

# MOLLY McDONALD

## A TALE OF THE FRONTIER



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Author of "Keith of the Border," "My Lady of Doubt," "My Lady of the South," etc., etc.

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### SYNOPSIS.

Molly McDonald, commanding an army post near Fort Dodge, seeks a man to intercept her daughter, Molly, who is headed for the west. An Indian outbreak is threatened. Sergeant "Duke" Hamlin meets the stage in which Molly is traveling. They are attacked by Indians, and Hamlin and Molly escape in the darkness. Hamlin tells Molly he was discharged from the Confederate service in disgrace and at the close of the war enlisted in the regular army. He suspects one Captain LeFevre of being responsible for his disgrace. Troops appear and under escort of Lieutenant Quaker Hamlin starts to join her father. Hamlin leaves to rejoin his regiment. He returns to Fort Dodge after a summer of fighting Indians, and finds Molly there. She is heard in the night. Hamlin rushes out, sees what he believes is the figure of Molly hiding in the darkness, and falls over the body of Lieutenant Quaker, who accuses Hamlin of shooting him. The sergeant is proven innocent. He sees Molly in company with Mrs. Dupont, whom he recognizes as a former sweetheart, who threw him over for LeFevre. Mrs. Dupont tells Hamlin LeFevre forced her to send him a living note. Hamlin's jealousy has been kindling for LeFevre to force him to clear his name. Later he overhears Dupont and a soldier talking up a "mossy" name. Hamlin sees her father coming to be in the power of Mrs. Dupont, who claims to be a daughter of Major McDonald. Molly disappears and Hamlin sets out to track her. M. McDonald is ordered to Fort Ripley. Hamlin discovers that the man who left on the stage under the name of M. McDonald was not the major. He finds M. McDonald's murdered body. Hamlin takes M. McDonald's rifle and two troopers take M. McDonald's horse. The man who had robbed M. McDonald of \$5000 captures a horse. He suspects Dupont, a Corporal, soldier, accomplice of Dupont, is a horse thief. Hamlin's party is caught in a fierce blizzard while heading for the Cimarron. One man dies from cold and another almost succumbs. Wason is shot as they come in sight of the Cimarron. Heroes work Hamlin rescues Carroll. He remains a prisoner. Hamlin discovers a log cabin hidden in a ravine. LeFevre, a cow thief who is laying for LeFevre, who cheated him in a cattle deal. His description identifies LeFevre and Dupont as one and the same. Hughes shot Wason mistaking him for one of LeFevre's party.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.

#### Snowbound.

The gleam in Hamlin's eyes impelled the other to go on, and explain fully.

"Lord, I know how yer feel, strangered an' I reckon, if yer was to plug me right here it wouldn't hurt even matters up. But yer listen first afore yer shoot. That Kiowa Klack Smoke was sent on ahead, an' got yere afore the storm. He said them other was 'bout four hours behind, an' headin' fer this yere cabin to make camp. They wa'n't hurryin' none, fer they didn't suspect they was bein' tracked. Well, that was my chance; what I'd been campin' out yere months a-waitin' fer. I didn't expect ter git nuthin' back y' understand, all I wanted was ter kill that damn skunk, an' squar accounts. It looked ter me then like I hed him on the hip. He didn't know I was in the kintry; all I hed to do was lay out in the hills, an' take a pot-shot at him afore he saw me."

"And get the girl and the money."

"As God is my witness, I never thought 'bout that. I jest wanted ter plug him. I know it sounds sorter cowardly, but that fellow's a gun-fighter, an' he hed two Injuns with him. Anyhow that was my notion, an' as soon as Black Smoke went lopin' up the valley, I loaded up, an' climbed them bluffs, to whar I hed a good look-out 'long the north trail. I laid out thar all night. The storm come up, an' I mighty nigh froze, but snuggled down inter the snow an' stuck. When yer onct get a killin' freak on, yer goin' through hell an' high water ter get yer man. That's how I felt. Well, just long 'bout daylight an outfit showed up. With my eyes half froze over, an' ther storm blowin' the snow in my face, I couldn't see much—nuthin' but outlines o' hosses an' men. But thar was four o' em, an' a big fellow ahead breakin' trail. Course I thought it was LeFevre; I wa'n't lookin' fer no one else, an' soon as I dared, I let drive. He fopped over dead as a door nail, an' then I popped away a couple o' times at the others. One fell down, an' I thought I got him, but didn't want to make sure; just turned and hoofed it fer cover, knowin' the storm would hide my trail. I'd got the men I went afore, an' just natch'ally didn't give er whoop what became o' the rest. As I went down the bank I heard 'em shootin', so I knowed some was alive yet an' it would be better fer me to crawl inter my hole an' sit still."

