

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**By H.E. Smith**

### **NORAH'S NEW YEAR**

It was New Year's Eve. The streets were thronged with pedestrians, the jingle of the sleigh-bells was ever anon heard, and all the world seemed to have forgotten care, and taken a holiday. But not so. There were sad faces amid the merry ones.' The poor and wretched jostled against the gay and happy; and this life-picture, like all others, had its dark background.

Looking in at the brilliantly-lighted window of a confectioner's stood a little girl, her face blue with cold and hunger, her eyes wistful and pathetic. She had on a light calico dress, shoes that were too large for her, and a strange kind of garment – half shawl, half cloak – so worn and patched that one could not tell its original shape or color. Her age was not over nine or ten, yet she seemed more like a little old woman than a child. There was an air of wisdom in the way she turned her head, and wrinkled up her forehead, and pressed her lips together as she gazed at the confectioner's candies and cakes, as if she thought them all very pretty, but at the same time very unsubstantial. Once or twice the child-nature showed itself in her eyes, but was quickly followed by an expression of gravity and sorrow, touching in one so young.

Finally she turned away with a sigh, and at that instant the confectioner's door-opened, and a lady, richly dressed, came out. Something in the child's face or look attracted her attention. She stopped, drew the shivering little figure toward the light, and scanned it curiously.

"What is your name, dear?" she asked, kindly. "Norah," was the answer, given in a low voice, and with a look of wonder at the questioner.

"Norah!" echoed the lady, turning pale, "Norah what?" "Norah Brady, ma'am." "Oh!" and an expression, partly of relief, partly of disappointment, swept over the listener's face. Then she slipped some money into the child's hand, and whispered, "Spend it as you please, dear. It is a New Year's gift.

Norah's cheeks flushed, and she drew back a little proudly." "I cannot take it, ma'am," she answered, in even, steady tones. "Papa would be angry if I did." "Angry that you accept a gift? Why so?"

"Because we're poor, and when people give us things, he says it's out of charity." "What is any reason for refusing them?"

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**continued**



## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

By H.E. Smith

### NORAH'S NEW YEAR

"Yes, for papa and I are independent, and had rather earn our own money." The little figure straightened itself with an air of dignity-almost womanly.

"You are a strange child," was the reply, and the lady looked interested and amused. "Tell me where you live." The street and number were named, and then Norah raised her honest blue eyes, and said, softly, "Please don't think me ungrateful, ma'am. You are very kind, indeed. Only that papa has seen better days, and that it hurts him so now to be poor, I might perhaps keep it." And she handed back the money with a wistful little glance that spoke volumes.

"Have you a mother, dear?" questioned the other. The blue eyes filled with tears. "No, ma'am," she answered, in a quivering voice. "Mamma died three years ago." Why was it that a throb of pain stirred the listener's heart at these words? What was Norah's mother to her? She felt drawn toward the child, she hardly knew why; drawn, too, toward the dead mother, and the strange, proud father. Norah's eyes, Norah's name, were like those of a little sister she had loved and lost-not by death-but by a separation that was almost worse. She had never forgotten it, and to-night the memory of that olden time softened her heart, and made her pitiful toward the griefs of others. All this while her carriage stood waiting, with a white-haired old gentleman inside, and the coachman impatiently stamping his feet.

"I must leave you," she whispered to Norah at last, longing to clasp the little figure to her breast. "I shall come and see you soon, may I not?" Then, seeing that the child hesitated to reply, she added. "Are you afraid papa will object? Tell him charity has nothing to do with it, but that it is for my own sake, and because you remind me of someone I loved years ago, that I wish to come." Norah was a hospitable little soul, and the beautiful lady had completely won her heart. "Papa will be glad to see you, she said, simply; "and I too."

"Thank you, dear." Then, moved by a sudden impulse, the lady stooped down and kissed her. The coachman, looking on, rubbed his eyes, and thought that perhaps Norah was some little princess in disguise. She was, and by a right more royal than that of blood or money. "What child was that?" questioned the white-haired old gentleman, as the lady took her seat in the carriage and bade the coachman drive on. "Some beggar, with a tale of distress that touched your sympathy?" He looked at her fondly, and in a manner that showed she was the "one woman of the world" to him.

"Not a beggar," and the lady smiled, and told how Norah had refused the money. "But the child interested me strangely. She has eyes like those of the little Norah I left in Ireland, and for a minute I had faint hope that my search was at last ended. But her father's name is Brady."

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**



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"And yours was O'Connell," said the gentleman. "And it was not here, but to France, that he migrated." "I know," and a touch of impatience came into her voice. "It was but for a minute, as I said. Afterward I understood how impossible it was." She signed bitterly, and went on: "I wonder if this is to be the punishment for my sin and folly—that I am never to know the faith of those I deserted."

"That girlish sin and folly, as you call it, dear wife, has been expiated long since," was the answer. "Let the dead past bury its dead. Do not make yourself miserable by raking up its ashes." "I am unhappy," she said, softly. "Why should I be?" Every wish is gratified save one—that of a reconciliation with my parents, and perhaps it is right this should be denied me."

"Has it never occurred to you that they may be dead?" asked the gentleman, looking at her compassionately. "Many times," she answered. "But I cannot make myself believe it. Something seems to tell me that they are living and in want." "Oh, that is because the agent we sent over to Ireland told us your father had lost his property. You would naturally think of him as poor after that."

"Yes, and when pride is joined to poverty, the struggle is the harder. Father was a strange man; stern, and haughty, and obstinate; but under a harsh exterior hid one of the warmest hearts that ever beat. I can understand why he left Ireland so suddenly and covered up all traces of his fight, lost those who had known him in prosperity should witness his humiliation. He could not have borne that; it would have been the added drop of bitterness that would have choked him. But mother was different; so meek and gentle, and was the only living person who knew how to manage him.

Everyone else was sure to see the worst side of his nature. "Ah, yes! You have told me of her before. But I cannot understand, Kate, why she never answered your letters. You were but seventeen when you eloped with that villain; a mere child; and surely she might have given some words of help and comfort when your heart was almost broken by his baseness. True, he was your wedded husband, and held you by a bond stronger than that of parent; but their silence was cruel, and I cannot forgive them for it." You do not know how I tried their love. My father warned me against the man, my mother told me of his falsehood and wickedness, and I deceived, betrayed them both.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**By H.E. Smith**

### **NORAH'S NEW YEAR**

I was guilty of such base subterfuges, it seemed as if a demon had entered into me, and I was not real myself! What-ever they said only increased my obstinacy, and made me more infatuated with the object of their censure. Besides, you must remember, my father had reason to think I robbed him the night of my departure, though the theft was committed without my knowledge, and by the wretch into whose hands I had trusted my honor and happiness. That I could have been so blinded to his real character seems impossible now; but he had a winning, plausible manner, and I was vain and foolish, fond of flattery and admiration."

"You fled to America at once, did you not? And wrote home from there?" "Yes, My husband's villainy was first revealed to me on board of the ship that took us over. I accidentally came across the money he had stolen from my father, and recognized the purse that held it as one I had knitted myself. I asked for an explanation, and he gave it boldly, gloating over the idea of what he called a just and righteous vengeance, instead of the hateful crime it seemed to me. It was then I found out that there had been a feud of long standing between him and my father, and that it was for this he had married me, and thus struck his enemy to the heart."

"Though the villain is dead, it makes my blood boil to think of him, Kate. Did you not mention all this in your letters – the vile plot, the stolen money?" "Yes, and more too. I told of my desolate condition in New York, alone and friendless, for as soon as we landed I fled from the wretch whom the law had made my husband. He followed me, persecuted me, prevented my obtaining any respectable employment; and oh! The terrible life that I led those two years that he lived. It is dreadful to say it, but his death was-actually a relief."

"They never answered your letters?" said her husband, indignantly. "I cannot understand such vindictiveness. " "The first one was returned unopened," she answered; "of the others I never had any tidings. I am sure they would have forgiven me had they known all. It may be that the letters were intercepted. The suspicion has occurred to me lately that they fell into my husband's hands, and that he remailed and stamped that first one to deceive me and prevent my writing others."

"Don't call that man your husband, Kate. It makes me shiver. He was capable of anything, and I have no doubt your suspicion is correct. Surely you wrote after his death?"

### **Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**By H.E. Smith**

### **NORAH'S NEW YEAR**

"I did not," she replied. "I was so utterly heart-broken by all that had occurred, as to believe myself an outcast from love and kindness forever more. You know what I suffered, and how I went from place to place, vainly seeking employment. The stage was the only means of livelihood that offered itself. Ah! Can I ever forget from what a life you rescued me, the humble ballet-girl?"

"Remember, you said it was from love, not gratitude, that you became my wife. For I am old enough to be your father, Kate, and had you refused me what I craved, would have adopted you as my daughter." "Old in years, but young in heart, she answered. "If my first marriage was a wretched mistake, my second is indeed blest, and crowned with such happiness as I never hoped to enjoy."

The carriage had reached the suburbs of the city by this time, and now stopped before a large house, with an old-fashioned, hospitable aspect very inviting. "Home at last!" said the gentleman, jumping out as nimbly as if he had been younger. "Come, Kate."

She followed, and leaning on his arm went up the stairs and into the house. No further allusion was made by either to the subject of their conversation during the drive. The thoughts of one kept continually recurring to the child she had seen in front of the confectioner's, and when Kate Hilliard closed her eyes in sleep that night, it was with the firm resolve to see Norah's father early the next day, and find out who he was and whence he came. For Norah's words, and Norah's looks, seemed like an echo from the past, and had in them something of the spirit she remembered.

Norah's thoughts were as full of her as hers of Norah. "Such a lovely lady!" mused the child, as she hurried home. "I don't think papa would have minded my taking the money, if he could have heard all she said, and seen exactly how she looked. It is New Year's Eve, and what if she were not a real lady at all, but just some fairy going around doing good? I saw a nice old gentleman inside her carriage, though, and a live coachman on top. I guess she's flesh and blood like the rest, only kinder and more thoughtful."

It was toward a wretched quarter of the city that Norah bent her steps, and the tenement where she stopped was old and dilapidated, and crowded with human beings. She ascended the stairs, and found her way to a room, dimly lighted by a tallow candle. The door stood open, and she entered softly. Then shading her eyes with her hand, she looked around. There was a bed in one corner, and upon that lay a man asleep.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**By H.E. Smith**

### **NORAH'S NEW YEAR**

"Poor papa!" she thought, "he is tired out, The doctor says he ought not to work, but he will, and I can't help it. I almost wish I'd taken the money. It would have bought a chicken, and I could have made him some broth tomorrow. He wouldn't have eaten it if he knew how I got it. Oh dear! Oh dear! It's so hard to be poor and have a sick father."

She bustled about a little, setting the room to rights, and tried to look cheerful, though she felt down-hearted. The tears came in spite of her when she went to the cupboard, and looked in to see what there was for breakfast. Only a few dry crusts and a small piece of bacon. If it hadn't been New Year's Eve, their poverty would not have seemed so bitter. She had gone hungry before, and never complained, but now, looking at her pale, worn father, and remembering the sad Christmas they had spent, her heart rebelled, and she almost doubted the goodness of God, who let poor people suffer thus. Then her mother's sweet face rose up before her, as if in reproach, and she folded her hands together, and breathed a prayer for help and comfort. Poor Norah! A child in years, but weighed down with a woman's cares, old in trouble and the wisdom born of it, it was well that she had early learned where to look for guidance when sore and distressed and buffeted by the world.

Her father did not awake, and she finally took up the bit of candle, and retired to an inner room hardly larger than a closet. Its only furniture was a little cot-bed. Into that she crept after undressing herself, and soon fell asleep.

She dreamed of an angel with the face of her mother, and of the beautiful lady who in some magical way had been changed into a fairy, all gold spangles and lace.

