owen's housekeeper for now for 15 years, and I think you'll find everything in a nice way."

"Malina raised her brown eyes to the woman in astonishment. She had not thought of keys, or housekeeping, or the love for which Malina had so long yearned was all that dwelt on her mind."

"Uncle Owen was away, and Malina was alone with her son. 'I don't understand you,' she said finally. 'I thought I spoke plain enough,' declared Mrs. Redgrave. 'I suppose you want the keys of the house?'

"Why should I want the keys?" asked Malina. "You want to look after the house yourself? No, I don't know that I care to do it."

"Not look after your own house?" cried Mrs. Redgrave. "What a curious creature you are."

"For the present," said Malina gently, "I will be as good as to do it for me. I fear her son will never live happily in the same house with her."

"My dear, try for my sake, and if you can't live happily in the same house with her, we will go some way to live apart from her. The world is wide."

"Little did the husband and wife dream that a keen ear was listening to all they said. Had they been aware of this, they would have been miserable under the same roof with Mrs. Redgrave. 'Won't you send her away?'

Then Malina said to Uncle Owen. It was a conflict between love and what he regarded duty. His first inclination was to obey the dictates of his heart and send Lucretia away, but his sense of duty, which was his solemn promise to his dying brother, to always give his wife and son a home beneath his roof."

"Won't mind Lucretia," he said, after a moment of hesitation. "She is a good woman when you come to know her."

"But she hates me, my dear husband. Her eyes flash with such deadly malice that I fear her. I can't live happily in the same house with her."

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caused Malina so many hours of anxiety. She held it triumphantly aloft. At sight of the envelope, Malina uttered a cry of agony. "You recognize this? It is familiar to you, Lucretia? That you are? You have begged me to spare you, and I will on one condition, and that is that you leave Owen Redgrave's house, that you never let him know where you are, so long as you live, and that you never claim the name of Redgrave. Swear to do this, and I shall never know how base the creature he thought his wife."

"Malina implored for mercy, but all in vain. At last she gained one day's time, and Lucretia Redgrave went to her room, and left alone Malina bowed her head and sobbed.

"Oh, God, that awful mistake will never be atoned for; never. Live down, and Owen—oh, I can't not give him up; I can't not give him up forever!" The great clock in the room below chimed the hour of midnight.

"Hold on, what ye mean?" yelled the amazed Kentuckian as the pistol ball whizzed over his head. Frank leaped on of the door on the opposite side and from a corner of the house fired a shot from his revolver.

"Crack, crack!" rang out two shots, one of them striking a splinter from the other log, where his face had been but a moment before. Frank ran toward the shed where his horse was eating from a trough. The bridge had been slipped from its hinges and a rope tied about his neck. This rope was so hard and fast that he found himself unable to lose it quickly, and he cut it with his knife.

While he was thus engaged his pursuers opened fire on him from the house in genuine partisan fashion, and a bullet struck the horn of his saddle, splitting the wood inside the leather. Meanwhile the Kentuckian was almost frantic with fear and rage. He ran out of the house, and into the house, and called to his wife and children to crawl under the beds, and hide from the fury of the attacking party, while he climbed into the chimney.

"I want to buy a saddle horse of you," said Frank. "I want to buy a saddle horse of you," said Frank. "I want to buy a saddle horse of you," said Frank.

"I can't see why ye're in such a hurry about it," the farmer declared. "Ist wait until the boys come, an' ye won't hev any trouble."

"I am on a very important mission, sir. It is a matter of life and death and I tell you I can't wait." The farmer, however, was obstinate and he had to wait.

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the woods on the right of the road. He again concealed himself in the bushes and listened. "They proved to be the sentry Bill and his companion, who were quarrelling because the sentry had been a false alarm, and their consciences were hurting them for having left the bridge unguarded. The two men struck the road and galloped back to the bridge, and Frank Vernon continued his flight. He traveled during the remainder of the night unmolested, and when morning dawned found himself in a strange, hilly country settled by wood-choppers and squatters. The elegant Kentucky farm houses had given place to the log cabins. Frank did not halt for food or rest until noon. He came to a log house rather larger and more pretentious than the others in the neighborhood, and asked the man who was in the yard regarding his sythe if he could get dinner.

"Wall, stranger I reckon so," the tall, lank Kentuckian answered. "We hain't got much to eat, but such as we have yer welcome to. Y'yer kin put up with the likes we do."