Hamlin sat motionless, staring at the man, not quite able to comprehend his character. Killing was part of the western code, and he could appreciate Hughes' eagerness for revenge, but the underlying cowardice in the man was almost bewildering. Finally he got up, swept the revolver

from the bench into his pocket, walked over, and picked up the gun.

"Now, Hughes," he said quietly, "I'll talk, and you listen. In my judgment you are a miserable sneaking cur, and I am going to trust you just so far as I can watch you. I suppose I ought to shoot you where you are, and have done with it. You killed one of the best men who ever lived, a friend of mine, Sam Wason—"

"Who?"

"Sam Wason, a government scout." Hughes dropped his face into his hands.

"Good Lord! I knew him!"

The Sergeant drew a deep breath, and into his face there came a look almost of sympathy.

"Then you begin to realize the sort of fool you are," he went on soberly. "They don't make better men out here; his little finger was worth more than your whole body. But killing you won't bring Sam back, and besides I reckon you've told me the straight story, an' his shooting was an accident in a way. Then you're more useful to me just now alive than you would be dead. My name is Hamlin, sergeant Seventh Cavalry, and I am here after that man LeFevre. We trailed his outfit from Dodge until the storm struck us, and then came straight through traveling by compass. I did not know the man's name was LeFevre until you told me; up in Kansas he is known as Dupont."

"That's it, that's the name he took when he sold the cattle."

"The officer robbed and killed was Major McDonald, and it is his daughter they hold. The fellow Dupont quarreled with and shot was a desert named Connors. We found the body. Now where do you suppose LeFevre is?"

Hughes stared into the fire, nervously pulling his beard.

"Well, I'd say in west yere somewhere along the Cimarron. Tain't likely he had a compass, an' the wind was from the northeast. Best they could do, the ponies would drift. The Injuns would keep the general direction, o' course, storm 'er no storm, an' Gene is some plainsman himself, but that blizzard would sheer 'em off all the same. I reckon they're under the banks ten mile, or more, up thar. An' soon as there's a change in weather, they'll ride fer Black Kettle's camp. That's my guess, mister."

Hamlin turned the situation over deliberately in his mind, satisfied that Hughes had reviewed the possibilities correctly. If LeFevre's party had got through at all, then that was the most likely spot for them to be hiding in. They would have drifted beyond doubt, farther than Hughes suspected, probably, as he had been sheltered from the real violence of the wind as it raged on the open plain. They might be fifteen, even twenty miles away, and so completely drifted in as to be undiscoverable except through accident. What course then was best to pursue? The storm was likely to continue violent for a day, perhaps two days longer. His horses were exhausted, and Carroll helpless. It might not even be safe to leave the latter alone. Yet if the frozen man could be left in the hut to take care of himself and the ponies, would there be any hope of success in an effort to proceed up the river on foot? He could make Hughes go—that wasn't the difficulty—but probably they couldn't cover five miles a day through the snowdrifts. And, even if they did succeed in getting through in time to intercept the fugitives, the others would possess every advantage—both position for defense, and horses on which to escape. Hughes, lighting his pipe, confident now in his own mind that he was personally safe, seemed to sense the problem troubling the Sergeant.

"I reckon I know this kintry well 'nough," he said lazily, "ter give yer a pointer or two. I've rounded up long-horns west o' yere. Them fellers ain't goin' to strike out fer the Canadian till after the storm quits. By that time yer ponies is rested up in better shape than theirs will be, and we kin strike 'cross to the south-west. We're bound either to hit 'em, or ride 'cross thar trail."