The sun was nearly an hour high when she awoke the next morning, though her room was still dark, for it had but one little window high up that opened on a brick wall. She rubbed her eyes, and looked around as if bewildered, for surely someone bent over her, and she whispered, softly, "Little sister! Little sister!" She sat up in bed, and then felt two arms clasp her close, and warm kisses rain down on brow and lips and cheeks. She was not afraid, only wondered what it all meant, and whether she was really in her own little room, or in fairy-land, or in heaven.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**





## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**By H.E. Smith**

### **NORAH'S NEW YEAR**

"Dress quickly, dear," said the voice she heard first. "There is a gentleman waiting to see you." The voice was that of the beautiful lady, and so was the form that she recognized by the dim light. Half believing it a dream still, Norah slipped on her clothes, and with her hand clasped in that of her companion, opened the door of the other room. There sat her father and the white-haired old gentleman she remembered so well, talking easily together; and if she had been puzzled and bewildered before, she was even more so now.

"Come here, daughter," said Mr. Brady, or O'Connell, as he was called thereafter. "The New Year has brought you a sister."

"What do you mean, papa?" Norah stammered. "Tell her, Kate," whispered the white-headed old gentleman.

Mr. O'Connell had heard the story before, but he listened again as the sweet voice trembled in its narration, and once wiped a tear furtively from his eye.

"My sister! My own, own sister!" cried Norah, joyfully, clasping Kate close. Then in a low voice she added, "The last word mamma spoke was your name." As this tears came into the eyes of both, and Mr. Hilliard, seeing them, rose hastily and said, "Come, come, Kate it is time we were going. Your father is ready, and so is Norah. You can talk all you want to afterward."

Mr. O'Connell's reluctance to accept his daughter's hospitality was finally overcome, and he consented that Norah and himself should make part of her household. His pride was great, and had led him to assume a false name, and almost make a martyr of Norah, but he began to have a faint perception that a great deal of error and selfishness were mingled with it, and was ready to make amends.

He soon afterward recovered his health, and through Mr. Hilliard's instrumentality obtained employment, at once lucrative and honorable, so that he was enabled to support both himself and Norah independently.

Norah grew more like a child, and less like a woman, under the new influences by which she was surrounded. She was none the less true and honest, and her sister rejoiced to see the signs of care fade out of the young face that had once been so sadly mature.

Neither Norah, nor Kate, nor Mr. O'Connell ever forgot the day that ushered in their new-found happiness, and to them the New Year brings greater joy than any other holiday.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

One of the many strange experiences recorded in the annals of the border was that of a young lady named Edith Whitbeck, who resided in Western Virginia, near the close of the last century. At the time the incident occurred she was about 18 years of age, of comely form and appearance, and with vitality and enduring courage which were probably developed by the rugged life she led, from earliest childhood, upon what was then our Western frontier.

She belonged to a family comprising three brothers and two sisters, with both her parents living. Their home was something like two miles from the nearest settlement, with which it was connected by a wagon-road through the forest-the highway consisting of a single track, with no fence upon either side, and a well-worn footpath between the ruts-proving that the Whitbeck's not only made frequent visits to the village, but received many calls from the same quarter.

One morning, late in autumn, Edith left her home, and went to the settlement with the intention of spending the greater portion of the day there. She remained until toward evening, when she started homeward, expecting to reach the end of her journey by the time it was beginning to become fairly dark.

She had not left the village, when she was hailed by an old friend, who asked her which way she was going. When she answered, he shook his head. "Better not." "What do you mean?" she asked, in surprise. "Haven't you heard the news?" "Not a word." "There was a war-party of Wyandots seen this afternoon not more than three miles up the river. They will be a good deal nearer here before morning, and they wouldn't like anything better than to pick up a good-looking lass like you."

Edith turned as pale as death. Her thoughts were not of herself, but of her brothers and sisters, who were thus peculiarly exposed to the most fearful of all perils. What would befall them? Would anything restrain these red-skins from massacring such a tempting group? Must all of them be doomed to perish?

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

In imagination she saw the rush of the Indians across the clearing-the sudden, murderous attack-the frightful massacre-the loved home swallowed up in smoke, and fire, and blood. Without pausing the reply further to the words of her friend, Edith turned about and hastened in the direction of her house.

He called to her, and warned her again and again that she must not think of venturing into the woods in the presence of such danger; but she made no answer, and a few minutes later was wending her way through the forest.

When the girl had walked along for a half-mile, she regained something like control of her feelings, and viewed her own position with something of deliberation. She found she had made a mistake in the time of leaving the settlement, and that it was so late in the afternoon that it was already growing dark. Furthermore, it was becoming quite chilly-the wind soughed dismally among the trees, and there was evidently snow in the air.

The reaction that succeeded the first shock of terror in her mind caused her to begin to entertain hope that her fears were groundless. The Indian party were seen in altogether a different direction, and probably had no hostile purpose in visiting the section. It was not at all unlikely that they had already returned.

At this rate, Edith bade fair to work herself back into quite a hopeful frame of mind, when her fears were roused to a tenfold intensity by hearing the report of guns ahead of her, and from the direction of her home.

She paused, with her hand upon her heart, and listened. All was still, except the mournful sighing of the wind among the trees. She was about half-way between the settlement and her home, so that if she had purposed to flee, there was no choice of the direction to pursue.

Her position was as lonely and gloomy as it is possible to imagine. It was already so dark that, as she glanced furtively up and down the road, she could see but a short distance; but, brief as it was, her terrified vision pictured the path, with the figures of scowling, horribly-painted demons stealing down upon her.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(Continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

It required the strongest effort of her will to convince herself that these hobgoblin phantoms were not real. Finally, she began moving forward again, her face still toward her loved ones. "If they are to perish, I want to perish with them!" was the thought which animated and hurried her forward. She would have sped directly forward even if a thousand enemies were in her path, but for the fact that there still remained enough doubt about what the redskins had done, or were able to do.

Suppose they had fired a volley upon her home? It was not at all impossible that her father and three brothers, who were all well armed, were able to keep them at bay-why, then, should she complicate matters and imperil her own life by rushing forward in this blind fashion?

Preyed upon by such distracting thoughts as these, her step was hesitating, and she was debating whether to go on or to stop, when she approached a stream without any bridge, the depth of the water being such that horses with wagons could easily pull through, while pedestrians passed over a small tree-trunk that connected the banks.

This stream, rather curiously, was an elevated one, something like the lower Mississippi except in size, so that in approaching it from either direction, a person was compelled to walk up a moderately inclined elevation. Thus it was that the figure of anyone walking over the bridge at night was brought out in relief against the sky beyond-the character of the wood and the direction of the road, at this point, contributing toward that end.

Edith was pushing along in this doubting manner, when she suddenly observed the figure of a man crossing the support. He was coming toward her, and his form was stamped in ink upon the clear sky beyond. She scarcely saw him when she noted a second and a third, and only a second glance at the scalp-locks and horse-blankets was needed to see that they were Indians.

There might have been more than these three, but the girl waited only long enough to count that number, and to note that they were coming directly toward her. Without attempting to run backward along the road she had been following, she moved steadily into the wood on her right hand.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(Continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

Although quite dark, it was natural that she should believe it necessary to penetrate the forest much further than was really required to avoid the red men. She stole forward like a cat approaching its prey, looking back in the darkness and listening after a few steps; but at no time did she detect the slightest sound to show where the warriors were.

If they were pursuing her, it was like shadows. Impelled by her terror, she kept ahead until she had penetrated so far that she felt it was wasted to go any further. Still she stood motionless for sometime, fearful of returning to the road before all the Indians were out of the way. When convinced that it was safe to do so, she attempted to retrace her steps. She walked all of a half-hour, and then when she paused, found that she had not yet reached the road.

She had certainly traveled twice as far backward as she had gone forward, and the conclusion was inevitable that she had lost her way. There was nothing particularly alarming in the prospect of spending the night in the woods, except that it would be disagreeable. True, there were wild animals, but they were not very numerous, and she could escape them by taking refuge in some tree.

No more firing was heard, and she grew quite sanguine that her friends had escaped harm at the hands of the Indians. This made her the more anxious to reach them, and she pressed continually forward in the direction that it seemed to her must speedily strike the road which she had left a short time before.

There is something singular in the difficulty which attends one's efforts to find the way after having gone astray. It is like the fatality which causes the discharge of rusty guns, and those that are believed to be unloaded, when they are pointed in a direction where to do mischief. A man may be within a hundred yards of his own house and wander around the night through without coming any nearer.

Many a female placed in the position of Edith Whitbeck would have given up in despair, but such a thought never entered her head. The slow hours dragged by, and through them all she kept at work. Now and then she would pause, and endeavor to determine the direction of the road by some theory of her own; but she failed in every instance.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

A faint moon was in the sky, but it was directly overhead, and was of no assistance in determining the points of the compass. She tried to use it for that purpose, but it was a failure in every case. Somewhere beyond midnight the fair wanderer paused, fully convinced for the first time that it was useless to tramp any further during the darkness.

She was tired, for she had tramped many miles since leaving the settlement, and she sat down upon a fallen tree to rest awhile. Wearied and worn, she leaned her head back against the soft branches, and, before she was aware, dropped asleep.

The sleep of health and strength followed, and she never opened her eyes until tomorrow. When she roused herself, the forenoon was well advanced, although the sun invisible. The air remained cold, the sky was clouded, and the heavens seemed to be filled with snow.

Her limbs were benumbed, and she was forced to move hurriedly about for some minutes to restore the circulation. "I declare," she said to herself. "I have spent the night alone in the woods!" She was in a portion of the forest where she was unable to recognize any landmarks, and she was hungry and thirsty.

There were abundant means for supplying the latter want, but none for the former. She had no weapon with her, not even a knife, but she discovered a few berries still upon the bushes, with which she partially satisfied her hunger, and then, with undiminished courage, resumed her hunt for home.

Near noon she paused again, with the conviction that nothing was for her except a blind perseverance.

North, south, east and west were all the same. By keeping on, she might reach home' by standing still she was certain not to do so. The forest remained one dead level-there being no elevation which she could ascent and make an observation-and she was still moving forward when it began snowing.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

The prospect of being lost in the woods in a snow-storm was terrible enough, and she redoubled her exertions; but night came down a second time, with snow falling, and without her having caught a glimpse of a human habitation or of a person.

The howling of wolves so alarmed her that she took refuge in a tree, where she remained shivering the night through. The snow ceased falling, but the weather became still colder, and it was hardly daylight when she descended and renewed her travels – more for the purpose of saving herself from freezing to death than with much hope of any other good resulting from it.

A few wild berries stayed the pangs of hunger, but she was sensible that she was growing weaker every hour. Her shawl and dress were torn by the briers and undergrowth, and she felt that she could not journey much further.

Just before night she reached a large stream of water – large enough, as it seemed to her, to be called a river, although she was unable to identify it. Here, while she stood viewing it, and speculating as to where she could be, her strength failed her altogether, and she sought shelter under some dense undergrowth, where she expected to remain until death came to her relief. She had been wandering forty-eight hours in the woods, with no nourishing food, and she had traveled far enough to exhaust almost any man. Still, she remained where she was the third night through, and at daylight struggled to her feet with the purpose of renewing her fight with life; but she was too far gone, and she succumbed.

At this critical moment she was aroused by the barking of a dog, and as she languidly opened her eyes she saw a young man in the garb of a hunter, who, as may be supposed, was astounded at the discovery his canine had made. He tenderly assisted her to her feet, and supported her to where his “dug-out” was moored. Placing her in this he paddled down the stream to his own home, where she received the kindest attention. When she was so far recovered as to be able to travel he conducted her to her home, over twenty miles distant.

It was found, upon reaching there, that the Indian party had made some hostile demonstrations, but they left the country without slaying anyone, they showing no anxiety to indulge in a murdering raid.

This sketch as the best kind of ending-for the acquaintance between the fair fugitive and her rescuer so strangely made, grew closer and closer, until they became man and wife when of course it was as close as it could be – Saturday night.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**JUNE 19, 1874**

### **A NEW DISCOVERY**

He was without exception one of the most extraordinary vagabonds to be found upon the Pacific coast. How he made a living no one can tell. His clothes were never of the best, yet he always had plenty of money; and where he came from no one ever knew.

