main log, by a distance of a few rods. In addition to these structures, were a tall corn crib and stable, all of which, unitedly, constituted the famous ‘Deaf Man’s Village’—the home of Mono-con-a-qua, the ‘Lost Sister,’ Frances Slocum. ‘She-buck-o-nah’ was the name of the deaf chief, the second husband of the heroine of whom we have written so long an epistle. Hoping it may not be considered obtrusion upon your active engagements, I remain yours very truly,

GEORGE WINTER.

Sketch of Frances Slocum

THE story of Frances Slocum, the ‘White Rose of the Miamis,’ as some one has poetically styled her, has been often told, but in connection with the preceding description of her by George Winter, the romantic and curious incidents of her career will bear repeating here.

Frances Slocum has now been dead some fifty-eight years. Born to the white man’s heritage she began life under the loving care of white parents. She ended it a squaw among the Miami Indians, a thousand miles from her birth-place, the wealthy widow of a chief and alienated utterly from her own race, from whom she had been separated more than sixty-eight years. The account of this transformed life is one of the most remarkable to be found in all our Indian annals.

The Slocums were Quakers who came from Rhode Island to the Wyoming valley, in eastern Pennsylvania, when Frances was four years old, and settled where the city of Wilkesbarre now stands. This was in 1777. The next year occurred the historic attack and butchery by the British and Indians which has so often been the theme of prose and verse. The Slocum home was assailed and pillaged by three Delaware Indians when the men were absent. The mother and most of her children fled and concealed themselves in the woods, but little Frances, who, in the consternation of the moment seems to have been overlooked, secreted herself under a flight of steps leading to the loft till one of the Indians discovered her feet protruding, and dragged her
Frances Slocum

out. A lame brother had also been left in the house, and as the marauders made off with the children their mother, forgetful of her own peril, came out and pleaded for their release. The boy was left, but the last she saw of her little girl she was thrown, bag-wise, over her captor's shoulder, and, with one hand outstretched, the other trying to keep the long, luxuriant hair from her face, was calling piteously to her mother for help.

The sorrows of this unfortunate woman were great. Francis was her favorite child, the pet of the household, and the memory of the little one's last heart-rending appeal never died away. To fill her cup to the brim, a month or so after the abduction both her husband and father were shot down, tomahawked and scalped by the savages. This new grief, terrible as it was, time assuaged, we are told; but the fate of her child, from its very uncertainty, haunted her till her death, more than twenty-eight years after the separation.

During those years repeated efforts were made to find the lost daughter. Her brothers made trips as far westward as Ohio and Detroit to meet Indians, agents and traders, hoping through them to get trace of their sister. Mrs. Slocum herself, then fifty-three years old, braved the difficulties of wilderness travel to attend a gathering of Indians who were to return captives to their families. To facilitate the search liberal rewards were offered, but all of no avail, and in this connection one or two interesting facts come to light, indicative of the Indian character. In the first place the family and tribe into which Frances was adopted accorded her an unusual regard, as was revealed by her subsequent account. One reason given for this was the color of her hair, which is described as reddish or auburn, and which to the Indians was so unusual as to be esteemed a mark of distinction. Hence, they were not willing to give her up. Again, the indications are that her foster-people knew of the search that was being made for her, and the further supposition is that the Indians far and wide knew who had this particular auburn-haired captive, yet, despite the proffered rewards, never a one would reveal her whereabouts—an illustration of the fidelity with which a red man will keep the secrets of his fellows. Until the day of her death Mrs. Slocum believed that her daughter still lived, and
for years after that the family clung to the hope and instituted occasional search and inquiry, but finally the question was laid at rest as one of the mysteries never to be solved.

Now comes another chapter of this romantic story. Fifty-seven years after little Frances Slocum had been carried off in eastern Pennsylvania, Colonel George W. Ewing, a well-known fur trader of the Wabash Valley, made an interesting discovery. He was traveling on horseback from Ft. Wayne to Logansport, and stopped over night at an Indian habitation known as the “Deaf Man’s Village,” on the Mississinewa River. This “village” consisted of a log cabin residence and various outbuildings that had been the home of She-pa-can-ah, a deaf Indian, then deceased, who was the war chief of the Miamis before Francis Godfrey. The place was now occupied by the venerable widow of She-pa-can-ah, Ma-con-a-qua, together with her family. They were quite wealthy, from the Indian point of view, owning a great number of horses, cattle, hogs and fowls, and a large reserve of land. Several things about the old woman led Mr. Ewing to suspect that she was really not an Indian, and, gaining her confidence, he got from her the story of her life and her abduction in early childhood. She remembered her Christian name—Slocum—and that her father was a Quaker, but where her old home was she did not know, further than that it was somewhere along the Susquehanna River. Her story impressed Mr. Ewing deeply, and he resolved to communicate his information to some one in eastern Pennsylvania in hopes of reaching some of Ma-con-a-qua’s family. To whom or where to write was a puzzling question, but finally selecting Lancaster as an old and important town on the Susquehanna, he sent a letter at a venture to the postmaster of that place.