"But the woman!" protested Hamlin, striding across the floor. "What may happen to her in the meanwhile? She is an Eastern girl unaccustomed to this life—a lady."

"Yer don't need worry none 'bout that. Ef she's the right kind she'll stan' more'n a man when she has to. I reckon it won't be none too pleasant

long with Gene an' them Cheyenne bucks, but if she's palled through so far, thar ain't nuthin' special goin' ter happen till they git to the Injun camp."

"You mean her fate will be decided in council?"

"Sure; that's Cheyenne law. LeFevre knows it, an' of Koleta would knife him in a minute if he got gay. He's a devil all right—that of buck—but he's afraid of Black Kettle, an' thar won't be no harm done to the gal."

The Sergeant walked over to the fire, and stared down into the red embers, striving to control himself. He realized the truth of all Hughes said, and yet had to fight fiercely his inclination to hasten to her rescue. The very thought of her alone in those ruthless hands was torture. There was no selfishness in the man's heart, no hope of winning this girl for himself, yet he knew now that he loved her; that for him she was the one woman in all the world. Her face was in his memory; the very scolding of the wind seemed her voice calling him. But the real man in him—the plainsman instinct—conquered the impetuosity of the lover. There must be no mistake made—no rash, hopeless effort. Better delay, than ultimate failure, and Hughes' plan was the more practical way.

"You're right, old man. We'll wait," he said sternly. "Now to get ready. Have you a corral?"

The other made a gesture with his hand.

"Twenty rod 'b'low, under the bluff."

"Well drive the horses down, feed and water them. But first come with me; there is a half-frozen man up yonder."

They plowed through the snow together, choking and coughing in the thick swirl of flakes that beat against their faces. The three horses, powdered white, stood tails to the storm, with head to the bluff, while the drifts completely covered Carroll. He was sleeping, warm in the blankets, and the two men picked him up and stumbled along with their burden to the shelter of the cabin. Then Hughes faced the blizzard ahead, leading the horses to the corral, while Hamlin ministered to the semi-conscious soldier, laying him out upon a pile of soft skins, and vigorously rubbing his limbs to restore circulation. The man was stupid from exposure, and in some pain, but exhibited no dangerous symptoms. When wrapped again in his blankets, he fell instantly asleep. Hughes returned, mantled with snow, and as the door opened the bowl of the storm swept by.

"No better outside!"

"Lord, no! Worse, if anything. Wind more east, sweepin' the snow up the valley. We'll be plum shet up in an hour, I reckon. Hosses all right, though."

In the silence they could hear the fierce beating against the door, the shrieking of the storm-fleed encompassing them about.

### CHAPTER XXIX.

#### The Chase.

Hamlin never forgot those two days and nights of waiting, while the storm roared without and the clouds of drifting snow made any dream of advance impossible. Trained as he was to patience, the delay left marks in his face, and his nerves throbbled with pain. His mind was with her constantly, even in moments of uneasy

Her Face Was in His Memory.

sleep, picturing her condition unsheltered from the storm and protected only by LeFevre and his two Indian allies. If he could only reach them, only strike a blow for her release, it would be such a relief. The uncertainty weighed upon him, giving unrestricted play to the imagination, and incidentally awakening a love for the girl so overwhelming as almost to frighten him. He had fought this feeling heretofore, deliberately, satisfied that such ambition was hopeless. He would not attempt to lower her to his level, nor give her the unhappiness of knowing that he dared misconstrue her frank friendliness into slight more tender. But these misfortunes had changed the entire outlook. Now he hung all pretense aside, eager to place his life on the altar to save her. Even a dim flame of hope began blas-

phemy in his heart—hope that he might yet wring from LeFevre a confession that would clear his name. He knew his man at last—knew him, and would track him now with all the pitiless ingenuity of a savage. Once he could stand erect, absolved of disgrace, a man again among men, he would ignore the uniform of the ranks, and go to her with all the pride of his race. Ay! and down in his heart he knew that she would welcome his coming; that her eyes would not look at the uniform, but down into the depths of his own.