In fact an air of mystery always hung about Doctor Slyke, which puzzled the denizens of Cedarville exceedingly; they never could make him out. When he was first seen in the community he was standing in the dusty twilight fondly patting the top of a pine-stump, which at the time seemed to be his only visible support, and saying; "Thank you, sonny. The good-hic!-are always rewarded; here are two bits."

Cedarville flourished and Doctor Slyke became an honored citizen. During the first weeks of his stay certain evil disposed persons seemed to doubt his right to have a place in their midst. Some said he was a road agent, who made his living by exacting tribute from the traveling public. Some said he had "made his pile" in other doubtful ways, cached it, and had settled down in Cedarville to spend it. These ill-natured reports soon died away under the sunshine of Doctor Slyke's affability.

Extraordinary? Why, that isn't the word for it. The way that man would sit in Hickory Johnson's saloon-before Hickory went out of the business (pistol-bal) – and bluff a man right square down on the breechen on a worthless hand was perfectly miraculous. He was so gifted with the power of speech that it was a brave man who dared to take a hand with him. As we said before, Hickory Johnson went out of the business forever, and then Doctor Slyke was thrown upon his own resources. Gambling as a means of making a living was played out, and no one cared to run the bank – Cedarville was taken with a virtuous fit – and the doctor was too high-motioned to swing a pick.

After idling around in a genteel fashion for some weeks the doctor bade the people of Cedarville an affectionate adieu and was seen no more for a time.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**JUNE 19, 1874**

### ***A NEW DISCOVERY***

Cedarville, as a matter of course, slid along on the even tenor of its way after Doctor Slyke's departure, but the wary adventurer had so ingratiated himself with her people that a most substantial vacuum was felt in the ranks of her society. It is so all the world over; we look up to one man in tribute to his good qualities and deeds, and admire him as is his right. Setting aside the **cacathes loguendi** with which Doctor Slyke was afflicted, the men of Cedarville, with that peculiar taste common to that peculiar place, admire a man who was death on Poker, and commonly held a first-class hand in the game of Bluff.

"Mates," said Jim Sprig one night in Gregory's bar-room, six month's after, "it ain't none o' my funeral, but I tell you' at doc's agoin' ter turn up, an' that before long. I feel it in my bones. Did ye ever notice a crimson streak along the top o fold Sarah, as the sun went down? Well, I never noticed that think yet 'ithout somethin' turnin' up."

As Jim spoke his eye rested upon the knob of the door, which was seen to gradually turn. The knob stopped turning, the door opened a foot or so, and through the opening was thrust a dirty head surmounted by a shocking bad hat and fenced in at the base by a prodigality of maculated shirt-collar. At first sight the aforesaid head seemed to be as enigmatical as a Chinese puzzle, but on a close inspection it proved to be the property of Doctor Slyke. The head nodded in a dignified way to the rousing "Senor!" which greeted it, and condescended to bring in the body which belonged to it. James Sprig was right; the doctor had turned up, and James's anatomy was no doubt relieved.

On this particular evening Doctor Slyke was perceptibly, sociably and confidentially drunk. "You did not know I was a married man, I suppose, gentleman?" said this educated vagabond, seating himself on a visit to my family, and am now on my way to the coast to find a suitable place to remove them to. Gentlemen, with all my faults, I trust I am capable of a good action."

To do the doctor justice, he was capable of a good action, for when the Chinaman slid down the flume and broke his legs, the doctor nursed him as tenderly as he would nurse one who was qualified by birth and education to testify against a white man.

***Register of Deeds***

***Judy Lambert***

***(continued)***

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**JUNE 19, 1874**

### **A NEW DISCOVERY**

"I trust I am capable of a good action." There were pathos and dignity in the tone of the doctor's voice as he uttered these words. More, too; there was a world of eloquence in the wave of the doctor's arm-which had the wristband neatly turned over the coat-cuff which had weight.

"I have been to see my family, residing in Fourteen-Mile Gap," resumed Doctor Slyke; "and, as I said before, I have resolved to bring them farther West. Today I came through Carson's Pass (having walked all the way), and on casting my eyes toward the summit of the mountain I beheld something which thrilled me to the very soul. I had made a new discovery!"

"Cinnabar?" said Jim. "Silver?" said another. "Gentlemen, quicksilver is not generally found at such a height. It was not silver, but a substance which, in my estimation, is equally as valuable." "Is it gold?" "It is not gold, gentlemen." "Then it can't be diamonds. What in thunder is it, Doc?" "Gentlemen, the only answer I can make is that the component parts of this substance are known in chemistry by the symbols. HO. I see you are all attention, gentlemen, and I will endeavor to explain to you the uses of this wonderful-ah-substance. In the first place, it is a rarity in this part of the world. It is only to be found at very high altitudes, and is most common to the Arctic and Antarctic regions. This substance is generated in a temperature not ranging higher than thirty-two degrees. This substance takes the form of a tabula rosa when the parts are in a complacent state. Sometimes it assumes a pendant form, and sometimes lumpy. In appearance it is limpid, translucent, opaque. In nature it is the opposite from colorific; it is brittle and easily removed. Its uses are many. In tropical latitudes its value is incalculable, and even in this climate it is valued highly. I know that the inhabitants of Fiddletown and Pokerville would give any price could they get it, as it is largely used in bibulous communities. (The doctor's elegance of diction was unsurpassed.) To satisfy myself, I toiled up the mountain, and found that my conjectures were right. Said I to myself, on beholding the treasure. I am a made man, but would it not be playing it pretty low down on the boys if I did not put them up to this?" Pardon the vulgarism, gentlemen, but my feelings overcome me."

At this point the doctor named his "pizin" and shook hands with the crowd.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(Continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**JUNE 19, 1874**

### **A NEW DISCOVERY**

"Gentlemen," resumed the doctor "a sense of gratitude to all impels me to disclose this secret. You have used me well, and when I made this discovery I asked myself "Cui bonon?" For yours certainly." "Lets pre-empt right off," said a huge-booted miner, "I'll lead off, hey, Doc?"

"Certainly, sir, ex pede Herculem, and I know of no more capable man than yourself. I was about to propose. Gentlemen-ahem!-I have a family to bring on, but what I lack is the necessary funds. I may say, under the present position, I am stans pedc in uno. I have been an erring man, I know, but I now see a chance to redeem myself. I have friends, gentlemen," added the doctor, huskily. "who will see my comfortably situated, but it is rather obnoxious to tax their generosity."

The crowd had evidently taken a hint as men were seen feeling in their pockets, and Jim Sprig had laid his hat on the bar. All this the doctor did not seem to notice, but kept his eyes modestly upon the knot-hole in the floor.

"Ther bank's open, mates," said James, "an' all wot's disposed ter give ter help a deservin' man kin walk up." A steady fire was kept upon the objective point a few minutes and then it came Bill Watson's turn. Bill threw in a "kine." James saw it and went two better. Bill saw him and raised him three.

"I see ther gentleman's pile an'rise him agin," said James, as he felt in his pocket. "Stamped, by thunder!" "Hole on, gentlemen," said the doctor, fumbling at a buckle, "and I'll come in.

"Eh?" "Forgive me, gentlemen," said Doctor Slyke despondingly, "I forget myself," and burst into tears.

"One navy, with ther tumbler broke," said Jim enumerating the contents of the hat, "one toothpick-pint broke off-pack o'keerds, one specimen, juice-harp, box o'caps, dust-bag, brass ring, five cartridges, 'bout ten ounces o'dust, an'-ninety dollars in kine." He deposited the heap in the doctor's lap.

### **Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

By H.E. SMITH

June 19, 1874

### A NEW DISCOVERY

"Gentlemen," said Dr. Slyke, his voice trembling with emotion, "I am grateful. This animating spirit of a collective body is refreshing, and rest assured I will repay you. I am adscriptus glebe, but nevertheless a man's family are entitled to his services. I will meet you tomorrow at the white rock, which can be seen from the Pass.

Behind it lies the treasure of which I speak. Tomorrow, gentleman, at ten. "Good night." Dr. Slyke vanished through the door. What a speculative spirit took possession of that body of men! They even thought of organizing a stock company on the spot, to the discomfiture of Fiddletown and other communities. But one and all believed that if the "doc" could be depended on their fortunes were made.

Early the next morning a band of men could have been seen toiling and sweating up the rugged sides of the Sierra to view the new discover. Nearly eight thousand feet above them was the white rock, behind which lay the treasure. The doctor must have gone ahead, and some of the most imaginative thought they could detect his figure slowly plodding upward.

At all events they reached the rock after a hard pull, and looked about them. No doctor was to be seen. Had they the eyes of the eagle they might see him proceeding at a rapid pace up Carson's Pass, with his face turned in an eastward direction. But as they did not have the eyes of the eagle, they got tired of waiting, and went behind the rock to see for themselves. Jim Sprig was ahead, when his eyes caught a gleam of something white.

"Yer she is, mates," said Jim with a yell, as he sprang forward. The excited crowd followed, and saw him lay his hand upon a clear substance which lay before them like a lake.

Jim laid his hand upon it, and arose with a face as red as a beet.

"Euchred, by thunder!"

Reader, the doctor had told the truth. It was **Ice**.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 20, 1874**

#### **WHICH WAS THE COWARD?**

“Will you bear that, Edward?” The young man to whom this was addressed, stood facing another person about his own age, on whose flushed countenance was an expression of angry defiance. The name of this person was Logan. A third party, also a young man had asked the question, just given, in a tone of surprise and regret. Before there was time for a response, Logan said sharply, and in a voice of stinging contempt-

“You are a poor, mean coward, Edward Wilson! I repeat the words; and if there is a particle of manhood about you-” Logan paused for an instant, but quickly added: “You will resent the insult.” Why did he pause? His words had aroused a feeling in the breast of Wilson that instantly betrayed itself in his eyes. The word “coward,” in that instant of time, would have more fittingly applied to James Logan. As quickly as the flash leaves the cloud so quickly faded the indignant light from the eyes of Edward Wilson. What a fierce struggle agitated him for the moment!

“We have been fast friends, James,” said Wilson, calmly. “Even if that were not so, I will not strike you.” “You’re afraid.” “I will not deny it. I have always been afraid to do wrong.” “Pah! Cant and hypocrisy?” said the other, contemptuously.

“You know me better than that, James Logan; and I am sorry that, in your resentment of an imagined wrong, you should so far forget what is just to my character as to charge upon me such mean vices. I reject the implied allegation as false.”

There was an honest indignation in the manner of Wilson, which he did not attempt to repress. “Do you call me a liar?” exclaimed Logan, in uncontrollable passion, drawing back his hand, and making a motion as if he were about to slap the other in the face.

The eyes of Wilson quailed not, nor were the smallest quiver of a muscle perceptible. From some cause the purpose of Logan was not executed. Instead of giving a blow, he assailed his antagonist with words of deeper insult, seeking thus to provoke an assault.

Wilson was not to be driven from the citadel in which he had entrenched himself. “If I am a coward, well,” he said. “I would rather be a coward, than lay my hand in violence on him whom I had once called friend.”

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(Continued)**



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 20, 1874**

#### **WHICH WAS THE COWARD?**

At this moment light girlish laughter and the ringing of merry voices reached the ears of our excited young men, and their relation of antagonism at once changed. Logan walked away in the direction from which the voices came, while the other two remained where they had been standing.

“Why didn’t you knock him down?” said the companion of Wilson. The latter, whose face was now very sober and very pale, shook his head slowly. He made no other response. “I believe you are a coward!” exclaimed the other, impatiently; and turning off, he went in the direction taken by Logan.

