

MOLLY McDONALD

A TALE OF THE FRONTIER

By RANDALL PARRISH
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Major McDonald, commanding an army post near Fort Dodge, seeks a man to intercept his daughter, Molly, who is headed for the frontier. He is threatened by "Buck" Hamlin, sergeant who has just arrived with messages to McDonald, volunteers for the mission. Molly arrives at Fort Ripley two days ahead of schedule. She decides to push on to Fort Dodge by stage in company with "Sutler" Bill, Mylan, Gaskins, a gambler, is also a passenger. Hamlin meets the stage with horrid depredations committed by the Indians. The driver deserts the stage when Indians appear. The Indians are twice repulsed. Hamlin and Molly escape in the darkness. Molly is wounded. Hamlin is much excited at finding a haversack marked C. S. A. He explains to Molly that he was in the Confederate service and dismissed in disgrace under charges of cowardice. At the close of the war he was responsible for his discharge. He says the haversack was the property of one Capt. LeFevre, who he suspects of being responsible for his discharge. Troops appear and under escort of Lieut. Gaskins Molly starts to join her father. Hamlin tries to retain the regiment. He returns to Fort Dodge after a summer of fighting in Indiana and finds Molly. Shots are heard in the night. Hamlin rushes out, sees what he believes is the figure of Molly falling in the darkness and falls over the body of Lieutenant Gaskins, who accuses Hamlin of shooting her. 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.

CHAPTER XV.—Continued.
Hamlin stood a moment silent, half inclined to ask another question, but crushing back the inclination. Then he walked down the hall to the quarters assigned "M" troop, and across to his bed in the far corner. There were only a few of the men present, most of whom were busily engaged at a game of cards, and he sat down where he could gaze out the window and think. Here was a new complication, a fresh puzzle to be unraveled. He had never expected this woman to come into his life again; she had become a blurred, unpleasant memory, a bit of his past which he had supposed was blotted out forever. Mrs. Dupont—then she had not married LeFevre after all! He duly wondered why, yet was not altogether surprised. Even as he turned this fact over and over in his mind, speculating upon it, he became aware of a man leaving the rear door of McDonald's quarters, and advancing back of officers' row to toward the barracks. As the fellow drew near, Hamlin recognized the soldier who had been driving the carriage. A moment later the man entered the room, spoke to the group of card players, and then came straight across toward him.

"Sergeant Hamlin?"
"Yes."
"I was asked to hand you this note; there is no answer."
Hamlin held it unopened until the fellow disappeared, hesitating between hope and dread. Which of the two women had ventured to write him? What could be the unexpected message? At last his eyes scanned the three short lines:
"You recognized me, and we must understand each other. At ten to-night ask the Clerk of the Occidental."
—V.

CHAPTER XVI.
The Meeting.
Hamlin's first impulse was to ignore the note, trusting his position in the ranks would be sufficient barrier to prevent any chance meeting, and believing his stay at that garrison would be only a brief one. Sheridan was evidently preparing for an early offensive campaign, and it was rumored on all sides that the Seventh Cavalry had been selected for active field service. Indeed, the urgent orders for the consolidation of the regiment from scattered posts must mean this. Any day might bring orders, and he could easily avoid this Mrs. Dupont until then. Except for a faint curiosity, the Sergeant felt no inclination to meet the woman. Whatever influence she might have once exercised over him had been thoroughly overcome by years and absence. Even the unexpected sight of her again—seemingly as beautiful as ever—had failed to awaken the spell of the past. It was almost with a thrill of delight that Hamlin realized this—that he was in truth utterly free of her influence. There had been times when he had anticipated such a possible meeting with dread; when he had doubted his own heart, the strength of his will to resist. But now he knew he stood absolutely independent and could laugh at her wiles. She who had once been all-trusted, loved, worshipped with all the mad fervor of youth—had become only a dead memory. Between

for a late-a-tate." He got up, and peered through his glasses across the room. "Here, Molke; damn that slapy head. Will one o' yer ganks wako the lad—that's it. Now come here, Molke. You run over to the Palace an' tell Mrs. Dupont the feller is here waitin'. He'll on now, not so fast; wait till O'm done tellin' yer. Say that to her alone—do yer mind that, ye sap-head; nobody else is to hear what yer say; stay there till yer get a chance ter whisper it to her. Now skip."

