

# MOLLY McDONALD

## A TALE OF THE FRONTIER

By  
**RANDALL PARRISH**  
Author of "Keith of the  
Border," "My Lady of  
Doubt," "My Lady of the  
South," etc., etc.  
Illustrations by  
**V. L. Barnes**

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**SYNOPSIS.**  
Major McDonald, commanding an army post near Fort Dodge, seeks a man to intercept his daughter, Molly. Molly, bred for the post, is an Indian outbreak is threatened. "Brick" Hamlin, a sergeant who had just arrived with a mission and starts alone. Molly arrives at Fort Ripley two days ahead of her father. She decides to push on to Fort Dodge by stage in company with "Sutler Bill" Moylan. Confronted by a band of Indians, she is rescued by Hamlin, who is a passenger. Hamlin meets the stage with stories of depredations committed by the Indians. In an attack on the stage by Hamlin, Moylan and Gonzales. The latter is killed. Moylan is killed in next attack. Indians retire, and Hamlin and Molly wait for the next move. They plan to attempt escape in the darkness by way of a gully. Molly is wounded.

**CHAPTER VIII.—Continued.**  
He could feel her breathing, and realized the danger of her return to consciousness. If she should be frightened and cry out, their fate would be sealed. Yet he must accept the chance, now that he knew the way to be clear. He held her tightly in both arms, his revolver thrust back into its holster. Bending as low as he could with his burden, feeling carefully through the darkness before advancing a foot, he moved steadily forward. Where the gully deepened their heads were at the edge of the bank, but much of the way was exposed, except for the dark shadows of the slope. Fortunately there were clouds to the west, already obscuring that half of the sky, but to the east nothing was visible against the faint luminousness of the sky-line. Once, far over there to the left, a gun was fired, the flame splitting the night asunder, and against the distant reflection a black figure rose up between, only to be instantly snuffed out again. Hamlin put down his uplifted foot, and waited, in tense, motionless silence, but nothing happened, except the echo of a far-away voice.

A dozen feet farther, some four-footed animal suddenly leaped to the edge of the bank, sniffed, and disappeared noiselessly. So taut were his nerves strung that the Sergeant sank upon his knees, releasing one hand to grip his revolver, before he realized the cause of alarm—some prowling prairie wolf. Then, with teeth grimly locked, bending lower and lower, he crept across the rutted trail, and past the dead body of the Indian. Not until then did he dare to breathe naturally or to stand upright; but now, the gully, bending to the right, led away from danger, every step gained adding to their safety. He was confident now, full of his old audacity, yet awake to every trick of plainscraft. The girl's head rested against his shoulder, and he bent his cheek to hers, feeling its warmth. The touch of his unshaven beard pricked her into semi-consciousness, and she spoke so loud that it gave him a thrill of apprehension. He dared not run in the darkness for fear of stumbling, yet moved with greater swiftness, until the depression ended at the river. Here, under the protection of the bank, Hamlin put down his burden and stood erect, stretching his strained muscles and staring back into the dark.

What now? Which way should they turn? He had accomplished all he had planned for himself back there in the coach, but now he became aware of other problems awaiting solution. In less than an hour it would be daylight; he almost imagined it was lighter already over yonder in the east. With the first dawn those watchful Indians, creeping cautiously closer, would discover the stage deserted, and would be on their trail. And they had left a trail easily followed. Perhaps the hard, dry ground might confuse those savage trackers, but they would scour the open country between bluff and river, and find the dead warrior in the gully. That would tell the story. To go west, along the edge of the river, wading in the water, would be useless precaution; such a trick would be suspected at once, and there was no possibility of rescue from that direction. They might as well walk open-eyed into a trap. There was but one hope, one opportunity—to cross the stream before dawn came and hide among those shifting sand-dunes of the opposite shore. Hamlin thoroughly understood the life involved, the treacherous nature of the Arkansas, the possibility that both might be sucked down by engulfing quicksand, yet even such a lonely death was preferable to Indian torture. The girl at his feet stirred and moaned. In another moment he had filled his hat with water from the riv-

er, had lifted her head upon one arm, and using the handkerchief from about his throat, was washing away the blood that matted her hair. Now that his fingers felt the wound, he realized the force of the blow stunning her, although its outward manifestation was slight. Her figure trembled in his arms, and her eyes opened, gazing up wonderingly at the black outlines of his shadow. Then she made an effort as though to draw away.