The moment Wilson was alone he seated himself on the ground, concealed from the party, whose voices had interrupted them, by a large rock, and covered his face with his hands, sat motionless for several minutes. How much he suffered in that little space of time we will not attempt to describe. The struggle with his indignant impulses had been very severe. He was no coward in heart. What was right and humane he was ever ready to do, even at the risk to himself of both physical and mental suffering. Clearly conscious was he of this. Yet the consciousness did not and could not protect his feelings from the unjust and stinging charge of cowardice so angrily brought against him. In spite of his better reason, he felt humiliated; and there were moments when he half regretted the forbearance that saved the insolent Logan punishment.

They were but moments of weakness; in the strength of a manly character he was quickly himself again. The occasion of this misunderstanding is briefly told. Wilson made one of a little pleasure party for a neighboring village, that was spending an afternoon in a shady retreat on the banks of a mill stream. There were three or four young men and half a dozen maidens; and, as it happens on such occasions, some rivalries were excited among the former.

These should only have added piquancy to the merry intercourse of all parties, and would have done so, had not the impatient temperament of Logan carried him a little beyond good feeling and a generous deportment toward others. Without due reflection, yet in no sarcastic spirit, Edward Wilson made a remark on some act of Logan that irritated him exceedingly.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 20, 1874**

#### **WHICH WAS THE COWARD?**

An angry spot burned instantly on his cheek, and he replied with words of cutting insult; so cutting that all present expected nothing less than a blow from Wilson as his answer to the remark. To deal a blow was his first impulse. He restrained the impulse; and it required more courage to do this than to have stricken the insolent young man to the ground. A moment or two Wilson struggled with himself, and then turned off and marched slowly away.

His flushed and then paling face, his quivering lips and unsteady eyes, left on the minds of all who witnessed the scene an impression somewhat unfavorable. Partaking of the indignant excitement of the moment, many of those present looked for the instant punishment for his unjustifiable insult. When, therefore, they saw Wilson turn away without even a defiant answer; and heard the low, sneeringly uttered word,

“Coward!” from the lips of Logan they felt that there was a craven spirit about the young man. A coward we instinctively despise; and yet, how slow we are to elevate that higher moral courage which enables a man to brave unjust, rather than to do what he thinks to be wrong, above the mere brute instinct which, in the moment of excitement, forgets all physical consequences.

As Edward Wilson walked away from his companions he felt that he was regarded as a coward. This was for him a bitter trial, and the more so, because there was one in that little group of startled maidens for whose generous regard he would have sacrificed all but honor.

It was, perhaps, half an hour after this unpleasant occurrence, that Logan, whose heart still burned with an unforgiving spirit, encountered Wilson under circumstances that left him free to repeat his insulting language, without disturbing the rest of the party, who were amusing themselves at some distance, and beyond the range of observation. He did not succeed in obtaining a permanent encounter, as he had desired.

Edward Wilson had been for sometime sitting alone with his unhappy thoughts, when he was aroused by sudden of alarm, the tone of which told his heart too plainly that some imminent danger impended. Springing to his feet he ran in the direction of the cries, and quickly saw the cause of excitement. Recent heavy rains had swollen the mountain stream, the turbid waters of which were sweeping down with great velocity.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(Continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 20, 1874**

#### **WHICH WAS THE COWARD?**

Two young girls, who had been amusing themselves at some distance above in a boat that was attached to the shore by a long rope, had, through some accident, got the fastening loose, and were now gliding down, far out in the current with a fearfully increasing speed, toward the breast of a milldam some hundreds of yards below, from which the water was thundering down a height of over twenty feet .

Pale with terror, the poor young creatures were stretching out their hands toward their companions on the shore, and making heart-rending cries for succor. Instant action was necessary, or all would be lost. The position of the young girls had been discovered, while they were yet some distance above, and there happening to be another boat out on the milldam, and that night at hand. Logan and two other young men had loosed it from the shore. The danger of being carried over the dam, should any one venture out in this boat, seemed so inevitable, that none of them dared to encounter the hazard.

Now screaming and ringing their hands, and now urging these men to try and save their companions, stood the young maidens of the party on the shore, when William dashed through them, and springing into the boat, cried out.

“Quick Logan ! Take an oar, or all is lost.” Instead of this, Logan stepped back a pace or two from the boat, while his face grew pale with fear. Not an instant more was waste. At a glance Wilson saw that if the ladies were saved, it must be by the strength of his own arm. Bravely he pushed from the shore, and, with giant strength, born of the moment and for the occasion, from the boat out into the current, and, at an angle with the other boat, toward the point where the water was sweeping over the dam. At every stroke the light skiff sprung forward a dozen feet, and scarcely half a minute elapsed ere Wilson was beside the other boat.

Both were now within twenty yards of the fall, and the water was bearing them down with a velocity that a strong rower, with every advantage on his side, could scarcely have contended against successfully.

To transfer the frightened girls from one boat to the other, in the few moments of time left ere the down-sweeping current would bear their frail vessel to the edge of the dam, and still to retain an advantage, was for Wilson, impossible. To let his own boat go and manage theirs he saw to be equally impossible.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 20, 1874**

#### **WHICH WAS THE COWARD?**

A cry of despair reached the young man's ears as the oars dropped from his grasp into the water. It was evident to the spectators of the fearful scene that he had lost his presence of mind, and that now all was over. Not so, however. In the next moment he had sprung into the water, which, near the breast of the dam, was not more than two feet deep. As he did so he grasped the other boat, and bracing himself firmly against the rushing current, held it poised a few yards from the point, where the foam-crested waters leaped into the whirlpool below. At the same instant his own boat shot like an arrow over the dam. He had gained however, but a small advantage. It required his utmost strength to keep the boat he had grasped from dragging him down the fall.

The quickly formed purpose of Wilson, in thus springing into the water, had been to drag the boat against the current. If he were to let the boat go he could easily save himself. Not once did such a thought enter his own heart.

"Lie down close to the bottom," he said, in a quick hoarse voice. The terror-stricken girls obeyed the injunction instantly.

And now, with a coolness that was wonderful under all circumstances, Wilson moved the boat several yards away from the nearest shore until he reached a point where he knew the water below the dam to be more expanded and free from rocks. Then throwing his body suddenly against the boat, and running along until he was within a few feet of the dam, he sprang upon it and passed over with it. A moment or two the light vessel, as it shot into the air, stood poised, and then went plunging down.

The fearful plunge was made in safety. The boat struck the seething waters below, and glanced out from the whirlpool, bearing its living freight uninjured.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(Continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 20, 1874**

#### **WHICH WAS THE COWARD?**

“Which was the coward?” The words reached the ears of Logan, as he gathered, with the rest of the company, around Wilson and the pale, trembling girls he had so heroically saved. Fair lips asked the question. One maiden had spoken to another, and in a louder voice than she had intended.

“Not Edward Wilson,” said Logan, as he stepped forward, and grasped the hand of him he had wronged and insulted. “Not Edward Wilson! He is the noblest and the bravest!”

Wilson made an effort to reply. He was for some moments too much excited and exhausted to speak. At last, he said.

“I only did what was right. May I ever have courage for that while I live.” Afterward he remarked, when alone with Logan:

“It required a far greater exercise of courage to forbear when you provoked and insulted me in the presence of those who expected retaliation, than it did to risk my life at the milldam.”

There is a moral heroism that few can appreciate. It will usually be found that the morally brave man is quickest to lose the sense of personal danger when others are in peril.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 13, 1874**

#### **COMING TO WOO**

“You’ll make a smart capable woman, if you git the right kind of a husband,” sadi Uncle Jotham Kingsley chucking me under the chin. “I know where there’s a splendid chance for you, Susan – a splendid chance. “Where?” I asked, amused at Uncle Jotham’s seriousness.

“Ah, up to Brasherville,” answered Uncle Jotham, knowingly. “Jest say you’ll consider the matter soberly, an’ I’ll send him down.” “Of course I’ll consider the matter soberly,” I answered, not having the faintest idea that Uncle Jotham would take me at my word.

But he did; for, about a week after his departure, I received the following letter, which, from its appearance generally, had most likely cost him a whole day’s work.

“My Dear Niece Susan – I take my pen in hand to inform you that I am well An’ hoap these fu lines will find you injoyin’ the Same great blessin. On Account of your great resemblance to my dear deceast wife, who you was named after, I feel a grait Interest in your welfair, an” would like to see you settled down an Doin’ wel. I think a good Husban would be the Best thing for you.

“As You promised to consider the matter Soberly if I would send Down a likely, respecttable man, I am goin to do so. His naim is Caleb Finch. Hes a widderer, and has 5 childurn, they’re Smart, an You wouldn’t have Any trouble with em. Hes got 80 akers of the best land in the whull of Brasherville, an 8 cows an severill horses. Hes goin to start a dary ef he gits married, now he don’t have anybody to see to Things, an his housekeeping is goin to rack An ruin.

“ive told him all about You an I think you’ll suit him, only youre a most too young. Howsumever that cant be helpt. He will come down the first of next week an there won’t be nothing to Hender your makin a good bargain, if you’ve only a mind to. He was very kind to the late Missus Finch, an spared no ecsponents when she was sick. Hur docter-bill amounted to Over 25 dollars. He got hur the handsomest gravestone that’s ever been set up in the cemetery.

“Hopin you you’ll conclude to act for your intrest, I scribe myself Your affeckshunate unkle, “Jotham Kingsley

“To Mis Susan Spencer.” Dear me! I never laughed in all my life before as I did over that letter, with its awful spelling, and its capitals scattered in promiscuously, for all the world, Bell declared, as if he had shaken them out of the sand-box and they had stuck wherever they happened to fall.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 13, 1874**

#### **COMING TO WOO**

The most laughable part of it was the idea that he had actually got a husband looked up for me, and was going to send him down to see me.

"You're a lucky young lady," said Bell with tears in her eyes, the moment she stopped laughing enough to utter a coherent word. "Only think how kind he was to the late deceased 'Missus Finch'! If you should die, you'll have the consoling thought to cheer your last hours that he'll get you a 'handsome gravestone,' and that he will pay your doctor's bill cheerfully, even if it does amount to 'over twenty-five dollars.' You'll be attended to 'regardless of expense,' I haven't the least doubt."

"And the five children!" I said, gasping with laughter. "But they're smart, and that's one consolation. "What a pity that you're quite so young," said Bell making an effort to recover her dignity, and failing signally in the attempt. "It's too bad that you can't have your age changed by an act of the Legislature, to accommodate your expected Mr. Finch. Mrs. Susan Finch! That sounds splendidly, doesn't it? It'll look nice, too, when he has you deposited by the late 'Missus Finch' in the 'symetry.' Dear, dear! Who ever heard of anything quite so comical before?"

"But what's to be done?" I asked, as the real state of the case began to make itself apparent. "Here we are, left to keep house while mother is visiting. Next week Mr. Finch is coming--- "Coming to woo!" said Bell. "Mr. Finch coming to woo!"

"And I want to know what we're going to do with him?" I demanded. "You're going to marry him of course," answered Bell. "I advise you to fall to and 'begin to consider the matter,' as Uncle Jotham requested. Think it over prayerfully and well, and let the argument of the late 'Missus Finch's gravestone' weight in Mr. Finch's favor.

"It's all well enough for you to laugh," said I, indignantly; "but if you were in my place, you'd think differently of it. How am I going to get rid of the wretch? What under the sun possessed Uncle Jotham to send him off down here? I never was so provoked in all my life, never!"

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said Bell, after a silence of a minute or two, "He doesn't know how you look, and if I were to pass myself off for you, he'd never know the mistake. I'll be Susan if you'll be Bell, and I'll get rid of Mr. Finch for you."

"If you only would!" cried I.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 13, 1874**

#### **COMING TO WOO**

"I will," answered Bell, her eyes sparkling with anticipated pleasure; "I'm going to make Mr. Finch think that I'm deaf-deaf as a post. Oh, my! Won't it be jolly, though?" Bell leaned back in her chair, and laughed till her sides ached.

Monday morning Mr. Finch came. We took a good look at him from the window as he came up the path. He was a little man, with red hair, and no eyes to speak of. The poor gentleman had evidently got on his best Sunday clothes, and looked ill at ease in consequence. Perhaps his mission helped to make him nervous.

