

MOLLY McDONALD

A TALE OF THE FRONTIER



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SYNOPSIS.

Major McDonald, commanding an army post near Fort Dodge, seeks a man to intercept his daughter, Molly, who is headed for the post. An Indian outbreak is threatened. "Brick" Hamlin, a sergeant who has just arrived with messages to McDonald, volunteers for the mission. Molly arrives at Fort Ripley two days ahead of schedule. She declines to push on to Fort Dodge by stage in company with "Sutton Hill" Moylan, a gambler, who is also a passenger. Hamlin meets the stage with stories of depredations committed by the Indians. The driver deserts the stage when Indians appear. The Indians are reported in attacks on the stage. Moylan and Gonzales are killed. Hamlin and Molly plan to escape in the darkness by way of a gulch. Molly is wounded and Hamlin carries her. They cross a river and go into hiding. The Indians discover their escape and start pursuit, but go in the wrong direction.

CHAPTER XI.

A Remembrance of the Past.

Moylan must have had Miss McDonald in mind when he had stocked up with food at Fort Dodge, and had therefore chosen all the delicacies to be found at that frontier post. These were not extensive, consisting largely of canned goods, which, nevertheless, made a brave show, and were clearly enough not the ordinary fare of the border. Hamlin had to smile at the array, but Molly handled each article almost with reverence, tears dimming her eyes in memory.

"He—he bought these for me," she said softly, and looking across reproachfully at the sergeant. "It was the best he could do."

"I was not laughing at poor Moylan, only, I fear, he had a wrong conception of a girl's needs on the trail. But I reckon our combined appetites are equal to it."

"I do not feel as though I could swallow a mouthful."

"Under orders you will try. We have a hard day before us, young lady, and some tramping to do. Afoot I wish I knew where that horse I turned loose last night has drifted to, in to the bluffs, probably, where the grass is green. He would be of some help just now. Try this, Miss McDonald, for lack of something better. I've got for you some coffee, but hardly dare hold a fire yet. The smoke would be seen for miles away."

"If we were across the river we could use the stage fire."

"Yes, but there is a wide river flowing between. Don't be afraid of that trip, noting the expression of her face. It will be easy enough to cross back by daylight, now that I know where the danger spots are."

"I was not so terribly afraid last night, I hardly had time to realize what was being done did you?"

"Well, yes, it was risky business. A wfully treacherous bottom and I was trusting to good luck."

The sergeant ate heartily, speaking occasionally so as to divert her mind, but for the most part, busily thinking and endeavoring to decide his next move. He sat facing the river, continually lifting his head to scan the opposite shore. There was probably a scouting detail somewhere near at hand, either approaching from the east, alarmed by the report of the fleeing stage crew, or else a detachment tracking Roman Nose's warriors across those plains extending into the north. The latter contingency was the more probable, judging from the Indians' flight and his own knowledge of the small reserve force left at Dodge. Besides, ride as they might those two fleeing towards yesterday could hardly have yet reached that shelter of safety and might not confess the truth of their desertion even when they did arrive. A pursuing force was the only real hope for escaping the necessity of a hard tramp back over the trail. Well, the girl looked fit, and he glanced toward her appreciatively.

In spite of the sad experiences of the past night she was a pleasant spectacle, her eyes bright with excitement, her cheeks flushed under the morning sun which flecked her dark, disordered hair with odd color. There was a winsome face, with smiling lips, and frank good nature in its contour. He was surprised to note how fresh and well she looked.

"Are you tired?"

"Not very. It seems more as though I had dreamed all this than actually passed through the experience. Perhaps when I do realize, the reaction will set in. But now I am strong, and—and not at all frightened."

"Nor hungry?"

"It is hard to eat, but I am often that way." Her hand strayed to the

emptied haversack, and she turned it carelessly over, where it lay beside her on the sand. "Why, this is an old Confederate sack, isn't it? I hadn't noticed before; see, 'C. S. A.' is on the flap."

"So it is, perhaps Moylan served in the south?"

"I think not. I am sure this was never his, for he bought it at Dodge. I remember he told me he would have to find something to carry our lunch in." She pushed the flap farther back, then held it up to the sunlight. "There are some other letters, but they are hardly decipherable. I cannot read the first line at all, but the second is somewhat plainer—'Fourth Texas Infantry.'"

Hamlin reached out his hand swiftly, and grasped the haversack, forgetting everything else in suddenly aroused interest. The girl, surprised, stared up into his face, as he closely studied the faded inscription, his face expressing un concealed amazement.

"Good God!" he ejaculated breathlessly. "It was General. What can this mean?"

