

# **A VISIT TO UNCLE TOM'S CABIN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649395903

A Visit to Uncle Tom's Cabin by D. B. Corley

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**D. B. CORLEY**

**A VISIT TO UNCLE  
TOM'S CABIN**





EUGENIE CHOPIN.

A VISIT TO  
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

BY

D. B. CORLEY, of Abilene, Texas

Author of "The Lives of the Twelve Apostles"

ILLUSTRATED

Copyright, 1892, by D. B. CORLEY

CHICAGO  
LAIRD & LEE, Publishers  
1892

## A Visit to Uncle Tom's Cabin.

---

LATE in the month of August, 1892, I decided to make a visit to the old plantation in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, where I knew the original "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was still standing, just as it stood the day that the old slave died the tragic death that has been accorded him. And knowing that it was situated in the Southern portion of the parish, some twenty miles from the parish site Natchitoches, I decided to go first to that place and ascertain from the Records of Deeds and whatever else I could find, something more of the authenticity of the "story," it being my purpose, in case I could establish the fact that it was the real cabin, to make such terms as might be made with the owner of it, and then remove it to Chicago, Ill., where it would be placed upon exhibition during the World's Fair to be held in that city in 1892 and 1893.

In accordance with this plan I arrived at the old town of Natchitoches, situated on the west bank of the Red river, on the morning of the 30th day of August.

It is a singular looking town to almost any one, and especially so to a western man who is accustomed to seeing towns and cities only that are fashioned after American ideas and American fashions of the Nineteenth Century. It consists of a long, crooked row of houses fronting upon one street, and all on the

same side of the street. This street, running up and down the river and lying between the house-fronts and the river banks, composes the business thoroughfare as well as the approach to or from the place. The steamboats in olden times would land anywhere along this street that was convenient to put off or take on their cargoes. It is about forty feet wide and as crooked as the original meandering of that notoriously meandering river was at the time the town was founded. One could tell at a glance that he was neither in Damascus nor upon the "street" called "straight," for Damascus has a straight street and a river, while Natchitoches can scarcely be said to have either.



NATCHITOCHES.

I was told by the citizens of the place that the nearest point then to the Red river from their town was six miles away. And this was told me by an old man with an emphasis, impressing me with the idea that he expected it would return at some day not far distant. Whether he was correct, and that Red river will come home to that town and people in the sweet-by-and-bye or not, I can not tell. But for the pres-



ent, let me assure you that the town fronts upon a dry river bed. The houses are altogether of the old Southern style, one story, with heavy columned porticoes in front, while the people there take great delight in telling you that the town is the second oldest town in America.



RIVER BED IN FRONT OF NATCHITOCHEs.

Shortly after my arrival, I called upon the clerk of the parish at the courthouse, whom I found to be a very estimable gentleman and possessed of the information I was in search of. He told me at once that the Legree plantation was situated in the lower portion of the parish, and that while the name "Legree" had been given to the public as the cruel slave-holder in the story of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," that in reality his name was Robert McAlpin. He further gave it as his opinion that the fictitious name "Legree" was used by the authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" to prevent him, Robert McAlpin, from laying a suit for slander or defamation of character against her if he should choose to do so.

The clerk also gave me a kind of abstract of the tract of land upon which the "cabin" stood. He said that it was granted by the government to Richard McAlpin, who lived at that time, he thought, somewhere in New England; that he never came out to that country at all, and that after his death his nephew, Robert McAlpin, fell heir to a portion of the tract of land and came forward and settled upon it, and afterward bought up the interest his brothers and sisters had in it, and shortly became sole owner of it. There were 4,800 acres originally in the grant and that he, Robert McAlpin, alias "Simon Legree," lived there until his death, which occurred in 1852, at which time J. B. Chopin, the father of the present owner, bought it at administrator's sale. After the death of J. B. Chopin the tract was subdivided among his children, and that the old negro cabins and McAlpin's residence fell to his son, L. Chopin, the present owner. The records of his office show these facts.

It was in this office that I was introduced to the district attorney of that district by the parish clerk, who proved to be a brother-in-law of Mr. Chopin, the present owner of the "cabin." From these gentlemen I learned the fact that Mr. Chopin was in town at the time and that he had happened to the grievous loss of Mrs. Chopin, who had recently died. Though as yet he had not been seen outside of his residence. Instantly I felt at a loss as to the course to be pursued by me. I had gone six hundred miles expressly to see the gentleman, only to find upon my arrival, of his late misfortune and possibly of my not getting to see him at all.

There is something in Southern chivalry not met with in all parts of the world, which both these gentle-

men instantly manifested. They assured me that I should meet Mr. Chopin, and fixed the hour at five o'clock that P. M. for that meeting, and said further that instead of it being a breach of any rule of courtesy for me to offer to see him under the circumstances, that they were glad of my coming and glad of the opportunity that I would have in the approaching interview to help them dispel the gloom then hovering over their friend. Such words so freely spoken not only relieved me from my seeming embarrassment, but put me on guard as to my Christian duty at that meeting. We met, and in a gentle way I discharged that duty that one Christian owes to another under such grief-stricken circumstances, and I did so to the best of my ability. After an interview which was neither hasty nor prolonged too long, we separated to meet again the next day.

Again we met as per agreement, when it was decided that we would visit the old plantation on the next day and make a personal inspection of the "cabin," Legree's residence, his grave and such other relics and remains of that dark and dismal time and cruel and brutal man, as might still be found in existence there. Where both he and poor Tom last saw the light of that life which, though bountifully given by heaven as a gracious gift and blessing, had proven a source of long and sore distress to the one and, I doubt not, eternal damnation to the other. Having now made all necessary arrangements for the trip of the morning, which was to culminate a desire which I had cherished from my earliest boyhood by bringing me face to face with the most romantic and historic scene of my life, I next decided to employ the intervening time in inquiring of some of the older people of the place as to what they