"From this time forth, as long as he stays, I'm deaf, remember," said bell, warningly. "I shan't be able to hear anything short of a respectable scream." I went to the door.

"Is this Miss Susan Spencer?" asked Mr. Finch, as he entered. "Susan is in the sitting-room," I answered. "I'll introduce you. You are Mr. Finch, aren't you?" "Yes'm; Caleb Finch." He responded, so solemnly that I wanted to giggle. We took him into the sitting-room where Bell was. "Susan," said I, in a loud voice, "this is Mr. Finch." I don't hear what you say, said Susan, turning her ear toward me. "Speak a little louder, if you please." "This is Mr. Finch!" screamed I, in her ear. I thought I must laugh, to see how horrified Mr. Finch looked.

"I'm glad to see you, Mr. Finch," said Susan, with a beaming smile. "Take a chair-bring it close if you please, because I'm slightly affected with deafness. How are the children?" "Pretty well," answered Mr. Finch, taking a seat beside her.

"Louder, if you please," said "Susan," presenting her ear. "Pretty well," answered Mr. Finch, in a fair war-whoop. I managed to keep my face turned the other way, and had hard work to keep from screaming. "I was much touched at what Uncle Jotham wrote about your kindness to your late wife," said "Susan," with a fond glance into Mr. Finch's face. "What did she die of?"

"Congestion of the brain," answered Mr. Finch, his voice about two octaves higher than its usual pitch.

I didn't hear, said "Susan" "A trifle louder, Mr. Finch. Mr. Finch repeated his reply in so loud a tone that he got red in the face with the exertion its utterance caused him.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 13, 1874**

#### **COMING TO WOO**

"Ah!" "Susan" comprehended at last. "Is she always so?" he asked, turning to me, and wiping his face vigorously with a big red and yellow handkerchief. "She isn't quite as deaf all the time," I answered, demurely.

Pretty soon Mr. Finch made another attempt at conversation. "You have a very pretty place here," he shouted. "Yes; groceries are pretty dear," responded "Susan." "You're right about that, Mr. Finch." "Pretty place," explained Mr. Finch, getting desperate. "Pretty place here!" and he waved his hand toward the garden and grounds. "Yes I know," answered "Susan," mournfully; "but it couldn't be helped, I suppose."

Mr. Finch cast a despairing glance at me. I had to leave the room. I could stand it no longer. When I was safely outside the door I laughed till I could laugh no more. I could only chuckle in kind of faint imitation of a laugh. I hadn't strength enough left for the genuine article.

As I sat there I heard Mr. Finch shouting in his highest tones to "Susan," who always had to have everything repeated to her. It wasn't long before he began to get hoarse, for she kept him busy. A dozen times, while we were eating dinner, I thought I must laugh; it was so comical to see "Susan" not a muscle of her face relaxing from its dignified look, holding out her ear for Mr. Finch to repeat his remarks in it. He couldn't have eaten his dinner, if he had had the best of appetites.

All the afternoon "Susan" kept him sitting by her. I could see the poor man, half tired out, casting furtive glances at the clock. At last he got up, and beckoned me to come out into the hall. "I think I'll be a goin' back," he said, with a sigh that indicated how great his disappointment was. "I come down, on your uncle's recommend, to make some kind of a bargain with your sister Susan; he never told me a word about her bein' so deaf."

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 13, 1874**

#### **COMING TO WOO**

"Ah!" "Susan" comprehended at last. "Is she always so?" he asked, turning to me, and wiping his face vigorously with a big red and yellow handkerchief. "She isn't quite as deaf all the time," I answered, demurely.

Pretty soon Mr. Finch made another attempt at conversation. "You have a very pretty place here," he shouted. "Yes; groceries are pretty dear," responded "Susan." "You're right about that, Mr. Finch." "Pretty place," explained Mr. Finch, getting desperate. "Pretty place here!" and he waved his hand toward the garden and grounds. "Yes I know," answered "Susan," mournfully; "but it couldn't be helped, I suppose."

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**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**  
**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **MARCH 13, 1874**

#### **COMING TO WOO**

"It's an unfortunate affliction," I said, feeling that he expected me to say something. "Yes, very," answered Mr. Finch, with another sigh. "I hain't said anything to her about my intention, 'cause it wouldn't be prudent for me to marry any one as deaf as she is. Beats all I ever see or heard of!"

"I'm sorry," I said, working hard to keep my gravity. "So'm I," said Mr. Finch. "She seems willin' enough. She's got a real kind dispersition; talked feelin'ly about the late Miss' Finch, an' appreciated my efforts to'rd doin' justice to her mem'ry. I don't feel's ef I'd orter say anythin' to her about what my intentions were. I don't s'pose you'd be willin' to come an' keep house for me?" Mr. Finch gave me a very insinuating glance, and looked hopeful.

"Oh, I couldn't think of such a thing," said I. "I'm too young, and, then, there are other reasons, you see." "Yes, I s'pose so." Mr. Finch heaved a disappointed sigh. "I don't s'pose there's any use of goin'in to tell her good-by; you can tell her that for me. I may as well be goin'," he added, taking his hat. "Good-day."

"Good-day," I answered, and Mr. Finch took his departure. A week after that my sides were lame and sore from the effect which Mr. Finch's visit had on them. I got a letter from Uncle Jotham after Mr. Finch's return to Brasherville.

"I never heerd nothin' about your bein' deaf," he wrote. "Seems to me it come on sudden. It's a pitty, because Mr. Finch is a nice man." Bell and I ofter Laugh about the poor man. I hope the efforts he made to make her hear didn't injure his lungs. I've been afraid he'd go into a quick consumption.

**Register of Deeds**  
**Judy Lambert**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**MARCH 27. 1874**

### **SCARED OUT OF A WIFE**

The narrative which I am about to write, was told to me one bleak cold night, in a country parlor. It was one of those nights in midwinter, when the wind swept over the land, making everything tingle with its frosty breath, that I was seated before a blazing fire, surrounded by a jolly, half dozen boys and an old bachelor-a Peter Green-about forty and eight years old.

It was just the night without, to make those within enjoy a good story, so each of us had to tell his favorite story, save Mr. Green, and as he was a jolly old fellow, we all looked for a jolly story. We were somewhat surprised to hear him say, "I have no story that would interest you," so we had to find other entertainments for a time, when one of the boys told me to ask him how it happened he never got married. So I did.

"Well, gentlemen," he began, "it don't seem right for me to tell how that happened, but as it is about myself I don't care much. You see, when I was young, we had to walk as high as five miles to church and singing school, which was our chief enjoyment. This don't have anything to do with my not getting a wife, but I just wanted to show you that we had some trouble them days in getting our sport.

John Smith and I were like brothers, or like "Mary and her little lamb." Where one went the other was sure to go. We went to see two sisters and as we were not the best boys imaginable, the old gentleman took umbrage and wouldn't allow us to come near the house, so we would take the girls to the end of the lane, and there we would have to take the final kiss.

We soon got tired of that sort of fun and I told John, on our way to singing school one night that I was going to take Saddle home and that I was going into the house, too.

He said the old man would run me if I did. I told him I was going to risk it anyhow, let come what would.

He said "he would risk it if I would." So home we went with the girls. When we got to the end of the lane, I told the girls we proposed going in the house. They looked at each other in a way I didn't like too well, but they said old folks would be in bed, so they didn't care if we did.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**July 24, 1874**

### **A BORDER HEROINE**

One of the many strange experiences recorded in the annals of the border was that of a young lady named Edith Whitbeck, who resided in Western Virginia, near the close of the last century. At the time the incident occurred she was about 18 years of age, of comely form and appearance, and with vitality and enduring courage which were probably developed by the rugged life she led, from earliest childhood, upon what was then our Western frontier.

She belonged to a family comprising three brothers and two sisters, with both her parents living. Their home was something like two miles from the nearest settlement, with which it was connected by a wagon-road through the forest-the highway consisting of a single track, with no fence upon either side, and a well-worn footpath between the ruts-proving that the Whitbeck's not only made frequent visits to the village, but received many calls from the same quarter.

One morning, late in autumn, Edith left her home, and went to the settlement with the intention of spending the greater portion of the day there. She remained until toward evening, when she started homeward, expecting to reach the end of her journey by the time it was beginning to become fairly dark.

She had not left the village, when she was hailed by an old friend, who asked her which way she was going. When she answered, he shook his head. "Better not." "What do you mean?" she asked, in surprise. "Haven't you heard the news?" "Not a word." "There was a war-party of Wyandots seen this afternoon not more than three miles up the river. They will be a good deal nearer here before morning, and they wouldn't like anything better than to pick up a good-looking lass like you."

Edith turned as pale as death. Her thoughts were not of herself, but of her brothers and sisters, who were thus peculiarly exposed to the most fearful of all perils. What would befall them? Would anything restrain these red-skins from massacring such a tempting group? Must all of them be doomed to perish?

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**MARCH 27, 1874**

### **SCARED OUT OF A WIFE**

Now one part of me was up stairs, while the longest part was in the kitchen. As my leg was very lone it reached a shelf which was occupied with dishes, pans, coffee-pots, etc,. and turning it over down it went with a tremendous crash.

The girls had not yet retired, and I could hear them laugh fit to split their sides. I felt awfully ashamed, and was scared until my heart was in my throat for I expected the old man ever moment.

I extracted my leg from the confounded hole just in time, for the old lady looked into the kitchen from the room door, and asked what all that noise was about? The girls put her off as best they could, and I went to bed, while John was strangling himself under the covers to keep from laughing aloud.

We soon went off into the land of dreams with the hope of waking early. I wish I could tell you my dreams, but it would take me too long. One moment I would fancy myself by the side of Sadie, sipping nectar from her heaven-bedewed lips, and the next I would be flying from the old man, while he would be flourishing his cane above my head.

This all came to an end by John giving me a kick. On waking up and looking around I saw John's eyes as big as my fist, while the sun was beaming in at the window. What to do now we couldn't tell, for we heard the old man having family prayers in the kitchen.

John looked out of the window and said we could get down over the porch roof. "Get out and dress as soon as possible," he said.

So in my hurry my foot got fastened in the bedclothes, and out I tumbled, headforemost, turned over, and down the steps until I struck the door, which was fastened by a wooden button, and giving way, out I rolled right in front of the old man.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**

**(continued)**

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

**BY H.E. SMITH**

**MARCH 27, 1874**

### **SCARED OUT OF A WIFE**

He threw up both hands and cried "Lord have mercy on us!" for he evidently thought I was the devil. The old lady screamed until you could have heard her a mile. I was so scared and bewildered that I couldn't get up at once. It was warm weather, and I didn't have anything on but a shirt.

When I heard the girls snickering it made me mad, and I jumped up and rushed out of the door, leaving the greater part of my shirt on the old iron door latch.

Off I started for the barn, and when half way through the yard the dog set up a howl and went for me. When I got to the barnyard I had to run through a flock of sheep, and among them an old ram, who backed off a little and started for me. With one bound I escaped his blow, sprang into the barn, and began to climb up the logs into the mow, when an old mother hen pounced upon my legs, picking me until they bled.

I threw myself upon the hay, and after John slid down the porch into a hogshead of rainwater, he came to me with one of my boots, my coat, and one of the legs of my pants.

He found me completely prostrated. Part of my shirt, my hat, one leg of my pants, my vest, stockings, necktie, and one boot was left behind.

I vowed then and there that I would never go to see another girl, and I'll die before I will.

**Register of Deeds**

**Judy Lambert**



## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

They have been havin' pleasure exertions all summer here to Jonesville. Every week a'most they would go off on a exertion after pleasure, and Josiah was all up in end to go too. That man is a well principled man as I ever see, but if he had his head he would be worse than any young man I ever see to foller up picnics, and 4<sup>th</sup> of Julys, and camp-meetins and all pleasure exertions. But I don't encourage him in it. I have said to him time and agin, "There is a time for everything, Josiah Allen, and after anybody has lost all their teeth, and every mite of hair on the top of their head, it is time for 'em to stop goin' to pleasure exertions."

