

A BACKWOODS WEDDING.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

At the age of eighteen I married a minister. Eugene Morrison was my first and last love; and though in truth I must say the life of a minister's wife is a sort of a refined slavery, still, I have never for a moment regretted my choice.

Eugene's first call after our marriage, was to the village of Brookboro. Our home was primitive, but we both were young and hopeful, and life was not unpleasant to us.

I, of course, encountered the trials of most ministers' wives. I was criticised and found fault with, until I wondered if I was not the incarnation of original sin itself; and I frequently had doubts whether anybody in the world was to be held responsible for the ill-deeds, but myself. My theology was very dubious at this time, and my faith frequently down below low water mark.

My parishioners were exceedingly faithful in pointing out the beam in my eyes. If ever a woman had incentives to reform on the advice of friends, then I had; not a day passed but I was admonished in some way.

Miss Splitwood said I dressed too much. A minister's wife ought to set a better example before the younglings of her flock. I laid my admonition to heart, and took the trimming off my bonnet, and wore it with nothing but the cape. Then Mrs. Hale called to tell me that I was a disgrace to the parish wearing such a dreadful bonnet. People would think I was of the Quaker persuasion. So I put the trimming on again. Then Mrs. Stanley met me on the street and said so much blue ribbon was unbecoming to the wife of a preacher of the gospel. So I laid the blue aside and appeared in brown.

Aunt Sally Jane called the next day before breakfast to know who of my folks was dead—she had noticed that my bonnet was trimmed in mourning.

If I called on a few of our parish, they would say I was gadding, and pitted 'poor Mr. Morrison, dreadful!' if I staid at home I was 'too stuck up to visit the poor.'

Just as sure as the supply in my larder ran low, I would have an influx of company, and the air of Brookboro was peculiarly favourable to the growth of appetite.

All the straggling ministers, tract agents, beggars and vagabonds came to the parsonage; and were obliged to entertain them because Eugene said by thus doing we might entertain angels unawares.

In endeavoring to obey this command I gave shelter to a man who called himself a colporteur, and who proved his right to wear rings by stealing a dozen silver napkins, rings and a butter knife given me by my sister.

One fine day in early winter, my husband had received a summons, to Burke's settlement, to unite a couple in the bonds of wedlock. It was especially requested that his wife should accompany him, and should be expected to remain all night, and partake of the festivities.

It was twenty miles to the settlement, and we reached the log house of Mr. Burke, the father of the expectant bride—about noon. A dozen two-haired children were at the door watching our arrival. They telegraphed the news instantly.

'Marm! marm! here's the Elder and his woman!' they're nothing but folks! She's got a man's hat on, and a turkey wing in the front of it, and his nose is just like dad's—crooked as a cow horn squish!

Alas for Mr. Morrison's aquiline nose, of which he was a little vain!

'Sam' cried a shrill voice from the interior of the cabin, run out and grab the rooster, and I'll clap him into the pot! Sal, you quit that churn and sweep the floor. Kick that corn dodger under the bed! Bill, you wipe the taller out of that cheer for the minister's wife, and be spry about it!

Further remarks were cut short by our entrance.

Mrs. Burke, in calico short-gown, blue petticoat, and bare feet came forward—wiping her face on her apron.

'How do you do, Elder! how do you do, marm! Must excuse my head—haven't had a chance to comb it since last week. Work must be did, you know. Powerful sharp air, haint it! Shoo, there! Bill, drive that turkey out of the bread trough! Sal, take the lady's things. Set right up to the fire, marm. Hands cold! Well, just rub 'em in Bill's hair—we keep it long a purpose.'

Bill presented his shaggy head, and I declined with a shudder.

'Lawk, if she ain't actilly shivering!' cried Mrs. Burke, 'bring some more wood. Here, marm, take this hot corn-dodger into yer lap, it's as good as a soapstone.'

A fateful squall announced the execution of the rooster, and shortly afterward he was bouncing about in a four-pail kettle hung over the fire. Sal returned to her churn, but the extraordinary visitors must have made her careless, for she upset the churn, and butter and buttermilk went swimming over the floor.

'Grab the ladle, Bill!' cried Mrs. Burke, and help dip it. Take keer, don't put that snarl of hair in. Strange how folks will be so nasty. Dick keep your feet out of the buttermilk—it won't be fit for the pigs when the butter's gathered. Drive that hen out—she's picked up a pound of butter already. There, Sal, try and churn a little more keeful. If you are a-goin' to be spliced to-morrow, you needn't run crazy about it.

'I'd advise you to dry 'up' remarked the bride-elect, thumping away at the churn.

By the time I had got fairly warmed dinner was ready; and you may be sure I didn't hurt myself by over-eating. Night came on early, and after a social chat about the event of the morning, I signified my desire to retire.

Sal lighted a birch knot, and began climbing a ladder in one corner of the room—I hesitated.

'Come on!' cried she—'don't you be afeared. Sam and Bill, and Dick, and all the rest of ye, duck yer heads while the Elder's wife goes up. Look out for the loose boards, marm; and mind or

Children Cry for

you'll smash yer brains out against that beam. Take keer of the hole whar the chimney comes through—'

Her warning came too late. I caught my foot in one end of a board—tumbled, and fell headlong through what appeared interminable space, but it was only the room I had just left, where I was saved from destruction by Bill, who caught me in his arms and set me on my feet, remarking coolly:

'What made you come that way? We generally use the ladder.'