Hamlin hesitated, watching the boy disappear.
"At the Palace—the dance hall across the street?" he asked incredulously.
"Sure," indifferently, relighting his pipe. "Officers' ball; couldn't break in with a can-opener unless you had a invite. Guards at both ends, sergeant taking tickets, an' Third Regiment Band makin' music. Hell of a swell affair; got guests from Leavenworth, Wallace, and all around. Every room I got is full an' run over—say, there are fellows over there in them fool swaltertail coats; damned if there ain't. If the b'ys ever get sight of 'em on the street there'll be a hot time. Say, ain't that the limit? Injuns out there thick as fleas on a dog, an' them swells dancin' here in swalter-tails like this yer wako Boston."

He was still talking when Hamlin crossed the narrow hall and entered the dimly-lighted, unoccupied parlor. The side window was open, a slight breeze rustled the heavy curtain, and the Sergeant stepped outside on to the dark porch. There was a bench close to the rail and he sat down to wait. A gleam of light from the Palace fell across the western end, but the remainder of the porch lay in shadow, although he could look up the street, and see the people jostling back and forth in front of the Poodle Dog. The sound of mingled voices was continuous, or an unrestrained outburst of profanity. Once shots echoed from out the din, but created no apparent excitement, and a little later a dozen horsemen spurred recklessly through the street, scattering the crowd, their revolvers sputtering. Some altercation arose opposite and a voice called loudly for the guard, but the trouble soon ceased with the clump of hoofs, dying away in the distance, the regimental band noisily blaring out a waltz. Hamlin, immersed in his own thoughts, scarcely observed the turmoil, but leaned, arms on railing, gazing out into the darkness. Something mysterious from out the past had gripped him; he was wondering how he should greet her when she came; speculating on her purpose in sending for him.

It seemed as though he waited a long time before the curtain at the window was thrust aside and the lady emerged, the slight rustling of her dress appraising him of her presence. The curtain still held slightly back by her hand permitted the light from



"My Name is Hamlin; I Am Here on the Lady's Invitation."

within to reflect over her figure, revealing in softened outline the beauty of her features, the flossy brightness of her hair. She was in evening dress, a light shawl draping her shoulders. An instant she paused in uncertainty, striving to distinguish his face; then stepped impulsively forward, and held out her hands.

"I have kept you waiting, but you must forgive that, as I came as soon as I could manufacture an excuse. Won't you even shake hands with me?"

"Is it necessary?" he asked, almost wearily. "You have come to me for some purpose surely, but it can hardly be friendship."

"Why should you say that?" reproachfully. "I have deserted a rather brilliant party to meet you here."

"That, perhaps, is why I say it, Mrs. Dupont. If my memory serves, you would not be inclined to leave such rendezvous as you have yonder to rendezvous with a common soldier, unless you had some special object in view. If you will inform me what it is, we can very quickly terminate the interview."

She laughed, a little touch of nervousness in the voice, but drew her skirts aside, and sat down on the bench.

martyr and gentle maid stood within the vast arena to die for Christ. The emperor is there; the nobility of Rome is there; tier upon tier is densely packed; the wild beasts paw their cages, impatient for the feast; one hundred thousand voices shout "The Christians to the lions!" A spring, a growl, a quiver and another hero has gone to God. Every brick, and stone, and grain of sand in this mighty ruin has been sanctified by the blood shed there. Here a Felicitas and Perpetua, a Cyriacus and Pancras

"Do you think you can deceive me by such play-acting?" she asked eagerly. "You are no man of wood. Tell me, is there nothing you care to tell me, after—after all these years?"
Hamlin lifted his eyes and looked at her, stirred into sudden interest by the almost caressing sound of the soft voice.
"Yes," he said slowly, "there are some things I should like to know, if I thought you would answer frankly."
"Try me and see."
"Then why are you Mrs. Dupont, instead of Mrs. LeFevre?"
"Then my guess is true, and you are not so devoid of curiosity," she laughed. "My answer? Why, it is simplicity itself—because I was never Mrs. LeFevre, but am rightfully Mrs. Dupont."

"Do you mean you were never married to LeFevre?"
"What else could I mean?"
"Then he lied."
She shrugged her white shoulders.
"That would not surprise me in the least. 'Twas a characteristic of the man you had ample reason to know. How came you to believe so easily?"
"Believe? What else could I believe? Everything served to substantiate his boast. I was in disgrace, practically drummed out of camp. There was nothing left for me to live for, or strive for. I was practically dead. Then your letter confessing came—"

"Walt," she interrupted, "that letter was untrue, false; it was penned under compulsion. I wrote you again, later, but you had gone, disappeared utterly. I wanted to explain, but your own people even did not know where you were—do not know yet."
He leaned his body against the rail, and looked at her in the dim light. Her face retained much of its girlish attractiveness, yet its undoubted charms no longer held the man captive. He smiled coldly.