But, good land! I might jest as well talk to the wind! If that man should get to be as old as Mr. Methusler, and be a goin' on a thousand years old, he would prick up his ears if he should hear of an exertion. All summer long that man has beset me to go to 'em for he wouldn't go without me. Old Bunker Hill himself hain't any sounder in principle than Josiah Allen, and I have had to work head work to make excuses, and quell him down. But last week the old folks was goin' to have one out on the lake, on an island, and that man sat his foot down that go he would.

We was to the breakfast-table a talk in' it over, and says I "shan't go, for I am afraid of big water any way." Says Josiah, "You are jest as liable to be killed in one place as another." Says I, with a almost frigid air, as I passed him his coffee, "Mebby I shall be drowned on dry land, Josiah Allen; but I don't believe it."

Says he in a complainin' tone, "I can't get you started onto a-exertion for pleasure any way." "Says I in a almost eloquent way, "I don't believe in makin' such exertions after pleasure. I don't believe in chasin' of her up." Says I, "Let her come of her own free will." Says I, "you can't catch her by chasin of her up, no more than you can fetch a shower up in a drewth, by goin' out of doors, and running after a cloud up in the heavens above you. Sit down and be patient, and when it gets ready the refreshin' rain-drops will begin to fall without none of your help. And it is jest so with pleasure, Josiah Allen; you may chase her up over all ocians and big mountains of the earth, and she will keep ahead of you all the time; but set down, and not fatigue yourself a thinkin' about her, and like as not she will come right into your house unbeknown to you."

"Wall," says he, "I guess I'll have another griddle-cake, Samatha." And as he took it, he added gently but firmly, "I shall go, Samantha to this exertion, and I should be glad to have you present at it, because it seems jest to me as if I should fall overboard durin' the day."

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

Men are deep. Now that man knew that no amount of religious preachin' could stir me up like that one speech. For though I hain't no hand to coo, and dun't encourage him in bein'spoony at all, he knows that I am wrapped almost completely up in him. I went.

We had got to start about the middle of the night, for the lake was 15 miles from Jonesville, and the old mare bein'so slow, we had got to start a hour or 2 ahead of the rest. I told Josiah in the first out, that I had jest as lives set up all night, as to be routed out at 2 o'clock. But he was so animated and happy at the idea of goin' that he looked on the bright side of everything, and he said that we would go to bed before dark, and get as much sleep as we commonly did! So we went to bed the sun an hour high. But we hadn't more'n got settled down into the bed when we head a buggy and a single wagon stop to the gate, and I got up and peeked through the window and I see it was visitors come to spend the evenin'. Elder Wesley Minkley and his family, and Deacon Dobbins' folks Josiah vowed that he wouldn't stir one step out of that bed that night. But I argued with him pretty sharp, while I was throwin' on my clothes, and I finally got him started up. I hain't deceitful, but I thought if I got my clothes all on, before they came in, I wouldn't tell'em that I had been to bed that time of day. And I did get fressed up, even to my handkerchief pin. And I guess they had been there as much as ten mintues before, I thought that I hadn't took my night-cap off. They looked dretful curious at me, and I felt awful meachin. But I jest ketched it off, and never said nothin'. But when Josiah came out of the bedroom with what little hair he has got standin' out in every direction, no 2 hairs a layin' the same way, and one of his galluses a hangin' most to the floor under his best coat, I up and told'em. I thought mebbey they wouldn't stay long. But Deacon Dobbins' folks seemed to be all waked up on the subject to religion, and they proposed we should turn it into a kind of conference meetin' so they never went home till after 10 o'clock.

It was most 11 o'clock when Josiah and me got to bed agin. And then jest as I was getting' into a drowse I heard the cat in the buttry, and I got up to let her out. And that roused Josiah up, and he thought he heard the cattle in the garden, and he got up and went out. And there we was a marchin'round most all night. And if we would get into a nap, Josiah would think it was mornin' and he would start up and go out to look at the clock. He seemed so afraid we would be belated, and not to get to that exertion in time. And there we was on our feet most all night I lost myself once, for I dreampt that Josiah was droundin' ad Deacon Dobbins was on the shore a prayin' for him. It started me so that I jest ketched hold of Josiah and hollered. It skairt him awfully, and says he, "What does ail you, Samatha? I hain't been asleep before tonight, and now you have roused me up for good. I wonder what time it is?" And then he got out of bed again and went out and looked. It was half past 1, and he said, "he didn't believe we had better go to sleep again for fear we would be late for the exertion, and he wouldn't miss that for nothin'."

Register of Deeds

Judy Lambert

(continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

"Exertion," says I, in an awful cold tone. "I should think we had had exertion enough for one spell." But I got up at 2 o'clock and made a cup of tea, as strong as I could, for we both felt beat out, worse than if we had watched in sickness.

But as bad and wore out as Josiah felt bodily, he was all animated in his mind about what a good time he was a goin' to have. He acted foolish, and I told him so. I wanted to wear my brown and black gingham and a shaker, but Josiah insisted that I should wear a new lawn dress that he had brought me home as a present, and I had got just made up. So jest to please him I put it on, and my best bonnet. And that man, all I could do and say would wear a pair of pantaloons I had been a makin' for Thomas Jefferson. They was getting' up a military company to Thomas J. school, and these pantaloons was whit with a blue stripe down the sides, a kind of uniform. Josiah took an awful fancy to 'em. And says he.

"I will wear 'em Samantha, they look so dressy." Says I, "They hain't hardly done. I was goin' to stitch that blue stripe on the left leg on again. They hain't finished as they out to be, and I would not wear 'em. It looks vain in you."

Says he "I will wear 'em Samantha. I will be dressed for once." I didn't contend with him. Thinks I, we are makin' fools of ourselves, by goin' at all, and if he wants to make a little bigger fool of himself by wearin' them white pantaloons, I won't stand in his light. And then I had got some machine oil onto 'em, so I felt that I had to got to wash 'em anyway before Thomas J took 'em to school. She he put 'em on.

I had good vittles, and a sight of 'em. The basket wouldn't hold 'em all. So Josiah had to put a bottle of red raspberry jell into the pocket of his dress-coat, and lots of other little things, such as spoons, and knives, and forks, in his pantaloons and breast pockets. He looked like Captain Kidd, armed to the teeth, and I told him so. But good land, he would have carried a knife in his mouth, if I had asked him to be felt so neat about goin', and boasted so on what a splendid exertion it was goin' to be.

We got to the lake about 8 o'clock, for the old mare went slow. We was about the first ones there, but they kept a comin', and before 10 o'clock we all got there. There was about twenty old fools of us when we got collected together, and about 10 o'clock we set sail for the island.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

I had made up my mind from the first on't to face trouble, and so it didn't put me out so much when Deason Dobbins, in getting' into the boat, stepped onto my new lawn dress and tore a hole in it as big as my two hands, and ripped it half off the waist. But Josiah havin' felt so animated and tickled about the exertion, it worked him up awfully, when jest after we had got well out onto the lake, the wind took his hat off and blew it out into the lake. He had made up his mind to look so pretty that day, and be so dressed up, that it worked him up awfully. And then the sun beat down onto him; and if he had any hair onto his head it would have seemed more shady. But I did the best I could by him. I stood by him and pinned on his red bandanna handkerchief onto his head. But as I was a fixin' it on, I see there was something more than mortification that ailed him. The lake was rough and the boat rocked, and I see he was beginning to be awful sick. He looked deathly. Pretty soon I felt bad, too. Oh! The wretchedness of that time. I have enjoyed poor health considerable of my life, but never did I enjoy so much sickness in so short a time as I did on that pleasure exertion to the island. I suppose our bein' up all night a'most made it worse. When we reached the island we was both weak as cats.

I set right down on a stun, and held my head for a spell, for it did seem as if it would split open. After awhile I staggered up onto my feet, and finally got so I could walk straight, and sense things a little. Then I began to take things out of my dinner basket. The butter had all melted, so we had to dip it out with a spoon. And a lot of water had washed over the side of the boat, so my pies, and tarts and delicate cake, and cookies, looked awful mixed up. But no worse than the rest of the company's did. But we did the best we did the best we could, and began to make preparations to eat, for the man that owned the boat said he knew it would rain before night, by the way the sun scaled. There wasn't a man or woman there but what the perspiration just poured down their faces. We was a haggard and melancholy lookin' set. There was a piece of woods a little ways off, but it was up quite a rise of ground, and there wasn't any of us who hadn't the rheumatiz more or less. We made up a fire on the sand, though it seemed as if it was hot enough to steep the tea and coffee as it was.

After we got the fire started I histed an umbrella, and sat down under it, and fanned myself hard, for I was afraid of sunstroke.

Well, I guess I had set there ten minutes or more, when all of a sudden I thought where is Josiah? I hadn't seen him since we had got there. I riz right up and asked the company, almost wildy, if they had Seen my companion Josiah. They said, "No they hadn't." But Celestine Wilkins' little girl, who had come with her grandpa and grandma Gowdey, spoke up and says he, "I seen him agoin' off toward the woods; he acted dreadful strange, too, he seemed to be walkin' off side ways."

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

"Had the sufferin's we had under-gone made him delirious?" says I to myself, and then I started off on the run toward the woods, and old Miss Bobbet and Miss Gowdey, and Sister Minkley and Deacon Dobbins' wife, all rushed after me. Oh, the agony of them two or three minutes, my mind so distracted with forbodin's and the perspiration a pourin' down. But all of a sudden on the edge of the woods we found him. Miss Gowdey weighed one hundred pounds less than me, and had got a little ahead of me. He sat backed up against a tree, in a awful cramped position, with his left leg under him.

He looked dreadful uncomfortable, but when Miss Gowdey hollered out, "Oh, here you be; we have been skairt about you. What is the matter?" He smiled a dretful sick smile, and says he, "Oh, I thought I would come out here and meditate a spell. It was always a real treat to me to meditate."

Jest then I came up a pantin' for breath, and as the women all turned to face me, Josiah scowled at me, and shook his fist at them four women, and made the most mysterious motions with his hands toward'em. But the minute they turned around he smiled in a sickish way, and pretended to go to whistling.'

Says I, "What is the matter, Josiah Allen? What are you off here for?" "I am a mediatin', Samantha." Says I, "Do you just come down and join the company this minute, Josiah Allen. You was in a awful taken' to come with 'em and what will they think to see you act so?"

The women happened to be lookin' the other way for a minute, and he looked at me as if he would take my head off, and made the strangest motions toward'em, but the minute they looked at him he would pretend to smile that deathly smile.

Says I, "Come, Josiah Allen, we're goin' to get dinner right away, for we are afraid it will rain." "Oh well, said he, "a little rain, more or less, ain't a goin' to hinder a man from mediatin'." I was wore out, and says I, "Do you stop mediatin' this minute, Josiah Allen. Says he, "I won't stop, Samantha. I let you have your way a good deal of the time; but when I take it into my head to meditate, you ain't agoin' to break it up."

Just that minute they called to me from the shore to come that minute to find some of my dishes. And we had to start off. But oh! The gloom of my mind that was added to the lameness of my body. Them strange motions and looks of Josiah were on me.

Register of Deeds

Judy Lambert

(continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

Had the sufferin's of the night added to the trials of the day made him crazy? I thought more'n as likely as not I had got a lunny on my hands for the rest of my days. And then, oh how the sun did scald down onto me, and the wind took the smoke so into my face, that there wasn't hardly a dry eye in my head. And then a perfect swarm of yeller wasps lit down onto our vittles as quick as we laid'em down, so you couldn't touch a thing without running a chance to be stung. Oh! The agony of that time. But I kept to work and when I had got dinner most ready, I went back to call Josiah again. Old Miss Bobbet said she would go with me, for she thought she see a wild turnip in the woods there, and her boy Shakespeare had an awful cold, and she would dig one to give him.