"You—you know the soldier?"

"Knew him? Yes," speaking almost unconsciously, his incredulous eyes still on the inscription, as though fearful it might vanish. "That man was either my best friend, or my worst enemy, under heaven, I know not which. Why, it is like a miracle, the finding of this bag out here in the desert. It is the clue I have been searching after for nearly five years!" He seemed to pull himself together with an effort, realizing her presence. "Excuse me, Miss McDonald, but this thing knocked me silly. I hardly knew what I was saying."

"It means much to you? To your life?"

"Everything, if I can only trace it back, and thus discover the present whereabouts of the original owner."

"Was that your regiment, then—the Fourth Texas Infantry?"

He bowed his head, now looking frankly at her.

"Would you mind telling me your rank?"

"I became Captain of B' Company after the fight at Chancellorsville, we served in Virginia under Massa Robert, and lost every commissioned officer in that affair." He hesitated to go on, but she prompted him by a question.

"And then what? What was it that happened? Don't be afraid to tell me."

"Nothing until the day we fought at Fisher's Hill," he said slowly. "Then I was dismissed from the service—for cowardice."

"Cowardice," repeating the word in quick protest. "Why, how could that be? Surely your courage had been sufficiently tested before?"

"Cowardice, and disobedience of orders," he repeated dully. "After I had been under fire almost night and day for three years, after I had risen from the ranks and commanded the regiment."

"And you had no defence?"

"No, at least, none I could use; this man might have saved me, but he did not, and I never knew why."

"Who was he?"

"My senior captain, detailed on Early's staff, he brought me the orders verbally. I was afterwards accused of disobeying. I was temporarily in command of the regiment that day with rank as major. There was a mistake somewhere, and we were horribly cut up, and a number taken prisoners. It was my word against his, and—and he lied."

She took the haversack from him, studying the scarcely legible inscription.

"E. L. F. Are those the letters?"

"Yes, they stand for Eugene LeFevre; he was of French descent, his home in New Orleans."

"You knew him well?"

"I thought so; we were at school together and afterwards in the army." She looked across at him again, touched by the tender echo of his voice; then leaned forward and placed one hand upon his.

"You have not spoken about this for a long while, have you?"

"No," his eyes lighting up pleasantly, "hardly thought of it, except sometimes alone at night. The memory made me savage, and all my efforts to ascertain the truth have proven useless."

"That is why you enlisted?"

"Largely, there is no better place to hide one's past than in the ranks

of out here on the plains. I—I could not remain at home with that disgrace hanging over me."

"You must tell me all about it."

Her head lifted suddenly as she gazed out across the river, shading her eyes. "Why, what are those?" she exclaimed eagerly, "there, moving on the bluffs opposite?"

His glance swept to the northward, and he was as instantly the soldier again. Far away on the upper plateau, clearly outlined against the blue of the distant sky, appeared a number of dark figures. For a moment he believed them buffaloes, but in another instant decided instead they were horsemen riding two by two.

"Get down lower, Miss McDonald," he commanded. "Now we can see, and not be seen. They must be cavalrymen, the way they ride, but we can take no chances."

They watched the black specks pass east to where the bluff circled in toward the river. It was from these those distant riders first observed the dim spiral of smoke still curling up from the burning stage, for they halted, bunching together, and then disappeared slowly down a gash in the side of the hill. Emerging on the lower flat they turned in the direction of the fire, spurring their horses into a swift trot. There was no longer any doubt of their being troopers, and Hamlin stood upright on the sand hummock waving his hat. They were gathered about the fire, a few dismounted beside the dead bodies, before his signal was observed. Then a field glass flashed in the sunlight, and three or four of the party rode down to the bank of the river. One of these, the glasses still held in his hand, his horse's hoofs in the water, shouted across the stream.

"Who are you over there?"

"White people," answered Hamlin, using his hands for a trumpet. "We escaped from the stage last night. I am a sergeant, Seventh Cavalry, and the lady with me is the daughter of Major McDonald at Fort Devereaux."

"How did you get across?"

"Waded in the dark; there is good bottom. Send a man over with a couple of horses."

The officer turned and spoke to the others grouped beside him; then raised his voice again.

"Are you sure there is no quick sand?"

"None to hurt; come straight over the end of that sand spit, and then swerve about a dozen feet to the right to keep out of a hole. The water won't go to a horse's belly. Try it, Wasson, you ought to know me."

"You're 'Brick' Hamlin, ain't you?"

"A good guess, Sam; come on."