He thought of it all as he paced the floor, or stared into the fire, while outside the wind raged and howled, piling the snow against the cabin front, and whirling in mad bursts up the valley. It would be death to face the fury of it on those open plains. There was nothing left him but to swear, and pace back and forth. Twice he and Hughes fought their way to the corral, found the horses sheltered in a little cove, and brought them food and water. The struggle to accomplish this was sufficient proof of the impossibility of going farther. Exhausted and breathless they staggered back into the quietness of the cabin, feeling as though they had been beaten by clubs. Once, desperate to attempt something, Hamlin suggested searching for the bodies of Wason and Wade, but Hughes shook his head, staring at the other as though half believing him demented. The Sergeant strode to the door and looked out into the smother of snow; then came back without a word of protest.

Carroll improved steadily, complaining of pain where the frost had nipped exposed flesh, yet able to sit up, and eat heartily. There remained a numbness in his feet and legs, however, which prevented his standing alone, and both the others realized that he would have to be left behind when the storm abated. Hughes would go without doubt; on this point the Sergeant was determined. He did not altogether like or trust the man, he could not blot from memory the cowardly shot which killed Wason, nor entirely rid himself of a fear that he, himself, had fallen an old comrade, in not revenging his death; yet one thing was clear—the man's hatred for LeFevre made him valuable. Treacherous as he might be by nature, now his whole soul was bent on revenge. Moreover he knew the lay of the land, the trail the fugitives would follow, and to some extent Black Kettle's camp. Little by little Hamlin drew from him every detail of LeFevre's life in the cattle country, becoming more and more convinced that both men were thieves, their herds largely stolen through connivance with Indians. Undoubtedly LeFevre was the bigger rascal of the two, and possessed greater influence because of his marriage into the tribe.

It was the second midnight when the wind died down. Hamlin, sleeping fitfully, seemed to sense the change; he rose, forced the door open, and peered out eagerly. There was lightness to the sky, and all about, the unbroken expanse of snow sparkled in cold crystals. Nothing broke the white desolation but the dark waters of the river still unfrozen, and the gaunt limbs of the cottonwoods, now standing naked and motionless. The silence was profound, seeming almost painful after the wild fury of the past days. He could hear the soft purr of the water, and Carroll's heavy breathing. And it was cold, bitterly cold, the chill of it penetrating to his very bones. But for that he had no care—his mind had absorbed the one important fact; the way was open, they could go. He shook Hughes roughly into wakefulness, giving utterance to sharp terse orders as though he dealt with a man of his own troop.

"Turn out, lively, now. Yes, the storm is over. It's midnight, or a little after, and growing cold. Put on your heavy stuff, and bring up the two best horses. Come, now; you'll step off quicker than that, Hughes. If you ride with me, I'll have everything ready by the time you get here. Eat! Hell! We'll eat in the saddle! What's that, Carroll?"

"Ye ain't a-goin' to leave me yere alone, are ye, Sergeant?"

"No; there'll be two horses to keep you company. You've got a snap-man; plenty to eat, and a good fire—what more do you want—a nurse? Hughes, what in the name of Heaven, are you standin' there for? Perhaps you would like to have me stir you up. I will if those horses are not here in ten minutes."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Wanted Another Opportunity.**

"Look here," he said to the groom, "are you the man who put the saddle on Miss Jonnie's horse?"

"Yes, sir. Anything wrong, sir?"

"It was loose—very loose. She had no sooner mounted than the saddle slipped, and if I hadn't caught her she would have been thrown to the ground."

"I'm very sorry, sir."

"But I did catch her," went on the young man, meditatively. "I caught her in my arms, and—here's half a crown for you, John. Do you suppose you could leave the girl loose when we go riding again tomorrow?"

"pansies flying." "A star is a cinder from God's great star" has a wealth of unconscious meaning. But perhaps the finest approach to poetry was made by a tiny tot who defined dew as "the grass crying." Oh, auntie!" said the little girl, "I've just seen a pencil walking." The nurse, who had grown out of fairyland, explained that it was only an ordinary worm.

The world likes to be amused; therefore all the world loves a lover

time when they were regarded as immature adults; we have learned that the main aim of a teacher must be to give the right tone to the feelings—goodness in the abstract is of little avail; the imagination must be stirred. We are accustomed to believe that there is little reflection on the part of children and yet one cannot but see now and again gleams of thought which suggest a hidden mental power working almost unconsciously. The little girl who "gathered sunlight in her hands and put it on her face"

### CHILDREN ARE REAL POETS

Descriptions of Ordinary Things Show Imaginative Fancy That Does Not Survive the Years.