Then happened one of those curious little freaks of fate which sometimes occur outside of the novelist’s pages. It chanced that said postoffice was in charge of a woman, owner of the 

*Lancaster Intelligencer*. It further seems that this woman had not journalistic sense enough to know that Mr. Ewing’s long and circumstantial letter made a good “story,” to say nothing of the humane considerations involved. Instead of publishing it she cast it aside among a lot of old papers, where it lay forgotten.
Frances Slocum

for two years. It chanced again that it was not destroyed, and that in the course of time it was discovered by some one who recognized its importance. It now found the light in the *Intelligencer*, which had changed hands, and fate this time ordained that it should be published in a large extra edition of the paper, which was widely distributed. A copy found its way to Joseph Slocum, one of the brothers, at Wilkesbarre. The family there at once opened up a correspondence with Colonel Ewing, and this resulted in two brothers and a sister, all old then, meeting at Peru, Indiana, to identify their sister.

Accompanied by an interpreter the trio followed an Indian trail ten miles up the Mississinewa to the rude home of Ma-con-aqua. They were received by a stolid woman to all appearances a thorough Indian, with the coolness and reticence of her adopted race. She had been apprised of their coming, but showed no feeling, either of gladness or curiosity. She asked no questions concerning either them or her parents, and during their visit treated them with a civil indifference. When they invited her to visit them at Peru she would not promise till she should consult with Francis Godfroy, the chief, but when he assured her that it was safe to make the visit, she and her two daughters and a son-in-law came, a picturesque cavalcade riding their ponies single file and "decked in gay, barbaric apparel." In accordance with the formal Indian etiquette, they bore with them a haunch of venison, and this being solemnly presented as a token of confidence and received in the same spirit, their reserve gave place to an open friendliness, and Frances talked of herself at length. To the request that she go back East to her kinfollks, even for a brief visit, she would not consent. To her resolution she firmly adhered, and her people, after this successful issue to their long quest, went sorrowfully back to their homes.

The "white captive" lived ten years after this visit from her kindred, and died at her home on the Mississinewa in March, 1847, aged seventy-four years. Her life presents an interesting study of that much-mooted question, environment versus heredity. While she became in all her tastes an aborigine, thoroughly alienated from the aspirations of her native race, she seems to have retained certain Caucasian qualities, among them a strength
of character and a dominating mentality which gave her among
the red people that prestige which the whites that mingled with
the Indians have almost invariably commanded. She was free
from the vices that are particularly common among the Indians,
notably that of intemperance, and her cleanliness and orderly
housekeeping were contrary to the slovenly habits of these dirty
people. She had the Indian's fondness for picturesque apparel,
and her industry and skill to this end is most interestingly shown
by some of her clothes still preserved by Gabriel Godfroy, a well-
known Miami, now living east of Peru. These garments, some
of them of the finest broadcloth procurable of the traders, are
beautifully ornamented with designs worked with narrow silken
ribbons of different colors, the needlework looking like machine
stitching.

Of a piece with the story of the "White Rose of the Miamis"
is the account of her marriage to She-pan-can-ah, the chieftain,
which is as romantic as the fond fabrications of the Indian legend
writers who love to talk about "dusky mates." Ma-con-a-qua
found the young warrior by the wayside badly wounded, and he
was taken to the lodge of her foster parents and nursed back to
health. For a time he remained with them and, being a skilled
hunter, furnished the family with meat. When he prepared to
seek pastures new they prevailed with him to stay permanently,
and the presumably fair Ma-con-a-qua was given him to wife.

Some years ago the question of preserving in a permanent
way the memory of Frances Slocum and of the vanished race
with which she was linked was agitated, and on the 17th of May,
1900 a handsome and substantial monument of white bronze was
unveiled over her grave, near the village of Peoria, Miami
County, Indiana. The branches of the Slocum family were
represented by many members from Michigan, Ohio, and States
further east, and remnants of the Miami tribe of Indians gathered
for the occasion, some from their distant reserve in Kansas. In
addition a large attendance from the surrounding country made
the occasion the more memorable and served to promote a senti-
ment which we of Indiana might well cultivate.

G. S. C.