We started up the hill again. He sat in jest the same position, all huddled up, with his leg under him, as uncomfortable a lookin' creetur as I ever see. When we both stood in front of him he pretended to look careless an' happy, and smiled that sick smile.

Says I, "Come, Josiah Allen; dinner is ready." "Oh, I hain't hungry," says he. "The table will probably be full. I had jest as leves wait." "Table full !" said I. "You know jest as well as I do that we are eatin' on the ground. Do you come and eat your dinner this minute." "Yes, do come," says Miss Bobbet. "Oh," says he, with that ghastly smile, a pretendin' to joke, "I have got plenty to eat here, I can eat muskeeters." The air was black with'em, I couldn't deny it. "The muskeeters will eat you, more likely," says I. "Look at your face and hands." "Yes, they have eat considerable of a dinner out of me, but I don't begrech 'em. I haint small enough, I hope, to begrech'em one meal."

Miss Bobbet went off in search of her wild turnip, and Josiah whispered to me with a savage look, and a tone sharp as a sharp ax. "Can't you bring forty or fifty more wimmin up here? You couldn't come here a minute, without a lot of other wimmin tied to your heels!" I began to see daylight, and Miss Bobbet got her wild turnip, I made some excuse to send her on ahead, and then Josiah told me.

It seems he had set down on that bottle of raspberry jell. That blue stripe on the side wasn't hardly finished, as I said, and I hadn't fastened my thread properly, so when he got to pullin' at 'em to try to wipe off the jell, the thread started, and bein' sewed on a machine, that seam jest ripped right open from top to bottom. That was what he had walked off sideways toward the woods for. Josiah Allen's wife hain't one to desert a companion in distress. I pinned'em up as well as I could, and didn't say a word to hurt his feelin's, only I jest said this to him, as I was a fixin'em. I fastened my gray eye firmly and almost sternly onto him and says I, "Josiah Allen, is this pleasure?" says I, "You was determined to come.

"Throw that in my face again, will you? What if I wuz? There goes a pin into my leg. I should think I had suffered enough, without your stabbin' of me with pins."

Register of Deeds

Judy Lambert

(continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### A PLEASURE EXERTION

By Josiah Allen's Wife

"Well, then, stand still, and not be caperin'. Round so?" "Well, don't be so agravatin', then." I fixed'em as well as I could but they looked pretty bad, and then they were all covered with jell, too. What to do I didn't know. But finally I told him I would put my shawl onto him. I doubled it up corner ways, as big as I could, so it almost touched the ground behind, and he walked back to the table with me. I told him it was best to tell the company all about it, but he jest put his foot down that he wouldn't, and I told him if he wouldn't that he must make his own excuses to the company, about wearin' the shawl. He told'em that he always loved to wear summer shawls, he thought it made a man look so dressy."

He looked as if he would sink, all the time he was a savin'it. They all looked dretful curious at him, and he looked as meachin' as if he had stole a sheep, and he never took a minute's comfort, nor I nuther. He was sick all the way back to the shore, and so was I. Jest as we got into our wagons and started for home, the rain begun to pour down. The wind turned our old umberell inside out in no time; my lawn dress was most spilte before, and now I give up my bunnet. I says to Josiah;

"This bunnet and dress are spilte, Josiah Allen, and I shall have to buy some new ones." "Well!Well! who said you wouldn't!" he snapped out. But it wore on him. Oh, how the rain poured down. Josiah, havin' nothin' but his handkerchief on his head felt it more than I did. I had took a apron to put on a getting' dinner, and I tried to make him let me pin it onto his head. But says he firmly:

"I hain't proud and haughty, Samantha, but I do feel above ridin' out with a pink apron on for a hat." "Well, then," said I,"get as wet as sop if you had ruther." I didn't say no more, but there we just set and suffered. The rain poured down, the wind howled at us, the old mare went slow, the rheumatiz laid holt of both of us, and the thought of the new bunnet and dress was a wearin' on Josiah, I knew.

There wasn't a house for the first seven miles, and after we got there, I thought we wouldn't go in, for we had got to get home to milk anyway, and we was both as wet as we could be. After I had beset him about the apron, we didn't say hardly a word for as much as thirteen miles or so; but I did speak once, as he leaned forward with the rain a drippin' offen his bandanna handkerchief onto his white pantaloons. I says to him in a stern tone: "Is this pleasure, Josiah Allen!" He gave the old mare a awful cut, and says he, "I'd like to know what you want to be so aggravatin' for?" I didn't multiply any more words with him only as we drove up to our door-step, and he helped me out into a mud puddle, I says to him:

"Mebby you'll hear me another time, Josiah Allen." And I bet he will, I hain't afraid to bet a ten-cent bill that man won't never open his mouth to me again about a PLEASURE EXERTION.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### SEPTEMBER 3, 1875

#### THE FRESHET

On a bend of the Connecticut River the old mill stood. It was a pleasant landmark to the traveler who journeyed by jolting stage from town to town; a relief to rippling river and leafy foliage, otherwise extending monotonously, as many an artist testified who came to sketch the spot. And yet the mill, became bright in the sunlight as it did, its wheel merrily beating time to the music of industry, had a dark history-one of deceit, mystery and wrong.

Of the miller, the older inhabitants of the adjacent villages, though they had come for years to joke, and gossip, and do business with Joseph Godfrey, none were ever heard to say that they liked the man. It was not that he was churlish and taciturn, or was deficient in joviality or hospitality. No laugh rang louder in the mill when village-wit told a comic tale; no one seemed to be more anxious than the miller to acquire the reputation of being entertaining and a good fellow. When winter brought the season of friendly visits, no house afforded better cheer and a warmer welcome than the Miller's. But though the laugh was loud and apparently hearty, it often ended in a harsh and bitter tone, as if some disagreeable recollection had sup-planted mirth, or a fiendish thought had abstracted jollity and substituted malice.

The eye, too, that one moment seemed full of fun, would suddenly quiver as if with defiance. Then, too, in the midst of hilarity, an expression of pain would pass over the Miller's usually rubicund face, the color would forsake his cheeks, he would swallow hard, as if strangled by an unseen hand, and would mutter disjointed syllables, unintelligible, but terrible even in their incoherency.

"That man (Godfrey) has certainly something terrible on his mind," the parson would say, when the strange exhibition of the jolly Miller suddenly becoming a hysterical sufferer was presented.

To which random remark some old man would answer: "He says that he was troubled with fits when he was a child; and though they never bother him now, they left the strange nervousness we have all seen. Still, after all, he did not come fairly by the mill, and it is strange that old Rutgers was never heard of."

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **SEPTEMBER 3, 1875**

#### **THE FRESHET**

“Old Rutgers,” as he was named by those who remembered him, was the owner of the mill before Godfrey came into possession. Rutgers had been married; but one terrific night, when the fiend of the storm was abroad, the rain pouring down as if a second deluge were threatened, and the wind whirling away everything that obstructed its ravaging path, the old mill, undermined by the pitiless tempest, was swept away, its massive timbers scattered as if they had been chaff, its ruins strewing the adjacent field.

When the storm abated, they found the corpse of Rutgers’s wife dreadfully mangled, covered with the heavy stones of the foundation. In her arms, which were clasped tightly to her breast, was a bundle of clothes, the garments of her son; but no mangled form of innocence incarnate was there. The powers of the air had snatched the object of her dying care from her arms, and slung it into the river-in a bend of which the little dead body was found lying in a shallow pool, three days after, by its father, who had been absent from home on the night of horror.

Rutgers never prospered after this. His afflictions seemed greater than he could bear. True the mill was rebuilt, the neighbors again flocked to their old rendezvous, the miller was even said to be making money faster than he had done before. But like some once noble but now decaying tree, though the top touches the sky, and its branches, far-stretching, seem to betoken great vivacity, is afflicted with a general withering of its leaves, Rutgers was blasted at heart. He became moody, sullen, morose, avoided the companionship of those whom before he had esteemed, and at last tried to drown the poignancy of bitter recollection in strong drink.

It was at this time that Joseph Godfrey came to the mill. Young and strong he was, but gaunt as if famished. To Rutgers he applied for work enough to keep him from starving. Rutgers, whose ear, even in his bitterest moments, was never deaf to the appeal of the suffering, listened to the story of the unfortunate; and from that time Godfrey became an inmate of the mill. More, he became a companion-indeed, the only one-of poor Rutgers, the miller. The two were seldom separate. They became attached with an affection apparently surpassing the love of brothers.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### SEPTEMBER 3, 1875

#### THE FRESHET

In a few weeks there was a wonderful improvement in the appearance of Godfrey. The sunken cheeks and gaunt form filled up the harried look gave place to the smile of contentment; the dejected air was supplanted by the appearance of comfort.

Happy would it have been had there been a like improvement in his employer. Alas! Rutgers was becoming worse and worse. He no longer troubled himself even about business. His days were spent in listlessness, or in a maudlin state he would wander among the woods, the bottle for a companion, staying till dusk, when Godfrey would go in search of him. Often was Godfrey seen bringing home on his back his helplessly intoxicated employer?

About a year passed from the time of Godfrey's arrival at the mill. Rutgers was now a poor, broken-down wretch, fit for nothing, unless half tipsy, then quarrelsome and capricious, insulting his friends, and often peculiarly bitter against Godfrey. The latter, however, never lost his temper, but excused the conduct of his employer by saying that the old man had been sorely tried. This exhibition of good nature had always the reverse of a soothing effect on Rutgers. He would on these occasions stamp and rave, and curse and relent.

"What have you to say on the subject? Who told you to speak, you miserable beggar? I saved you from starvation! Come here, till I spit upon you!" Godfrey would then lift up his friend, spite of his struggles, as if he were a child, and carries him to an inner apartment in the mill, whence he would emerge only when far gone in intoxication.

One day when Rutgers came home in a good-natured state of semi-intoxication, he perceived Godfrey standing in a center of a group of amused listeners, relating a laughable anecdote. Rutgers staggered up and listened, and laughing heartily at some absurdity, said, in a maudlin fashion. "You're a good fellow, a good miller, too, thanks to your humble servant. What'll you give me for the mill?"

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### SEPTEMBER 3, 1875

#### THE FRESHET

I'll sell it on easy terms. I must get away from here. I'm going to the devil-ever since-Oh, my poor wife and my poor baby! Name your price. I must get away from here, where everything reminds me. Name your price."

Godfrey felt uneasy at the commencement of Rutgers' speech, but began to listen with a pleased earnestness quite noticeable when his employer offered to sell the mill. When all eyes turned on him his face was flushed, his eye beamed with glad eagerness, his lip quivered, and he looked like a man who had suddenly accomplished a long-toiled-for object.

"You'll never leave this place," he hoarsely answered. "Won't I, though? Give me what money you have. Don't shake your head. I know you have some-though I believe it's mine by right. I'll give you your own time to pay the balance; I'll at once go away, and never trouble you more, so long as you keep your part of the bargain between us."

Godfrey now hastily named a price, and terms were agreed to, drawn up, duly recorded and witnessed, and finally put in form by a lawyer of the nearest town. During the merrymaking that followed, Rutgers signified his intention of going to Boston to live with some distant relative till a chance offered for his going into business.

It was resolved that there should be merrymaking in honor of their friend about to leave them. So it was arranged that the largest room in the mill should be cleared, to be used as a dancing-room. The day before the appointed festival, Godfrey appeared in the village-tavern and said that Rutgers, in a fit of his usual perversity, had departed the previous night, and that he promised to come back within a month, when the merrymaking would take place.

No one thought it strange, as Rutgers had become utterly unreliable of late. When a month had passed, and there was no appearance of the truant, some of the more inquisitive began to ask such question as, "Was Rutgers sober when he left?" "Did he take all his clothes with him?" "Did he go afoot, or how?"