Children are born with a taste for knowledge. They want to know, and they want to know the right things. They ask questions, and are not easily satisfied. They are fond of imitating what they see around them. They are highly imaginative. They clothe their ideas in concrete forms. There was a

## ITS WORK WELL DONE

### Democratic Party Deserves the Country's Confidence.

Proper Revision of the Tariff Accomplished Without Unpleasant Disturbance of Business Marks an Era in Statesmanship.

For 23 years the people have been trying to get the tariff revised, not by its friends, but by their friends. Men of all parties have felt that the protective idea had been very greatly overworked. Before the birth of the Progressive party, progressive Republicans had been that something would have to be done in the way of reducing duties, declares the Indianapolis News. The arguments for a tariff commission when they were honest, as they have not always been, were prompted by this feeling. One of the greatest tariff speeches ever made, at least in our time, was that of Senator Dooliver, in opposition to the Payne-Aldrich bill.

Yet in spite of the pressure for lower duties, nothing whatever was done. When the Republicans were swept into power in 1896, they interpreted the verdict of the election as in favor of a higher tariff. So they at once passed the Dingley bill, with greatly higher duties, and turned their back on the real reason, which was that of the gold against the silver standard. And in the campaign of 1906 the Republicans were unable to resist the popular demand, and they promised to revise the tariff, and, of course, revision meant revision downward. For none ventured even to suggest that the Dingley duties were not high enough.

But they failed to keep their pledge. Instead of revising the tariff downward, they gave us the Payne-Aldrich law, which in many particulars, was worse than the Dingley law—at least it was not revision downward. Here began the split in the Republican ranks. Amid all the talk about initiative, referendum, recall, and judicial decisions, and fluid constitutions, people forgot that the break in the Republican ranks was over; the tariff. But such is the fact. The result was against extreme protection.

In the campaign last year the tariff question was again at the front. It was the most popular issue that the Democrats had. They elected a Democratic president, a Democratic senate and a Democratic house. Instead of turning away, as the Republicans did, from the paramount issue of the campaign, they at once set about the work of revising the tariff—and this time downward. And now the work is practically done. The long battle has been won.

We do not believe that there has been a tariff, certainly not since the war, made under such favorable and clean conditions as this one. The lobby was driven out of Washington by the president, and congress has been free to serve the people without being deviled by the representatives of special interests. No one claims that the bill is perfect. But the standard of comparison is, not perfection, but Republican tariffs. We have certainly improved on them, and come measurably near meeting the wishes of the people. The bill is a good bill. The president and congress have done their work well.

#### President's Position Right.

The president stands pat on congress doing what it was called together for, and what the Democratic platform promised, if it takes all of both summer and fall months in which to accomplish the task. The president is right about it. Let the will of the people prevail. Let the representatives of the people keep the promises of the party which elected them to office. Public office is a public trust, and those who abuse a public trust are "embezzlers of power." Members of congress are paid for every month of the year, whether they work or not. If the public interests require that they work the full 12 months of the year, they should not complain—that is what they hired themselves to do. Talk may be cheaper to those public servants who indulge it than work, but it is not cheaper to those who pay the bills than work—if it be the right kind of work.

#### Congress Must Act.

A few years ago a little clique of Wall street magnates were able to bring hard times on the nation whenever they pleased. They learned the full extent of their power in the crash of 1907—and the country learned a little of the evils of this irresponsible control. As a result of this lesson, the Vreeland law was passed, authorizing the issue of emergency currency, and providing other safeguards against panic.

The Vreeland law expires by limitation June 29, 1914. Unless congress acts in the meantime, the money lords will then get back the power they wielded in 1907.

#### Leadership by Right.

The complaint of President Wilson's "dictating" is ho-ho, and everyone knows it. The president's ascendancy is the leadership of a strong, fearless, clear-headed man, who means to do his duty, and insists that his colleagues shall do theirs. He steps out ahead, and public opinion forces safeguards in other departments of government to close ranks and follow. If the president took the wrong road he would be powerless—but, so far as he has not taken the wrong road.