"Lie still a while yet, Miss McDonald," he said soothingly, "until you regain your strength."

He heard the quick gasp of her breath, and felt the sudden relaxing of her muscles.

"You!" she exclaimed in undisguised relief at recognition of the voice. "Is it really you? Where are you? What has happened?"

He told her rapidly, his face bent close, realizing that she was clinging to him again as she had once before back in the stage. As he ended, she lifted one hand to her wound.

"And I am not really hurt—not seriously?" her voice bewildered. "I—I never realized I had been struck. And—and you carried me all that way—"

"I—I can hardly comprehend—yet. Please explain again; I am back there watching for us still, believing we are in the coach; they will follow our trail as soon as it becomes daylight. Why—why, the sky is brighter over in the east already, isn't it? What was it you said we must do?"

"Get across the river; once hidden in those sand-dunes over there we'll be safe enough."

"Across the river," she repeated the words dully, sitting up to stare out toward the water. Then her head sank into her hands. "Can we—can we ever do that?"

Hamlin bent forward on his knees, striving with keen eyes, sharpened by his night's experience, to learn more of what lay before them. The movement, slight as it was, served to frighten her, and she grasped him by the sleeve.

"Do not leave me; do not go away," she implored swiftly. "Whatever you say is best, I will do."

### CHAPTER IX.

#### Across the River.

He dropped his hand upon hers, clasping the clinging fingers tightly. "Yes, we can make it," he answered confidently. "Wait until I make sure what is out there."

He had slight recollection of the stream at this point, although he had crossed it often enough at the known fords, both above and below. Yet these crossings had always been accomplished with a horse under him, and a knowledge of where the trail ran. But he knew the stream, its pe-



Her Figure Trembled in His Arms and Her Eyes Opened.

culiarities and dangers. It was not the volume of water, nor its depth he feared, for wide as it appeared stretching from bank to bank, he realized its shallow sluggishness. The peril lay in quicksand, or the plunging into some unseen hole, where the sudden swirl of water might pull them under. Alone he would have risked it recklessly, but with her added weight in his arms, he realized how a single false step would be fatal. The farther shore was invisible; he could perceive nothing but the slight gleam of water lapping the sand at his feet, as it flowed slowly, noiselessly past, and beyond, the dim outline of a narrow

and ridge. Even this, however, was encouragement, proving the shallowness of the stream. He turned about, his face so close he could see her eyes.

"We shall have to try it, Miss McDonald; you must permit me to carry you."

"Yes."

"And whatever happens do not scream—just cling tight to me."

"Yes," a little catching in her throat. "Tell me first, please, just what it is you fear."

"Quicksand principally; it is in all these western rivers, and the two of us together on one pair of feet will make it harder to pull out of the suck. If I tell you to get down, do so quickly."

"Yes."

"Then there may be holes out there in the bottom. I don't mind those so much, although these cavalry boots are no help in swimming."

"I can swim."

"Hardly in your clothes; but I am glad to know it, nevertheless. You could keep afloat at least, and the holes are never very large. Are you ready now?"

She gave him her hands and stood up. The Sergeant drew in a long breath and transferred the haversack to her shoulder.

"We'll try and keep that from getting soaked, if we can," he explained. "There is no hotel over in those sand-hills. Now hold on tight."

He swung her easily to his broad shoulder, clasping her slender figure closely with one arm.

"That's it! Now get a firm grip. I'll carry you all right."

To the girl, that passage was never more than a dim memory. Still partially dazed from the severe blow on her head, she closed her eyes as Hamlin stepped cautiously down into the stream and clung to him desperately, expecting each moment to be flung forward into the water. But the Sergeant's mind was upon his work, and every detail of the struggle left its impress on his memory. He saw the dark sweep of the water, barely visible in the gleam of those few stars unobscured by cloud, and felt the sluggish flow against his legs as he moved.

