

"UNCLE TOM'S CABIN."

How It Came to be Written.

Two miles distant from this village, over among a group of hills through which used to wind the celebrated Crab Orchard pike of half a century ago, stands a fine old red-brick mansion facing south and commanding a view of miles upon miles of wave-like hills and valleys. Fifty years ago it was the plantation of Gen. Thomas Kennedy, a Virginian, who fought at King's mountain with Marion and came to Kentucky about 1780 to wrest the garden of the central portion of the State from the Indians. The old red-brick house and the ground all about it have lately become famous as being the original scene in Mrs. Stowe's novel of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Gen. Kennedy owned 7,000 acres of land, 150 slaves, and was enormously wealthy for those days. He was a man of wonderful character and determination, a Black Douglass in the Garrard hills. He was a tall, athletic and hale man, with the erect carriage of an Indian and the mien of a commander. He was, in the main, a man of fair impulse and royal generosity when calm; but, when angered, he was insatiably cruel to his slaves. Gen. Kennedy died in 1836, and left the bulk of his property to his son Thomas, then about 20 years old. In three years the young man had run through more than a great fortune, and was dead at the very outset of his career. Among the slaves left in his estates was an intelligent, high-strung octoroon boy, named Lewis Clarke, who had been granted comparative freedom, in being allowed to travel about with an open pass, trading, weaving and occupying himself as he pleased, paying his master a certain sum every month. When the estate came to be settled, it was discovered that some of the slaves must be sold, and an execution was issued against Lewis among the others. The rumor got out—and at that day the rumor was a dreadful one among slaves—that they were to be "sold down South." On the first night of the September court in 1841, Lewis Clarke mounted his pony and struck for liberty.

He rode away and over the hills to Ohio and to Canada. Then he went to Cambridge, Mass., lived for seven years with A. H. Safford, a brother-in-law of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. Mrs. Stowe visited her relatives every summer, and took a deep interest in Lewis Clarke, his experience and his narrative of incidents, pathetic, humorous and terrible, of slave life, and the horrors which the system made possible, and which were, in localities, frequent from brutal and irresponsible masters.

From Lewis Clarke's own lips I gathered the story of how Mrs. Stowe came to write "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Dr. Bailey, who published the *Philanthropist* in Cincinnati, had been persuaded to move to Washington city about 1848 or 1850, where he established an emancipationist organ, the *National Era*. He thought if he could get some woman of literary reputation and ability to write a series of articles for his paper every week on the subject of slavery and its violation of the finest sentiments, that it would raise public interest and carry his paper to people it had never reached before. The names of Mrs. Lydia M. Child and others were proposed, but not accepted. Lewis Tappan, who was one of the counselors, finally said he knew of one woman who could do the work successfully, that she was poor and must be paid for it, but that she would succeed. He then mentioned Mrs. Stowe, and advised Dr. Bailey to write to her, and, by way of earnest, inclose her a draft for \$100. The letter was written and the draft sent. The next week there appeared in the columns of the *National Era*, not the first of a series of articles on slavery, but the first chapters of a story called "Uncle Tom's Cabin." The circulation of the *National Era* increased at once, and soon became very large. Mrs. Stowe was poor and earning her money so laboriously that, for fear the great novel would be cut short, she was sent an additional draft for \$300. Then she copyrighted the story, which in book form has made her a fortune, and become more famous than any novel ever issued from a printing press.—*Lowell (Ky.) Cor. Courier-Journal.*