Hay is the chief agricultural crop of Switzerland.

Women never really admire each other. They are too busy admiring each other's clothes.

Keeps it.  
"My hubby goes out every evening for a constitutional."  
"Mine don't; he keeps it in the house."

Suitable.  
"Jim seems to have a frog in his throat."  
"No wonder; he is such a continual croaker."

Not Mercenary.  
"I have a friend who just married for money."  
"Why, how disgraceful!"  
"No, not exactly. You see, he's a minister."—Cornell Widow.

Natural Phenomenon.  
"There's one queer thing about these constables out for speeding motorists."  
"What is that?"  
"No matter how fast you go, you can't throw dust in their eyes."

Inquiring to Know.  
"You're a smart man, and I want you to answer me a question," said the boss.  
"Shoot it," responded the wise guy.  
"Is an injudicious man a questionable character?" asked the boss.

Ready for Him.  
A conductor stumbled twice over the foot of a small boy. Looking back at the mother, the conductor said:  
"Some people seem to have very awkward children."  
"Yes," said the mother, "I was just thinking your mother had one."

Interested.  
Husband (at the police station)—  
They say you have caught the fellow who robbed our house night before last.

Sergeant—Yes. Do you want to see him?  
Husband—Sure! I'd like to talk to him. I want to know how he got it without waking my wife. I've been trying to do that for the last twenty years.—Judge.

Thinks Cancer is Contagious.  
Authorities contend that cancer is not contagious, but Doctor Odier, head of the cancer institution at Geneva, Switzerland, says he has discovered in one of the principal streets of that city at least a dozen houses in which the disease has recurred, a fact he can only account for on the theory that it is contagious. He urges that every house in which there has been a cancer patient be disinfected.

Warning.  
The minister was coming to dinner, and the lady of the house killed a rooster in his honor. Her little boy was very much annoyed, and thought it cruel.

Some time after this the lad saw the minister coming up the road. He ran into the yard and began putting all the hens and chickens into the roost in place, saying all the time:  
"Shoo, shoo! Here comes the man that ate yer father!"

Luckily for Him.  
The amateur adventurer had just returned from stirring scenes in Mexico, where he had fought under the banners of the revolutionists. He had come home wounded and was telling his friends about it.

"It was my first engagement, you know. The bullet struck me just under the heart."  
"And you lived? How remarkable!"  
"Oh, no! not at all! You see, my heart was in my mouth at the time."

#### DIDN'T KNOW

##### That Coffee Was Causing Her Trouble.

So common is the use of coffee as a beverage, many do not know that it is the cause of many obscure ailments which are often attributed to other things.

The easiest way to find out for oneself is to quit the coffee for a while, at least, and note results. A Virginia lady found out in this way, and also learned of a new beverage that is wholesome as well as pleasant to drink. She writes:

"I am 40 years old and all my life up to a year and a half ago, I had been a coffee drinker.

"Dyspepsia, severe headaches and heart weakness made me feel some times as though I was about to die. After drinking a cup or two of hot coffee, my heart would go like a clock without a pendulum. At other times it would almost stop and I was so nervous I did not like to be alone.

"If I took a walk for exercise, as soon as I was out of sight of the house I'd feel as if I was sinking, and this would frighten me terribly. My limbs would utterly refuse to support me, and the pity of it all was, I did not know that coffee was causing the trouble.

Reading in the papers that many persons were relieved of such ailments by leaving off coffee and drinking Postum, I got my husband to bring home a package. We made it according to directions and I liked the first cup. Its rich, snappy flavor was delicious.

"I have been using Postum about eighteen months and to my great joy, digestion is good, my nerves and heart are all right. In fact, I am a well woman once more, thanks to Postum."

Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Write for copy of "The Little Book, 'The Road to Wellville.'"

Postum comes in two forms: Regular Postum—must be well boiled.

Instant Postum is a soluble powder. A teaspoonful dissolves quickly in a cup of hot water and, with cream and sugar, makes a delicious beverage instantly. Grocers sell both kinds.

"There's a reason" for Postum.