

**OUR KITH AND KIN,
OR, A HISTORY OF
THE HARRIS FAMILY**

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Our kith and kin, or, A history of the Harris family by Mary Letitia Chalmers

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MARY LETITIA CHALMERS

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1754-1895

DEDICATION.

As an affectionate tribute to my dear grandchildren, Eva, Mary Agnes, Palmer and James Cuyler Chalmers ; and to the youth of the present generation of the descendants of John and Eleanor Reynolds Harris, this volume is inscribed by the author, with the fond hope that it may be in some measure instrumental in leading them to embalm in grateful and loving memory the names and virtues of their pious and noble ancestors, and to bequeath to succeeding generations a spotless name with increasing splendor.

PREFACE.

This modest little volume owes its existence to what was at first a small collection of matter for the information of the writer's immediate family. Friends desired and asked for its publication. Then other matter was obtained, hence the present form and arrangement of the book.

It is not given to the public as a complete record of all the descendants of the Harris Family, but the author's aim and desire were to make it complete, and to this end neither time, labor, nor expense were spared in the collection of material.

It may be, doubtless will be, disappointing to some, but when it is remembered that the families are scattered abroad over this South land from Virginia to Texas, that some have been lost sight of entirely, that in some instances valuable records have been lost or destroyed, while in a few instances little or no taste or interest is felt by the present generation in such matters, it is a source of gratification that so much reliable information has been gathered and arranged in a simple, intelligible and permanent form.

To all who have so kindly aided us in the collection of materials public acknowledgment is herewith most gratefully made.

If this little volume shall in any degree serve to keep green and fragrant the memory of our worthy ancestors, or contribute to the instruction and pleasure of any descendant, or stimulate and encourage a single reader to collect and preserve materials for future history, the author will feel that she has not written in vain.

M. L. C.

Charlotte, N. C., June 1, 1895.

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CHAPTER I.

IN BONDS AND IMPRISONMENT.

Our narrative begins with a marriage solemnized within the gloomy walls of a prison. We sometimes witness marriages in churches, brilliantly lighted, with elaborate decorations, large audiences and the music of the deep toned organ; sometimes in ancestral halls among friends and relations who load the happy pair with costly presents and congratulations; sometimes in the humbler walks of life with but few to witness; and occasionally a "Gretna Green" affair.

But in the case of John Harris and Eleanor Reynolds, our worthy and esteemed ancestors, how very different!

On January 23, 1754, Rev. Thomas Clark, M. D., the beloved pastor of John and Eleanor, at Ballybay congregation, Ireland, was arrested by the civil authorities, at the instigation of his Socinianized Presbyterian enemies, while in the very act of moderating in a call in the congregation of New Bliss.

The charge was disloyalty, because he refused to swear by "Kissing the Book," believing it to be unscriptural, and also because he refused to take the "Oath of Abjuration," inasmuch as it recognized the king as the head of the Church, though he had proven