To all which Godfrey answered that his friend was neither drunk, nor yet sober, when he left; that he took a small bundle with him, but left most of his wardrobe behind; that he started on foot, intending to take the stage at the cross-roads.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **SEPTEMBER 3, 1875**

#### **THE FRESHET**

These answers were given in an offhand, impatient way, but good-naturedly enough; but when some of the more tedious and pertinacious repeated questions, in various forms, regarding Rutgers's sudden leave, Godfrey would start and stammer, grow uneasy; and at last, with an oath, would tell the persevering inquirers that was all he knew about it, and there was no accounting for the freaks of drunken fools, or the obstinacy of inquisitive ones, and that when Rutgers came back he would tell all about the matter.

Months passed, and there was no word from Rutgers, or information of him from anyone else. Godfrey, meantime, by his genial manners, had won the good will of his neighbors; and, as they saw that he was irritated by inquiries concerning Rutgers, they forbore to press the subject.

One wag, it is true, celebrated for his conceit and his high appreciation of his own shrewdness, came one day to the miller, and said that he had seen Rutgers half an hour ago, and that he said he intended to stop at the mill in the course of the morning. The effect of this announcement on Godfrey was peculiarly strange. He started back as if bitten by a snake, leaned against the mill as if paralyzed, grew pale, and trembled as if afflicted with ague; then recovering himself in a moment, he rushed at the young man, seized him by the collar, and exclaiming, "I'll teach you to play tricks on me! I'll make you as helpless as Rutgers before I've done with you!" pummeled the jester till he howled alternately for help and mercy.

This little episode effectually stopped the months of impudent inquirers. None after that day approached the subject except in a cautious manner, and then they were subdued with a short "Goodness knows," or "I don't know, do you?" or "Rutgers can have the money whenever he likes to come for it."

Years passed. Godfrey grew prosperous. Rutgers's name was almost forgotten. A new generation grew up, who knew little and cared less for the history of the eccentric owner of the old mill. Eccentric he was.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### SEPTEMBER 3, 1875

#### THE FRESHET

Ready ever to assist the unfortunate with his purse, he never ventured near a scene of distress. He had been known to fly like one possessed from the place where a laborer had been struck by a falling brick, and received a deep wound. One of his inmates dying expressed a wish to see him. After repeated messages, Godfrey went. When he was ushered into the sick-room and saw the eyes of the dying man turned anxiously toward him, with an oath and a yell Godfrey burst from the room, and raved like a madman along the road. He supported the family, however, after all was over. It was remarked, to, that though Godfrey contributed freely to religious objects, he never entered a place of worship. Consequently, the pious shook their heads mysteriously, but said nothing, as the miller had plenty of defenders, the recipients of his benefits or the partakers of kindly offices.

Godfrey never married. No raider against the fair sex was he. Reputed well-to-do, and being of good appearance, he was by no means an object of disgust with the unmarried far. Yet none of them could boast of ever receiving a special visit from him, but one, and her daughter of an old farmer in embarrassed circumstances, whom Godfrey had befriended. The gossips had declared it a match; but the visits were suddenly broken off and neither of the principals would declare the reason. "There were some men who dare not marry, was all the answer could be got from him, even by his most intimate friends, when they advised him to take a wife and settle down comfortably.

Yet the sight of an infant seemed to transfigure his somewhat severe features. He would take the chubby hand in his loving palm, kiss it, pat the velvet cheek, and looking into the dreamy eyes, would sigh, mutter, "How innocent! We were all so once." Some said that on these occasions a tear would gather in the miller's eye' but most laughed at the idea. For Godfrey was not of tender mood. Thus when any one ventured to say that the mill was old, and the foundations crumbling, the water undermining the walls, and that it should be repaired, assuredly it would be carried away by a freshet;

"Let it go to the devil with its owner! It will last my time. Then would follow such remarks that the astonished listener, looking on Godfrey's countenance, would perceive that his eyes were glaring like a wild beast's, his nostrils distended with passion, and his jaws quivering with suppressed emotion.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)



## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### SEPTEMBER 3, 1875

#### THE FRESHET

"The freshet!-the freshet!" is the theme of conversation in the old mill as each gossip brings tidings of devastation worked by the storm along the borders of the rivers of New England."Look to your old walls and crumbling foundations!" says an acquaintance to Godfrey, the miller, "See the water is rising; and now, good heaven! The frail old building reels and shakes with the wind. I would not stay here to-night for all your money."

"Who asks you, coward? I'll remain here, though the river ran into the windows, and it blew blasts from Tophet." "But you will be drowned to a certainty if you stay much longer," urged his companion." "Well, what is that to anyone if I am determined to brave the consequences?"

While they are speaking the building shakes from cellar to garret, and a rotten beam cracks with a noise like a pistol-report; the workmen are struck with panic, they seize their garments, and, with the visitors, rush out into the pelting rain and howling blast. They reach a rising ground and turn round to look. The Connecticut rages like Niagara's cataract. White-crested waves surge as if it were part of the territory of Old Ocean. Borne down on the current, flowing with the swiftness of a spectral racer, are fragments of houses, factories, machinery, boats. Now a cradle is swept past into the abyss of mist and foam; now a human face glances for a moment from between the foamy billows, and is hidden forever. Beasts of the field look piteously at the fast-receding shores, and dogs howl hopelessly as they are swept to destruction.

Ruin is written on everything on the earth, and the dark and threatening heavens appear as if eager to repeat the tragedy of the world's early history. "Come, hast, or you will be too late!" They cry to the miller as the building totters to one side. "Away, cowards!" comes on the blast."I will see it out!"

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **SEPTEMBER 3, 1875**

#### **THE FRESHET**

Now the mill is surrounded with the raging stream. It is evident the foundations are sapped, for more prone than Pisa's tower leans the rotten fabric. A blast that causes the most sturdy to fall, clinging to the underbrush; a rush of the river that makes the spectators fear the dry land is about to be swallowed up; a yell, a crash, and then excruciating silence; and when, taking advantage of the momentary calm, the watchers look up, the old mill-wheel is all that remains.

They hasten from the spot overawed by the catastrophe. They relate the vision of horror. Crowds hasten toward the spot, but between them and the old mill there is a great gulf of seething, hungry billows. What is man's boasted power in the presence of the omnipotence of Nature?

Days elapse. The flood abates, the foundations of the old mill are revealed. Men search for a pallid corpse, but in vain. Instead, they find, jammed in between huge boulders, part of the mill's foundations, a skeleton, and within the bony grasp of its clenched, fleshless fingers, is a small tobacco-box. Then they open, and find a paper still decipherable. Wondering, they read, after much trouble. It is the note given by Godfrey for the balance of the price of the mill.

The skeleton is all that remains of the lone-missing Rutgers. Some of the old men recognized it by the peculiar conformation of the jaw and teeth and by a scar on the skull. Murder had been done, but the murderer was beyond human justice.

They bury the remains of the victim to avarice, and think forgivingly of the culprit as they recall his attempts at atonement, remembering that only the all seeing knows human weakness, and can fitly estimate the infernal power of temptation.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert



## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **FRIDAY JULY 2, 1875**

#### **How I Became A Farmer**

One fine summer afternoon I decided to become a farmer. Don't for goodness sake think that I was going to buy a farm, for such were not my intentions. No, not by any means. Why I had never joined the Patrons of Husbandry was because I had been black-balled by that same organization something less than half a dozen times. And why I was not going to buy a farm the reader can easily guess-I hadn't the required amount of funds.

I am wandering away from my fine summer afternoon. To return I will tell you why and what way I was going to become a farmer: My bank account was no more, and my landlady would not wait with me for another week's board, hence my departure from the city and my arrival among farmers. The time was spring when I wandered among the rural districts.

The grass was just tarring from its mother earth, and look inviting in the extreme, to a lazy young man with the world before him, and no one to take care of but himself. When I say inviting to eat, but to lie down and take comfort thereon. I threw myself on the green sward'neath the shade of a friendly bush growing near the roadside. I was lying thus, drooping into a delightful snooze, when a voice from the highway disturbed my calm repose.

"Say young feller, what's the matter?" I remained perfectly quiet, turning the matter carefully over in my mind. I was lying on my back, and, with very little body exertion, I raised my left leg to a perpendicular position, and gently moved my foot up and down, and waited to see the effect. To this day, I solemnly believe, though I know I am liable to be killed for saying it, that this motion was the sign of distress among the Patrons, for in an instance the man in the wagon was at my side. Bending over me he said:

"What ails you, young man?"

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## **EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY**

### **FRIDAY JULY 2, 1875**

#### **How I Became A Farmer**

I said nothing for a moment, wondering "if what ails you" was the test word, and, if so, what would be the proper response. Finally I groaned out-with a mysterious and unknown working of my fingers-the word, "Corn bread." With a bounding heart I saw I had beyond a doubt hit the nail on the head. Without a word my fraternal brother assisted me to rise, and led me limping toward the wagon, which stood in the road nearby. He helped me into the wagon, and after I had imbibed something from a little brown jug, I was able to tell my rescuer the story of my wrongs. This I will not repeat for reasons best known to myself. Suffice it to say, that the farmer was deeply touched by my tale. I wound up by telling him I wanted to get work on a farm.

"Well, now," said my rescuer, "I am looking for a cheap chap to work on my farm. Did you ever shear sheep?" "Oh, yes," I said, "I have done as much of that as any other work about the farm." This was the truth, for I had never been on the grounds of a homestead in my life. I was just going to tell him what a jolly time I had experienced last Christmas, when the idea struck me I might be treading on dangerous ground, so I determined to remain silent on the subject until I learned something about it.

"How much will you pay a month for a good shearer," I ventured, determined not to air my ignorance. "How much a month," said he, with unmistakable astonishment, "Why, man I won't have shearing enough to last a week."

"Oh, yes," I replied, "shearing on a small scale, I understand." "Small scale!" he repeated with emphasis. "How many sheep are you used to shearing in the spring?" "Oh, that's all right," I replied, coolly. "Of course you will not shear as many sheep in the spring as in the fall." And here I commenced to whistle an unknown melody.

"Young man," said my companion savagely, "did you ever hear of shearing sheep in the fall?" Without paying any attention to this pointed question I asked:

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)

## EARLY HISTORY OF CLOUD COUNTY

### FRIDAY JULY 2, 1875

#### How I Became A Farmer

'How much will you a month pay for a farm hand, generally?' "Well, I'll give you about eight dollars a month, and feed." I gave a prolonged whistle, wondering what I would have to feed, but not daring to ask.

"What do you say, young man, do you hire?" I didn't exactly understand him, but said "yes" at once. We arrived at the farm a little after dark, and at ten o'clock I got into bed between two burly farm hands, and soon dropped to sleep to the music of quacking geese, barking dogs, and my two bedfellows snoring an accompaniment. In the morning, or rather in the night, at half-past three, I was aroused from shearing sheep by the man behind me rolling over me and standing on the floor. When I was able to speak I said: "Who's sick?" No reply. "Where's the fire?" No foolin' young man," was the gruff reply. "You'd better be tumblin' out, or you'll miss your breakfast."

During this speech the speaker was jumping hurriedly into his pants and his boots. "Well, you're hungrier than I ever was, although I've often been in need of a square meal. I think I would have to be pretty bad off before I would hurry as you do. But ere I had finished my audience was half way down stairs. I rose and leisurely put on my clothes and went down stairs, guided by a piece of tallow candle sputtering in an old dirty lantern. When I landed in the kitchen I found the farmer, his son, and two hired men standing before a bench, on which was above half a dozen lanterns similar to the one in my bed-chamber. I was astonished. Could it be possible that these dirty lanterns were productions of the farm?

"Here's your lantern, young feller," said the "boss," as I heard the two men call him. I took the proffered production, and in solemn silence we marched through the back door in single file, and wended our way in the direction of the barn; the boss taking the lead, the two hired men next, and the author gallantly bringing up the rear.

I though this a strange way of going to breakfast, but said nothing. I was not thoroughly awake, and as we were thus marching along, I fell into a sort of a doze, and dreamed I was on a railroad train and the men before me were my brakemen.

Register of Deeds  
Judy Lambert  
(Continued)