"The explanation comes somewhat late," he replied deliberately. "When it might have served me it was not offered—indeed, you had conveniently disappeared. But I am not here to criticize; that is all over with, practically forgotten. I came at your request, and presume you had a reason. May I again ask what it was?"

CHAPTER XVII.

At Cross-Purposes.

She sat for a moment silent, gazing up the street, but breathing heavily. This was not the reception she had anticipated, and it was difficult to determine swiftly what course she had best pursue. Realizing the hold she had once had upon this man, it had never occurred to her mind that her influence had altogether departed. Her beauty had never failed before to win such victory, and she had trusted now in reviving the old smouldering passion into sudden flame. Yet already she comprehended the utter uselessness of such an expectation—there was no smouldering passion to be fanned; his indifference was not assumed. The discovery angered her, but long experience had brought her control; it required only a moment to readjust her faculties, to keep the bitterness out of her voice. When she again faced him it was to speak quietly, with convincing earnestness.
"Yes, I realize it is too late for explanations," she acknowledged, "so I will attempt none. I wished you to know, however, that I did not desert you for that man. This was my principal purpose in sending for you."

"Do you know where he is?"
She hesitated ever so slightly, yet he, watching her closely, noted it.

"No; at the close of the war he came home, commanding the regiment which should have been yours. Within three months he had converted all the family property into cash and departed. There was a rumor that he was engaged in the cattle business."

"You actually expect me to believe all this—that you know nothing of his plans—were not, indeed, a part of them?"

"I am indifferent as to what you believe," she replied coldly. "But you are ungentlemanly to express yourself so freely. Why should you say that?"
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Fire Without Flame.

An English engineer named Bode has invented a way to have fire without flame. His apparatus consists of a porous plate or mass of fire-resisting fragments, within which he mixes inflammable gas and air in the right proportions.
When the gas is first turned on and alighted it burns with a flame at the surface of the plate. When the air is turned on the flame disappears, but the heat increased. A temperature of 3,200 degrees is claimed.
Just what use of this invention can be made is yet a question.

Wedding Ring Worn by Men.

Customs slip in and almost before we are aware of them they are there—the wearing of the wedding ring by men, for instance. Twenty years ago this was almost unknown in England, but now it is quite an ordinary thing. It has its advantages for men, as for women; it is a sign, as it were, of ownership, of not being on the market.



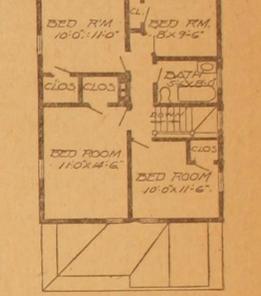
WILLIAM A. RADFORD, EDITOR

Mr. William A. Radford will answer questions and give advice FREE OF 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. 115 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, Ill., and only enclose two-cent stamp for reply.

For economy in space and careful planning of the rooms to utilize the last inch to advantage, the house design here shown is exceptionally good. It is that of a medium-sized square-built house, 24 by 30 feet in ground plan.

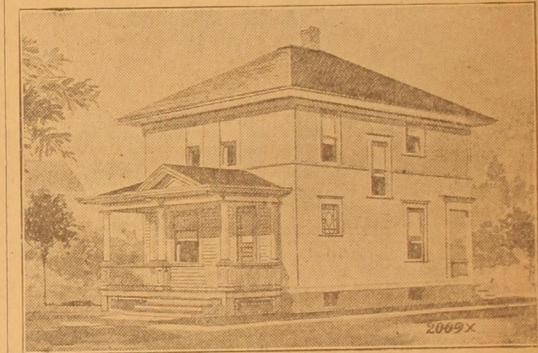
These dimensions may seem rather small to work into seven rooms, besides a good bathroom, plenty of closets, and a good lower hall with an open stairway. Yet these rooms are as large as the average rooms in new houses, as houses go at the present time; and they are a good deal larger than some. Years ago, rooms were larger; but that was when building material and labor were very much cheaper than they are now. A builder can almost tell the age of a house by the size of the rooms. But there are other contributing causes. One is that we understand building better, and it is not necessary to build so large to get the same amount of comfort. As one lady expressed it, "I have learned to like my small kitchen; there are places for everything, and I do not have to walk so much."

We have learned how to ventilate houses so that the air in small rooms in new houses is better than the air in large rooms in houses built 20 or 30 years ago. One reason for better ventilation is that, houses now are set up well from the ground. It is a rare thing to see a new house less



Second Floor Plan.