Two troopers left their saddles, and the third man, the one answering the last call, gathered the reins in one hand, and spurred his horse confidently into the brown water. Following the Sergeant's shouted directions, the three animals plunged forward, and came dripping up the low sand bank. The rider, a tall, well-built man clad in rough corduroy, patched and colorless, leaned over and held out his hand.

"Dern yer 'er skin," he said solemnly, but with a twinkle in his eyes, "ye're sure got the luck of it. Ain't see ye afore for two years."

"That's right, Sam; down on the cowskin, wasn't it? Who's over there?"

"Lieutenant Gaskins, an' some o' the Fourth Cavalry, scoutin' out o' Dodge; ben plum to their mountings, an' ain't home agin. What the hell 'erein yer pardin, mam? has happened yer?"

"I'll explain when we get across, and Hamlin swung the haversack to his shoulder, and turned to the girl.

"This is Sam Wasson, Miss McDonald, a scout I have been out with before, let me help you into the saddle."

CHAPTER XII.

The Parting.

They recrossed the stream carefully, the horses restless and hard to control in the current, the men riding on either side, grasping the bit of the girl's mount. Others had joined the little squad of troopers on the bank, and welcomed her with a cheer. The lieutenant dismounted. At sight of the girl's face he whipped off his hat, and came forward.

"Miss McDonald," he said, pleasantly greeting her. "I am Lieutenant Gaskins, and I have met your father—of the Sixth Infantry, is he not? So glad to be of service, you know. You were in the stage, I understand, a most remarkable escape."

"I owe it all to Sergeant Hamlin," she replied, turning to glance toward the latter. "He bore me away unconsciously in his arms. Indeed, I scarcely realized what happened. Do you know anything regarding my father?"

"Oh, yes, I can put your mind at ease so far as he is concerned. I presume you were endeavoring to reach his post when this unfortunate affair occurred."

"Yes."

"Sheridan has ordered Devereaux abandoned for the present, and the major's troops are to return to Dodge. No doubt we shall be in the field within a week or two. But we can cultivate

acquaintance later; now I must straighten out this affair." He bowed again, and turned stiffly toward Hamlin, who had dismounted, his manner instantly changing. He was a short, heavily built man, cleanly shaven, with dark, arrogant eyes, and prominent chin.

"You are a sergeant of the Seventh, you said," he began brusquely. "What were you doing here?"

"My troop is stationed at Fort Union," was the quiet response. "I carried despatches to Devereaux, and while there was requested by Major McDonald to intercept his daughter and turn her back."

"Were you subject to Major McDonald's orders?"

"It was not an order, but a request."

"Oh, indeed, a mere pleasure excursion?"

"It has hardly turned out that way, sir, and conditions seemed to justify my action."

"That is for others to determine. When was the attack made?"

"Just before sundown last evening. The driver and guard escaped on the lead horses, and the wheelers ran away, wrecking the coach."

"There were four passengers?"

"Yes, we fought them off until after dark, although the Mexican was killed by the first fire. I don't know when the other man got his."

"Who were they?"

"Gonzales ran a high ball game at Santa Fe; the other, Moylan, was post-sutler at Fort Mercey."

"How many Indians? Who were they?"

"About thirty; we must have killed five or six. It was hardly more than daylight when they left, and I could not tell just how many bodies they strapped on the ponies. They were a mixed bunch of young bucks, principally Arapahoes, led by Roman Nose."

"Went west, hey?"

"Yes, sir."

The lieutenant turned his gaze up the river, and then looked at Wasson, who remained seated in the saddle.

"Must be the same old Maxwell told us about up on Pawnee Fork, Sam," he said at last. "He will be likely to cut their trail some time today. We knew a bunch had headed south, but didn't suppose they had got as far as this already. Better leave Maxwell to run them in, I suppose. Our orders are to return to Dodge."

"They haven't three hours the start," ventured Hamlin in surprise, and cannot travel fast with so many of their ponies doubly loaded."

"That is for me to decide," staring insolently, "and I understand my duty without any advice. Is there any damage done west of here?"

"The station at the crossing is burned, two dead men there, I don't know what became of the third."

"Then it is just as I thought, those



"What the Hell (Begging Your Pardon, Ma'am) Has Happened Here?"

fellows will turn north before they get that far, and will run straight into Maxwell. What do you say, Sam?"

The scout lolled carelessly in the saddle, his eyes on the river, his lean, brown face expressionless.