I was duly commiserated, and at last got to bed. The less said about that night the better. Bill and Dick and four others, slept in the same room with us, and made the air vocal with their snoring. I fell asleep, and dreamed I was just being fired from the muzzle of a Columbiad; and was awakened by Mr. Morrison, who informed me that it was morning.

The marriage was to take place before breakfast, and Sally was already clad in her bridal robes, when I descended the ladder.

She was magnificent in a green calico, over a crinoline full four inches larger than the rest of her apparel—a white apron with red strings—blue stockings—a yellow neck ribbon, and white cotton gloves. Her reddish hair was fastened in a pug behind, and well adorned with the tail feathers of the defunct rooster before mentioned.

When it was announced that Lem Lord, the groom, was coming, Sally dived behind a coverlet, which had been hung across one corner of the room to conceal sundry pots and kettles, and refused to come forth. Mr. Lord lifted one corner of the curtain and peeped in, but quickly retreated with a step-pan following close behind, and a few sharp words from Sally, advising him to mind his own business.

Lemuel was dressed in blue with bright buttons. The entire suit had been made for his grandfather on a similar occasion. His hair was well greased with tallow, and his huge feet encased in sheep-skin pumps.

Very soon the company began to gather, and in half an hour the room was filled.

'Now Elder,' cried the bridegroom, 'drive ahead! I want it done up short. I'm able to pay for the job—do yer best. Come, Father Burke, trot out yer gal.'

But Sally refused to be trotted. She would be married where she was or not at all. We argued and coaxed but she was firm; and it was finally concluded to let her have her own way.

Mr. Morrison stood up—the happy couple joined hands through a rent in the coverlet, and the ceremony proceeded. Just as Mr. Morrison was asking Lemuel 'Will you have this woman,' etc., down came the coverlet, enveloping bride, groom and pastor, and filling the house with dust. Dick had been up in the loft and cut the string that held it.

Mr. Morrison crawled out, looking decidedly sheepish, and Sally was obliged to be married openly. To the momentous question, Lemuel responded, 'To be sure—what else did I come here for?' and Sally replied, 'Yaas if you must know.'

'Salute your bride,' said Mr. Morrison when all was over.

'I'm ready for anything reasonable, Elder,' said Lemuel, 'but skin me if I know about that air. Just show me how, and I'll do it if it kills me.'

My husband drew back nervously; but Sally advanced, threw her arms around his neck, and gave him a kiss that made the very windows clatter.

'I um if I don't do ditto!' cried Lemuel, and hastily taking a huge bite of maple sugar which he drew from his pocket, he made a dash for me—smashed my collar, broke my watch into a dozen pieces, tore my hair down, and succeeded in planting a kiss on my nose, greatly to the delight of the company.

Then he turned to my husband.

'Now, Elder, what's the damage? Don't be afeared to speak.'

'Whatever you please,' said Mr. Morrison.

Lemuel produced a piece of fur from his pocket.

'There, Elder,' said he, 'there's a muskrat skin; and out in the shed is two heads of cabbage, and you're welcome to the hull of it.'

My husband bowed his thanks—the young people went on dancing. Mrs. Burke went getting breakfast; and at my earnest request, Mr. Morrison got our horse and we bade them adieu.

I never could have lived through another meal in that house.

I have since heard that Mr. Lord said that if he had seen the Elder's wife before she was married, Sally might have gone to the dickens.

Alas! 'It might have been!'

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SUMMER Arrangement.

On and after TUESDAY, JUNE 5th, until further notice, trains will run on the above Railway, daily, as follows:

CHATHAM TO FREDERICTON.	FREDERICTON TO CHATHAM.
LEAVE CHATHAM	LEAVE FREDERICTON
Chatham	Gibson
" Junction	" Marysville
Blacktown (arrive 10.25)	" Cross Creek
" "	" Boston
Boisbroun	" Blacktown (arrive 10.10)
" Cross Creek	" Blackville
" Marysville	" Chatham (arrive 1.00)
Gibson (arrive)	" Chatham (arrive)
Chatham	Chatham

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CHATHAM RAILWAY.

SUMMER 1888.

On and after MONDAY, JUNE 4th, Trains will run on this Railway in connection with the INTERCOLONIAL RAILWAY, daily, (Sunday nights excepted) as follows:

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LOCAL TIME TABLE.	LOCAL TIME TABLE.
No. 1 EXPRESS, No. 4 ACCOMMODATION	No. 2 EXPRESS, No. 5 ACCOMMODATION
Leave Chatham	Leave Chatham
Chatham (arrive)	Chatham (arrive)
Chatham	Chatham

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Close connections are made with all passenger Trains both DAY and NIGHT on the Intercolonial.

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The above Table is made up on I. G. Railway standard time, which is 75th meridian time. All the Train stops at Nelson Station, both going and returning, if signalled.

All freight for transportation over this rail, if above Fourth (4th) Class, will be taken delivery of the Union Wharf, Chatham, and forwarded free of Truckage Custom House Entry or other charges. Special attention given to Shippers of Fish.

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Chatham May 5, 1888

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