The bottom was soft, yet his feet did not sink deeply, although it was rather difficult wading. However, the clay gave him more confidence than sand underfoot, and there was less depth of water even than he had anticipated. He was wet only to the thighs when he tumbled up to the low spit of sand, and put the girl down a moment to catch a fresh breath and examine the broader stretch of water ahead. That which he had just left, a black, lumping, dim outline. Except for the lapping of the water at their feet, all was deathly still. Even the Indian fire had died out, and it was hard to conceive that savages were hidden behind that black veil, and that they two were actually fleeing for their lives. To the girl it was like some dreadful delirium of sleep, but the man felt the full struggle. There was a star well down in the south he chose to guide by, but beyond that he must trust to good fortune. Without a word he lifted her again to his shoulder, and pushed on.

The water ran deeper, shelving off rapidly, until it rose well above his waist, and with sufficient current so that he was compelled to lean against it to maintain balance, scarcely venturing forward a foot at a time. Once he stumbled over some obstruction, barely averting a fall; he felt the swift clutch of her fingers at his throat, the quick adjustment of her body, but her lips gave no utterance of alarm. His groping feet touched the edge of a hole, and he turned, facing the current, tracing his way carefully until he found a passage on solid bottom. A bit of driftwood swirled down out of the night; a water-soaked limb, striking against him before it was even seen, bruised one arm, and then dodged past like a wild thing, leaving a glitter of foam behind. The sand-dunes grew darker, more distinct, the water began to grow shallow, the bottom changing from mud to sand. He slipped and staggered in the uncertain footing, his breath coming in quicker gasps, yet with no cessation of effort. Once he felt the dreaded suck about his ankles, and broke into a reckless run, splashing straight forward, falling at the water's edge, yet not before the girl was resting safely on the soft sand.

Strong as Hamlin was, his muscles trained by strenuous out-door life, he lay there for a moment utterly helpless, more exhausted from the nervous strain indeed, than the physical exertion. He had realized fully the desperate nature of that passage, expecting every step to be engulfed, and the reaction, the knowledge that they had actually attained the shore safely, left him weak as a child, hardly able to comprehend the fact. The girl was upon her feet first, alarmed and so litigious, bending down to touch him with her hand.

"Sergeant, you are not hurt?" she questioned. "Tell me you are not hurt?"

"Oh, no," dragging himself up the bank, yet panting as he endeavored to speak cheerfully. "Only that was a rather hard pull, the last of it, and I

am short of breath. I shall be all right in a moment."

There was a sand-dune just beyond, and he seated himself and leaned against it.

"I am beginning to breathe easier already," he explained. "Sit down here, Miss McDonald. We are safe enough now in this darkness."

"You are all wet, soaking wet."

"That is nothing; the sand is warm yet from yesterday's sun, and my clothes will dry fast enough. It is beginning to grow light in the east."

The faces of both turned in that direction where appeared the first twilight approach of dawn. Already were visible the dark lines of the opposite shore, across the gleam of water, and beyond appeared the dim outline of the higher bluffs. The slope between river and hill, however, remained in impenetrable darkness. The minds of both fugitives reverted to the same scene—the wrecked stage with its dead passengers within, its savage watchers without. She lifted her head, and the soft light reflected on her face.

"I—I thank God we are not over there now," she said falteringly.

"Yes," he admitted. "They will be creeping in closer; they will not wait much longer. Hard as I have worked, I can't realize yet that we are out of those toils."

"You did not expect to succeed?"

"No; frankly I did not; all I could do was hope—take the one chance left. The slightest accident meant betrayal. I am ashamed of being so weak just now, but it was the strain. You see," he explained carefully, "I've been scouting through hostile Indian country mostly day and night for near-

ly a week, and then this thing happened. No matter how iron a man is his nerve goes back on him after a while."

"I know."

"It wasn't myself," he went on doggedly, "but it was the knowledge of having to take care of you. That was what made me worry; that, and knowing a single misstep, the slightest noise, would bring those devils on us, where I couldn't fight, where there was just one thing I could do."