"Hunger makes the best sauce," returned Frank, dismounting. "The day was warm, and the table was placed in the front room, between the north and south doors, both of which were left open, so that the air might circulate through the house. Frank had not half approached his luncheon when the sound of galloping horses was heard and two of Frank's pursuers rode to the gate. "That he is now," cried one, and drawing a pistol he fired. "Hold on, what ye mean?" yelled the

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Uncle Owen glanced at his wife, and to the house, and saw the man who was her father, SWY, Malina, my dear, are you frightened?" he asked. "I'm afraid something awful has happened to me, and I'm afraid you're all right. Uncle Owen was on his feet in a moment, and hastened to Mrs. Redgrave's room. It was still locked. He glanced at the lock, and saw that it was not taken from the lock. He kicked the door open, and there Mrs. Redgrave, dead, one arm hanging over the side of the bed. Malina was lying on the floor, and weeks from the shock. The doctors disagreed as to the cause of death. Some pronounced it heart disease, others said one of the convulsions of opium, to which she was addicted. John Redgrave sobbed so long enough to attend his mother's funeral, which was a quiet affair, and Uncle Owen severely mourned her loss. He was a warm party in honor of his marriage.

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AMONG ABORIGINES. Soldiering in the Southwest. Long Marches Over Desolate Plains—Natives and Their Habits.

By A. STEEP, 6TH U. S. INFANTRY, ILL.

Sometime ago I gave an account in your valuable paper of our march through Kansas, as well as a partial description of the country as I saw it in 1867 from Leavenworth, Kan., to Fort Gibson, Cherokee Nation and Indian Territory.

At the last-named place we arrived the latter part of November, 1867, after a long and dusty march, which gave us an idea what soldiering really meant. Gibson was then an old military post, which had been built and occupied by the Government long before the war with Mexico. All the buildings were of leaved oak timber; namely, four barracks to hold two companies each, and all the officers' quarters, as well as Commissary and Quartermaster stores, hospital, etc., with its small log shanty, occupied by negroes and Indians, outside of the garrison.

In these log huts bloody fights often occurred between the soldiers, negroes and Indians. A few of these were shot and killed; one man of Co. D, 6th Inf., was shot and killed near these huts while on guard duty, one night, by an Indian.

The fort is on high ground, with a level parade ground of about 10 acres. The barracks to the west of the main building in the guard-house, with nice gravel walks. Everything was kept nice and clean; white wash was used wherever it was possible. Cleaning up, cooking and equipment is the pride of the U. S. Regular soldier, officer and private, and everything else must correspond to a certain degree. The country was then not much improved at this time, and the land was of poor quality—sandy ridges and brush.

I read in a paper not long ago that it was the old fort in the old log barracks, while Gen. Zachary Taylor, of Mexican War fame, then a Colonel of some regiment, was in command of the post, before the war. It was stated that it was here that J. Persim Davis first met the lady who afterward became his wife. I was then a Lieutenant fresh from the Military School at West Point. The locality was healthy, and the place well adapted for defense. During the civil war the fort was built heavy breastworks around the barracks, which were leveled after our regiment occupied the place. It was altogether an out-of-the-way place—away from railroads and civilization, and like all frontier posts, soldiering was then not the most pleasant occupation that a man could follow in these out-of-the-way forts.

Some of the things which I saw and heard were the only forts in the Territory before the Mexican war. Fort Washita was abandoned by the Government before the war, and the only one in the Territory occupied after the war by part of the 19th U. S., relieved by our regiment in 1869, coming from Charleston, S. C.

The Cheerokee Indians at the Cherokee Indians at this place may not be amiss here. These Indians were brought to the Territory from Tennessee and Georgia. They were in the country for their country, looking after their cattle, hunting, stealing horses, and anything except work. They had no aptitude for work. What I saw of the Cheerokee Indians seems to me less and less. They lay around the sutler stores, smoking cigars made of cheap tobacco, with corn husk for wrappers. They were dressed in the old-fashioned soldiers' discarded uniforms, buckskin coats and caps. Some wore coats of large-fur calico; in fact they wore anything they could get their hands on, except the blanket of the tribes further west. They had lots of cattle, and sold to the Government to supply the garrison with beef and mutton, and they took to the soldiers, such as venison, wild turkey, prairie hens, etc.

They had lots of ponies, and were almost entirely riding around in the surrounding country. They had no tents or wigwags to move around with, like the West. They had small log huts, some, indeed, too small for comfort.

The Government had formed these Indians a mounted patrol to hunt horse-thieves and other hard characters. They were uniformed as the regular army, and they did a good deal of good among these people, doing nothing and receiving nothing in return. There were some white, half Indian, and some pure Indian and negro. These half-breeds generally had a straggling mustache and were dressed in the old-fashioned soldiers' discarded uniforms, buckskin coats and caps. Some wore coats of large-fur calico; in fact they wore anything they could get their hands on, except the blanket of the tribes further west. They had lots of cattle, and sold to the Government to supply the garrison with beef and mutton, and they took to the