"I reckon as how I don't make no great difference what I say," he answered soberly. "Yer ain't taken no advice from me yet, fur as I remember. But if yer yit want ter know, this time, my notion is them bucks will most likely hide in the bluffs till night, an' then sneak past Maxwell after it gets good an' dark. If this yer was my outfit now, I'd just naturally light on to the trail fast, orders or no orders. I reckon it's in juns we cum out after, an' I don't suppose the war department would find any fault if we found a few."

The blood surged into the lieutenant's face, but opposition only served to increase his obstinacy.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Have No Country.

While at supper one evening a member of the family asked, "Say, what are the Blanks?" The discussion on nationality and religion following, was wound up by the youngest son inquiring earnestly: "Papa, what country do the bachelors come from?"

ROGERS CHOSEN AS HOLDER

Football Warrior Chosen to Lead Chippewa Nation in Fight for \$15,000,000.

St. Paul, Minn.—More than a century has elapsed since the Chippewa tribe has been recognized as a nation. More than seventy-five years had elapsed on May 6, 1913, since all the Chippewa tribe of Minnesota met in one general council. Indians who were present during the general council which began in Cass Lake on May 6, 1913, all seemed pleased to think that after many years they had finally arrived at a point where the entire Minnesota tribe would have one organization through which it would find what it wanted and, having found out, speak as one man.

It was easy for them to see that a man of their own who had matched his wits politically against the white man's best and received from the



Mr. Rogers as a Football Star.

white men the verdict that they recognized him as of at least their equal in legal ability was their natural choice for leader.

Edward L. Rogers at present county attorney of Cass county, Minnesota, physically a giant and the superior of most white men, as has been demonstrated by his feats in the "Cass" and Minnesota university football teams, was selected unanimously.

The council had as spectators many men who have been more or less prominent politically, for Cass Lake has many of them. There was not a man among them who did not concede that Rogers in the chair did splendid work in cementing the Chippewas into one body. There are approximately 10,000 Chippewas in Minnesota, and if they get all that is coming to them of right every man, woman and child of them will be worth approximately \$15,000,000.

It is no small task that has been set for Rogers. The total of claims that he will have to start on their way to adjudication is more than \$1,000,000.

MUTE GIRL RESUMES TALKING

Peculiar Case of Hysteria Brought on by Overstudy at a Summer School.

St. Louis.—Irene Burnes, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James C. Burnes of Hilliard, who for the last seven and a half months has been confined at the Sacred Heart hospital on account of a most serious and peculiar case of hysteria, which baffled local physicians for several months on account of her refusal to talk, is improving. In about a month she will be able to leave the hospital, at which time she will be taken for a visit to Lewistown, Ill.

Miss Burnes was at her home for a few hours recently, the first time since October 2, when she was taken to the hospital. Although she has not entirely recovered her power of speech, she will at times, especially in the mornings when rested, talk for a little while. She understands all said to her, but under no condition can she talk unless she be thoroughly rested.

Miss Bailey, her nurse, takes her for a walk each day. Miss Burnes since March has been under the care of Dr. W. T. Pfy.

The illness was brought on last summer as the result of overstudy at a summer school and following the excitement of the final examination.

WOMAN RIDES ON PORPOISE

Miss Violet Nathan of Minneapolis Has Startling Experience While Bathing on Coast.

Venice, Cal.—A ride on the back of a huge playful porpoise caused Miss Violet Nathan of Minneapolis to have hysterics while in bathing.

While a large number of bathers were enjoying the surf near Maier Pier avenue a school of porpoises suddenly appeared and began to frolic with the bathers. All except Miss Nathan fled to the beach. When she observed the monsters she started to flee, but a big porpoise, in a playful mood, swam up and rubbed against the young woman. She screamed and jumped.

The porpoise then swam directly under Miss Nathan and she was carried several feet astride of the creature's back.

She called loudly for help, fainted and fell off.

David Moreno, a life guard, rescued Miss Nathan and she was revived.

EFFICIENCY THE TEST

POSTMASTERS WHO ARE NOT MAKING GOOD DROPPED.

No Wholesale Dismissal in Order, but Where Mr. Republican is Failing Down, Mr. Democrat Takes the Job.

Heads of Republican postmasters are falling. Let it be noted at this juncture, for there will probably be something of an outcry about it a little later. And by that is meant the heads of Republican postmasters who have not served their allotted four years. Postoffice inspectors have been scurrying up and down the land. Some weeks ago, it transpires, Postmaster General Burleson gave word to the little army of inspectors to go out and see what was doing. There were instructions how to proceed, and how the returns are beginning to come in. Reports are pouring in upon the chief inspector, who is looking the documents over, and in certain cases—in numerous cases, as a matter of fact—these reports are going up to the postmaster general.