There was silence, her hands pressed to her face, her eyes fixed on him. Then she questioned him soberly.

"You mean, kill me?"

"Sure," he answered simply, without looking around; "I would have had to do it—just as though you were a sister of mine."

Her hands reached out and clasped his, and he glanced aside at her face, seeing it clearly.

"I—I thought you would," she said, her voice trembling. "I—I was going to ask you once before I was hurt, but—but I couldn't, and somehow I trusted you from the first, when you got in." She hesitated, and then asked: "How did you know I was Molly McDonald? You never asked."

The Sergeant's eyes smiled, turning away from her face to stare out across the river.

"Because I had seen your picture."

"My picture? But you told us you were from Fort Union?"

"Yes; that is my station, only I had been sent to the cantonment on the Cimarron with dispatches. Your father was in command there, and worried half to death about you. He could not leave the post, and the only officer remaining there with him was a disabled cavalry captain. Every man he could trust was out on scouting service. He took a chance on me. Maybe he liked my looks, I don't know; more probably, he judged I wouldn't be a sergeant and entrusted with those dispatches I'd just brought in, if I wasn't considered trustworthy. Anyhow I had barely fallen asleep when the orderly called me, and that was what was wanted—that I ride north and head you off."

"But you were not obliged to go?"

"No; I was not under your father's orders. I doubt if I would have consented if I hadn't been shown your picture. I couldn't very well refuse then."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Daily Thought.

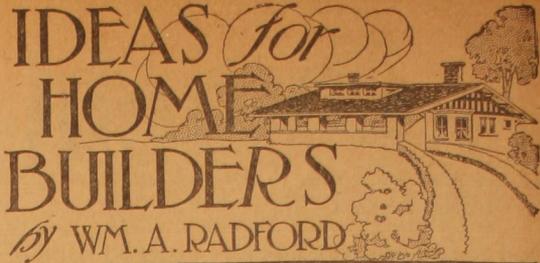
We, by our suffering, learn to prize our bliss.—Dryden.

made. So with this simple passport he could mingle with any society, and enter courts and palaces from his little cottage on the banks of the Ayr. You know the meaning of the word "gentleman." It means a gentleman—a man who does things gently with love. And that is the whole art and mystery of it. The gentleman cannot in the nature of things do an ungentle, an ungentlemanly thing. The ungentle soul, the inconsiderate, unsympathetic nature cannot do anything else.—Henry Drummond.

really is success. With such a good foundation to build on, why shouldn't he start in to do something of real value? Blessed are the young in heart.—Kansas City Star.

The Gentleman.

Carlyle said of Robert Burns that there was no truer gentleman in Europe than the plowman poet. It was because he loved everything—the mouse and the daisy, and all the things, great and small, that God had



Mr. William A. Radford will answer COST on all subjects pertaining to the subject of building, for the readers of this paper. On account of his wide experience as Editor, Author and Manufacturer, he is, without doubt, the highest authority on all these subjects. Address all inquiries to William A. Radford, No. 175 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Ill., and only enclose two-cent stamp for reply.

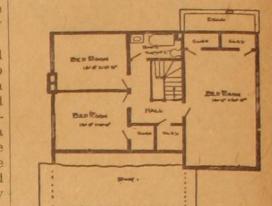
It often seems that the style or appearance of the house doesn't make so much difference as the site on which it is built. In every town and village there are examples that prove this. There are delightful little places set back among shade trees and flowers, which give one a restful, home-like feeling just by walking past; yet the house is really very plain and ordinary in design.

Then for every one of this kind there is one of the other sort to keep the balance, probably. Every town has them—the house is large and pompous, quite an architectural creation in fact, but it is set down onto a small lot, crowded in, with all the trees and shrubbery cut down to make room for it. In spite of its size and cost a residence of this kind is very far from attractive. The home builder would not knowingly take such a model; yet, many times he does because he does not understand the real elements of success in planning an attractive home; and a barren uninviting place is the result.

