

# UNCLE TOM.

## Original of the Famous Character in the Novel.

## The Prototypes of Eva, Topsy and George Harris.

## A Maine Author Who Upheld the American Girl.

Dark as midnight and bright as sunlight was the face that fairly beamed over the picture in the Corner Book Store window. His black eyes sparkled with genial jollity as the owner of that Ethiopian face, oblivious to the crowd around him, cried out "Dat's my little 'un, suah!"

Everyone looked at the picture. It was a colored lad to the life, assuredly, the picture of a smart little fellow peering over the old board fence before his father's cottage, drawn with all the accuracy which that excellent delineator of negro life, Edward W. Kemble, commands from his experience. Gracing the first pages of this new "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the last edition, perhaps, that will be published in the life-time of its author, the picture stood as an indication of the elaborate illustrating given this holiday edition.

### The Original of Uncle Tom.

The worthy admirer, however, had spoken merely from the emotional side of his being. In the picture he saw a close resemblance to his boy at home, but he could not claim that his hopeful heir was the original of the character. Yet there is living to-day one person, at least, who could take up this famous story of slave life before the war and find himself therein drawn to life. Others who will re-read the book now, in its handsome new form, may like to follow the characters with a sketch of the originals beside them.

Josiah Benson and Sam Peto were the prototypes of Uncle Tom. The first half of the character's life was drawn from Benson, while the career of Peto, who died exactly as Mrs. Stowe described, formed the basis of the second part of the story. Benson, who became a preacher, had shown fight while in the service of a cruel master, and, on being overthrown, had both arms broken. The arms were never set and Benson remained a cripple until his death five years ago.

### The George Harris of the Story.

The original of George Harris is still alive. A few months ago he visited Boston to see his brother Milton, an employe in the Sub-Treasury here. Lewis George Clarke, for such is his real name, was the first slave who, after running away from his master, was allowed to take the platform against slavery. Twice he was sold at the block, the first time at Stamford, Ky., to Tom Kennedy, the original Legree, and the second time at Garrett, Ky., to Kennedy's son. At the latter sale Clarke brought \$1250. Though Clarke's parents were slaves, they were nearly white, and his sister, Della, the original of Emmeline in the story, became the wife of a Frenchman, who bought her in the auction pen at New Orleans and took her to Mexico, she died some years ago. Lewis made his escape in 1841, a year after his brother Milton had run away, and went to Canada in the way stated in the story. At one time an attempt was made by the original of Marks, the lawyer, to kidnap Lewis and his brother, but though Milton was carried to the Court House at Madison, he was quickly rescued by the Abolitionists. Eliza, who was chased by the bloodhounds over the ice, was not the wife of Lewis, but otherwise the incident was true.

It was when Lewis Clarke was living with Gerrit Smith that Mrs. Stowe saw him and obtained the facts for her powerful novel. He often has maintained that, so far from being overdrawn, the sketches of life could have been made with truth, even more vivid. He himself has of late been a lecturer.

### Eva and Other Characters.

A few years ago the original of Eva was living in Washington, and, as her death has not been chronicled, she may to-day be still in the Capital City. She was Miss Letcher, of a prominent Southern family, and became the wife of Gen. Kennedy, the master of Lewis Clarke. Kennedy was made over by Mrs. Stowe into Legree and his son into St. Clair, while the Letcher family served as prototypes for the Selbys. The storied death of Eva necessitated the choice of another girl to give the coloring of truth to that pathetic pen picture and so Annie Campbell, a daughter of Mr. Clarke's grandfather, was taken as the model. Topsy was a colored girl named Millie, who belonged to Mrs. Banton of Lincoln county, Ky.

### An Anniversary at Hand.

It will be forty years the 20th of next March since the first edition of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was published, as the introduction of the new edition records. There, also, it has been stated that some of the incidents of the story came under Mrs. Stowe's very eye; the sale and separation of a married woman from her husband having occurred while she was a passenger on an Ohio steamboat, and her husband and brother once being obliged to flee with a fugitive slave by night. When Mrs. Stowe read in an anti-slavery magazine the account of the escape of a woman with her child on the ice of the Ohio River she began to formulate the plot of her story, and then, at her desk, wrote first of all the death scene of Uncle Tom. Thus the great book came into existence.

### A Maine Author.

To turn from a Northern author writing about the South to a Northern author writing about the East, one finds just issued from the press a new book on Florence, a finely illustrated descriptive tale of the "Lily of the Arno," on the title page of which appears the name of Virginia Johnson. Although a pen picture of Italian scenes, written in the spirit of one long familiar with Italian life, yet the book is the work of an American, a native of the Pine Tree State. For a long time she has been away from home and now, having resided with her mother and sister in Florence for many years, she has become practically domesticated in the Flower City. It was Miss Johnson who so boldly took up the cudgils of defence for our American girl when Henry James's "Daisy Miller" drew her in far from flattering colors on the Maine lady's story of "An English Daisy Miller" is worth recalling as a turn-about literary blow given with spirit. That was published some ten years ago, and since then she has written "A Royal Physician," "The Treasure Tower of Malta" and "The House of the Musicians."

Her present book is the result of a clever idea on the part of the publishers to issue a series of handsomely illustrated books about leading European cities written by various prominent authors and intended as picturesque accompaniment to the technical guide books, with the sentimental interest, so to speak, pointed out by the pen of an artistic writer. I saw Miss Johnson's picture yesterday on the mantel of one of her friends, and, noting the strength of intellect that showed in her handsome face, crowned by a mass of curling hair, did not wonder at her ability to please her New England neighbors of former days.

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