The result? Requests are going out for Republican postmasters to quit. It is not to be inferred that there is in progress a wholesale dismissal of Republican postmasters. Nothing of the kind. But a good many are slated to go, and these are to be disposed of in the name of better efficiency. If Mr. Republican is not conducting his office right up to snuff, if he is not above reproach on the standard of a most stiff inspection, he must step aside and let Mr. Democrat in. If he is possibly thousands of postmasters named by Taft are to be let out in this fashion.

Tariff Morality.

The late Senator Dooliver declared that a protective tariff builds up its own system of ethics, which is different from any code ever expounded by any moral teacher whom the world cares to remember.

The present inquiry at Washington confirms Dooliver's statement. The capital is thronged not by a lobby, we are gravely informed, but by respectable business men who want special favors. These business men are seeking to "protect" their business at the public expense. They are asking laws which will give them money taken from other people's pockets. They are explaining how much richer and happier the country will be if the "protected interests" are given keys to the national treasury, and allowed to help themselves.

Trouble for the Schoolmaster.

Some of the trials and tribulations awaiting him in the White House, as foretold by the Courier-Journal, are beginning to dog the footsteps of Woodrow Wilson. Few men are better able to meet them. They will presently whip round from his heels to assail him, big and blith, and again in front and then we shall have a monkey and parrot time sure enough for our schoolmaster. Is a fighter from Way Back, not troubled by a rush of affections to the brain, nor sentimental fold-over of any sort—Louisville Courier-Journal, Item.

"Salt the Progressives."

If the Republican party would catch the Progressive bird it must put salt on its tail. With all the exuberance and elasticity of youth, and feeling as badly as its leader, the Progressive party makes rude gestures when the decadent Republican party assumes its most insinuating smile and invites the buoyant and boisterous youngster to come back. One of the features of home, sweet home, is a woodshed and an equipment of shingles, and the unfilial son will take no chances of renewing his acquaintances with it—Philadelphia Record.

Bad in Many Features.

That the tariff has served a great and useful purpose will not, we think, be denied in any quarter. But it has in processes of time and of economic development become involved with grievous abuses. Special interests, profiting under the system, have sought and attained influence in arranging the schedules and have so fixed them as to place upon some elements of the community hardship and injustice for the benefit of whomers and manipulators. The tariff has become, not indeed a thing wholly bad, but bad in many of its features.

Arrant Humbug.

However, the tariff is not likely to affect the price of watermelons or strawberries either one way or the other, and that is something to anchor to if chaos comes," says the Chicago News. No, nor what nor four nor various other grains either. The pretense of protection on most farm products, whether made by Republicans or Democrats was one of the most arrant humbogs.

Currency Reform Urgent.

The sooner a new currency law can be placed on the statute books, and for that matter the quicker the tariff situation is settled, the better it will be for the country. It is the president's belief. He apparently thinks the academic and the practical argumentation has gone about far enough; that the country is thoroughly adrift as to what is coming and that the thing now wanted is to have the change made quickly and the new schedules put into operation so that business may be adjusted to them.

HORSES LOVED BY SOLDIERS

Animals That Have Carried Leaders Through Famous Campaigns Remembered With Affection.

The fact that King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, commander-in-chief of the Balkan forces, has a favorite black charger which he has named Varna, after the place of that name on the Black sea where his summer place is situated, reminds one of the affection which has existed between cele-

brated soldiers and the horses which have accompanied them through their numerous campaigns.

One of the most famous war horses was Lord Roberts' gallant charger, Volonel, which died a few years ago, and lies buried near the Royal hospital, Dublin. Volonel was a gray Arab which Lord Roberts bought in India, and he rode the animal to Kandahar.

Lord Roberts was very much attached to the animal, and when Queen Victoria awarded medals to the soldiers who had gone through the Af-

ghan war the hero of Kandahar proudly hung round his charger's neck the Kabul medal with four clasps and the Kandahar star of bronze.

The best known of Lord Kitchener's war horses was a handsome chestnut which he named Omdurman. The animal carried Kitchener during that battle, and ultimately went with his master to South Africa during the Boer war.

Modern Idealism. Our intuitions of a godness, a beau-

ty, a truth, transcending anything that earth can show, our persistent devotion to ideals that actual life always disappoints, our postulates of a perfection that rebukes and shames our practice—what can these things mean save that . . . a refraction of the white light of eternity by life's dome of many-colored glass, a sequence of shadow pictures cast on the further wall of the dim cavern where we sit, our eyes . . . averted from the true light of the world?—Paul Shorey (on Plato) J