The experienced home builder will always, if possible, select a rough and wooded site; if it is slightly hilly so much the better. The labor and expense, it is true, for grading and preparing the site for the building, and for smoothing up the ground afterwards are greater; but the satisfac-

especially in connection with cobble stone work. There are various pleasing ways in which shingles may be laid to suit those who consider the ordinary method of laying the shingles in uniform rows, five inches to the weather, too monotonous. A pleasing variation is to place the shingles in alternate rows of two and eight inches to the weather. This requires no more material or labor and gives a very attractive appearance. The shingles on the roof, however, should always be laid in the regular way.

A glance at the floor plans will show a very convenient and comfortable arrangement of space in this house.



Second Floor Plan.

There is a large central hall, with a living room occupying the entire space at the left, while the dining room with the kitchen back of it is at the right. On the second floor there are three bedrooms and a bath room, also four clothes closets.

It is a design and arrangement that would be hard to improve upon for any one desiring a comfortable residence of artistic appearance. The cost

is estimated at \$4,000 including a good grade of plumbing and lighting and first class basement heating plant.

EATABLES MANY AND VARIED

What One Race Looks Upon With Loathing May Be Considered a Delicacy by Others.

It is a fact that grasshoppers from an early time were regarded as a favorite food by the Israelites. They were called under the more familiar name locust, which resembles the grasshopper so closely that in modern times they would have passed for one.

The favorite way of preparing them was to crush them with wine or boil them in hot water and dry them in the sun. They formed a salad course of many a famous dinner in the old, old days.

In Africa, even in modern times, ants are considered the most delicious form of food. One prominent English historian quotes having received as a present 20 baskets of ants pounded into a paste. He says himself that it was quite an eatable dish, tasting like the livers of chicken.

The old Romans ate beetles and considered them a delicacy. Even in the present day Brazilians eat bugs, and it is not an uncommon thing, if you are invited to a festive dinner in a Brazilian home, to have served you in your first course some 20 varieties of bugs, powdered and cooked in different ways.

In fact, many of the black tribes in Africa eat flies and their larvae. In the Andama island a man must eat a live rodent before he can marry if he is not willing to go through this ordeal. He is not permitted the pleasure of a wife.

Chinese eat roasted dogs, as do many Russians and our Sioux Indians. A century ago dogs were favorite meat with our Louisiana darkies.

Bed Divided Against Itself.

Tom—Mother, Jack's got half the bed!

Mother—Well, you take the other half!

Tom—I can't; he's got his half in the middle.—Woman's Home Companion.

Seeking Light.

Ikey—Fader, vat is dis socialism?

Fader—It's robbery, dot's vot it is—robbery!

Ikey—Is it vere a man's gretdors vants him to divide mit dem?—Puck.

First Floor Plan.



First Floor Plan.

should be rather large and laid at random, not in rows, and should fit together closely, so that few of the mortar joints are more than one-half inch thick. The stones should stand out prominently and should not be plastered to a smooth surface with mortar, neither should any broken edges be visible. A good workman, by the proper use of cobble stones, as shown in this design, can secure a very ornamental effect, and one exactly in keeping with the general atmosphere of the rustic site on which the house is built.

For the walls of this house either clap-boards or shingles may be used. Shingles are always appropriate for the walls of a house of simple design,

**AT THE AGE OF REAL WORTH**  
Youth of the First Years of Age Hopes to Demonstrate His Value Before the World.

Here is a young fellow who is the real thing. Andrew D. White, founder of Cornell University, for several years representative of the nation at St. Petersburg and Berlin, and delegate to the first Hague peace congress, recently reached the age of discretion and celebrated his eighteenth birthday.

So now he expects to be able to do some real work. He has taken up the study of criminology and hopes, he says, within the next few years to make some contributions worth while on the subject.

That is the sort of spirit of youth to make a man envious. But why not? At eighty a person is just beginning to accumulate a bit of wisdom and to get rid of the half-baked ideas of his boyhood. He is reaching a point where he sees through the shams of success that really is failure and failure that

really is success. With such a good foundation to build on, why shouldn't he start in to do something of real value? Blessed are the young in heart.—Kansas City Star.

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