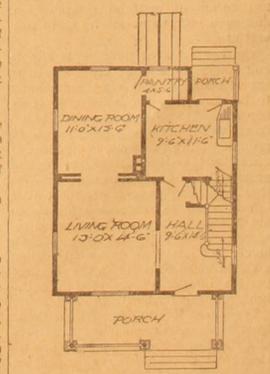
general design. It is, however, better to build plain and neat than to attach too many ornaments. There is something about a plain, neat house, if well proportioned, that you never get tired of. Fancy balconies and odd-shaped roofs look well when they are new, but such things seldom wear well. For steady diet, there is nothing so satisfying as plain bread and



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than three feet above grade, and many of them are more than four feet up.

There was a time when cellars were confined to one corner of the house, and they were often dark, damp, dingy affairs. Modern houses, however, practically all have cellars the full size of the house, divided into compartments—one for the furnace, one for coal and one for the storage of fruit and vegetables. A furnace in the cellar is in itself a splendid ventilator; it keeps the cellar dry and warm, and the heat from it will force ventilation. Then, the circulation of air in the pipes and through the registers carries the warm circulating medium to every corner in the building. Nine out of ten of the smaller houses probably are heated by means of a hot-air furnace, and there is no bet-



First Floor Plan.

ter heating apparatus for a house of this size.

Another improvement in the modern house is in making larger chimneys and putting more flues in them. There is a constant current of air going up through the chimney. If a flue is built right, it works night and day, purifying the air in the house. It does not make any noise, and we are likely to forget that it is there; but the work goes on whether we know it and appreciate the fact or not. Thousands of people owe their lives unknowingly to just such protection. I know families who habitually sleep

butter, meat and potatoes. A little cake and a few candies may be all right by way of variety, but you cannot live on such things. You build a good, solid, plain, square house that is light, airy, well ventilated, and easily heated, and you have something to be satisfied with as long as you live. But you let some architect coax you into building some fancy gothic arrangement, or add a lot of gewgaws to an otherwise sensible plan, and you will have a job of alterations on your hands before many years.

A study of the rooms in the present design will convince anyone that this plan offers a good deal of comfort for the amount of money the house will cost. Commencing with the front hall, there is a good-looking open stair lighted both from the top and the bottom—a feature that you do not always meet with. Then there is a closet for coats, and room behind this and under the main stair for an entrance to the cellar from the kitchen. There is a good hall—big enough without using up a whole lot of unnecessary space.

The living room and dining room are supposed to occupy the south or west side of the house, which is the sunny side, as these rooms are used the most. When it comes to the kitchen and pantry, with a back porch entrance, the arrangement is good and pretty handy. I do not advocate putting the kitchen on the north side of the house, because I think a kitchen should be as bright and cheerful as any other room; but on the other hand, a northern or eastern room is cooler than one facing the south or west, and you have too much heat in the kitchen anyway.

It is impossible to have everything just exactly right; but taking this house on the whole, the plan is a good one, and it is not very expensive. With careful management it may be built in most towns for about \$2,000, complete with piping for gas and with electric wiring. An exceptionally good manager might get the furnace put in, and still keep the price within \$2,000.

Hardly Probable.
"Have you seen Mamie's engagement ring?"
"Of course. Did you have an idea that she was making an effort to hide it?"
"I know families who habitually sleep

SAW FALL OF PAGAN ROME

Stones of the Coliseum Immortalized Today the Triumphs of a Christianity That Lives.

Christianity is crystallized in the Coliseum and St. Peter's. In the former by the triumphs of the martyrs; in the latter, by the dedication of art to the worship of God, writes Bishop Gibbon.
Come with me along the Via Sacra, past the Forum and the Arch of Titus.

But a step, and we are at the Coliseum, pressed in between the Caelian and Palatine hills, the Arch of Constantine and the Temple of Venus.
As we enter, the moon has risen, giving a weird appearance to the scene, as we see its shadows fit, dissolve and lose themselves amid the arches of this mighty ruin. Amid broken arch and column and vaulted corridor, terrace rises upon terrace till the blood curdles and the hair stands on end. Memory is busy and hurries us back to when Christian

died; here Rome brutalized herself and within these walls strove to crush out truth.
Here Pagan Rome fell and Christianity rose. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.
Plants That Resemble Stones.
In South Africa there is found a plant of the genus Mesemryanthemum, growing on stony ground, which so closely resembles a pebble that it is invariably taken by the strange for a stone.