

The Ohio Story

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"OHIO'S FIRST WHITE WOMAN"

WALDROP: Ohio Bell, the Telephone Company, presents "The Ohio Story".

ORCH: THEME

WALDROP: Mary Harris would deserve a place in the Ohio Story if only for the fact that she was the first white woman in our state. But she was also the central figure in a fiery love triangle 200 years ago. Nelson Olmsted will tell you about it in a moment.

(COMMERCIAL)

WALDROP: Now here is Nelson Olmsted and "Ohio's First White Woman".

OLMSTED: It was tragedy that brought them together ... and tragedy that tore them asunder. In 1704, when Mary Harris was nine years old, warring Iroquois tribesmen swept in on the sleeping village of Deerfield, Massachusetts, set fire to the town and fled toward Montreal with 100 of its remaining residents. From then on, Mary Harris lived as an Indian ... an adopted child of the tribe. Her closest friend and fondest admirer was an Iroquois lad named Eagle Feather.

In time Eagle Feather became a tribal warrior and then its chief. As they grew up together, friendship turned to romance. On a warm summer night, with the land bathed in moonlight, Eagle Feather poured out his feelings to her as he was about to take to the war path. He told Mary Harris ...

AS (19) War drums beat ... Eagle Feather go now ... Come to say fire in heart burn like summer sun.

AS MARY: Could fire in heart perhaps die out while Eagle Feather is on warpath?

AS E. FEATHER: Never. When Eagle Feather return, Mary Harris become princess.

AS MARY: Your wife?

AS E. FEATHER: Eagle Feather has spoken.

AS MARY: But if something happens ... Please do not go ... Send someone else.

AS
E. FEATHER: Eagle Feather is brave warrior. Must save land for sons. English come like flies to honey. Soon no place left for sons of Eagle Feather. Our friends, the French, say this is so.

OLMSTED: But the raids of Eagle Feather and his comrades weren't enough to stop the English tide. Desperately the French looked about for a way to save the new-world empire ... and Eagle Feather's tribe seemed like friendly pawns. They sent a friendly American trapper to the Indian chief to sound him out. He asked Eagle Feather ...

AS LOU: You know the Ohio River?

AS
E. FEATHER: Eagle Feather knows it well.

AS LOU: Your friends, the French, say they must protect it at all costs ... for themselves and for the tribes.

AS
E. FEATHER: Will French send army?

AS LOU: No ... They ask that you and your tribe take to the warpath in the Ohio Country.

AS
E. FEATHER: My tribe stay here, at Caughnawages (CAW-NA-WAH-GAS).

AS LOU: It will be better if you live across the Ohio.

AS
E. FEATHER: So we can fight Frenchman's wars?

AS LOU: They're your wars, too. Besides, it's better country. Here the game is gone, the forests are bare. In Ohio you'll find the best hunting in the world.

AS
E. FEATHER: Yes, so say my brothers, the Senecas, who have been there.

AS LOU: They speak the truth, Chief. It is better for you and your tribe that you go there.

OLMSTED: Reluctantly, Mary Harris followed her husband into the Ohio Country. They made their home at what was called White Woman's Village, in Mary's honor ... not far from present-day Coshocton. But the added burden of more work was making Mary Harris old before her time. In Eagle Feather's mind, the move to Ohio was a fortunate one ... for as he told Mary ...

AS
E. FEATHER: The land is good. It is well we have come.

AS MARY: (TIRED) Yes.

AS Other squaws raise much corn, many squash. But storehouse of Eagle
E. FEATHER: Feather not full.

AS MARY: But the garden is so big I cannot work it all. I am not as strong as
I once was.

AS Field cannot be tilled by one who is always tired. Storehouse cannot
E. FEATHER: be filled. Must get help.

OLMSTED: If Eagle Feather's wife was old and tired, his Indiand mind knew the
logical answer to the problem. He went among the young squaws until
he found one to his liking. He commanded her ...

AS You ... Rising Star ... come. Be good squaw to Eagle Feather. Much
E. FEATHER: work to do.

AS NEWCOMER: (QUITE YOUNG) But Eagle Feather have squaw.

AS Eagle Feather squaw old, tired. Garden too big. Need younger,
E. FEATHER: stronger squaw to help fill storehouse.

OLMSTED: Well, they say that time changes everything. But it doesn't change
human nature. When Eagle Feather brought the new squaw home, Mary
Harris looked at the newcomer for one moment of blank disbelief ...
then at the man who had been her husband for 37 years. Then her
feelings broke loose, and she cried ...

AS MARY: (55) Take her out! Take her away! She cannot stay here ... I am
your wife ... I have raised your sons and cared for you ...

AS
E. FEATHER: Newcomer stay. Do garden work, fill storehouse.

AS MARY: I am not old ... I am not too tired to do your work ... and I need no
help. Send the Newcomer away!

AS
E. FEATHER: Newcomer stay ... Make place for Newcomer.

AS MARY: No ... she must go!

AS
E. FEATHER: Eagle Feather warrior in family. Do as he say!

OLMSTED: The Newcomer found a place in Eagle Feather's lodge. But it was an
unhappy one. Mary Harris, her pride hurt, vented her feelings on the
young squaw whom she felt was to blame. In Mary's inflexible mind,
Eagle Feather was still a good husband and family provider. Hence,
the blame must fall on the Newcomer, and the blunt end of the punish-
ment must be meted out to her. From morning until night, Mary badgered
the Newcomer into more and more work. It was her way of showing the
young squaw that she was an unwelcome intruder ... and a bitter rival.
Eagle Feather had promised that the Newcomer would keep the storehouse
filled. Jealously, Mary Harris drove the Newcomer into unbearable
weariness, to make certain that she would. Seething with rage at
Eagle Feather, whom she blamed for her plight, the Newcomer took her
vengeance on him one night. The Newcomer tomahawked the Indian chief

OLMSTED: as he slept ... then fled for safety. But there was no refuge from the
(Cont'd.) fury that drove Mary Harris. They found the Newcomer on the banks of
the Tuscarawas, and held her there until Mary Harris arrived. Moving
through the curious mob that had gathered, Mary walked up to the woman
who had broken her life. Taunting her, she asked ...

AS MARY: Young squaw tired already? Not even strong enough to run far?

AS NEWCOMER: What do you want with me?

AS MARY: You will find out soon.

AS NEWCOMER: What are you going to do with me?

AS MARY: Ask Eagle Feather.

AS NEWCOMER: No ... NO!

AS MARY: Take her away ... Send her to join Eagle Feather.

OLMSTED: With Mary's fury driving them on, the Indians killed the Newcomer. The
place to which she had fled is now called Newcomerstown, according to
the legend ... a bookmark to help find the chapter that Mary Harris
wrote in the Ohio Story.

ORCH: THEME TO CURTAIN

(COMMERCIAL FOLLOWED BY CLOSING)

WALDROP: Be with us for the next chapter in "The Ohio Story".

The Ohio Story, brought to you by special recording twice each week is
written by Leo Tréfzger and Frank Siedel and produced by Stuart
Buchanan.

This is Robert Waldrop speaking for the Ohio Bell Telephone Company.

ORCH: THEME UP AND OUT

WALDROP: This is a special Ohio Story Network.

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