KEITH OF THE BORDER

A TALE OF THE PLAINS

By Randall Parrish

Author of "My Lady of the South," "When Valley Meets Valley," etc.

Illustrations by Dearborn Melville

(Copyright, A. C. McClurg & Co., 1908.)

SYNOPSIS.

Jack Keith, a Virginian, now a border plainsman, is looking for roaming war parties of savages. He sees a wagon team of full gallop pursued by men on ponies. "Pan" Keith reaches the wagon the ponies have massacred two men and departed, its occupants, a young lady and a young boy, being carried off. The Keith party is arrested at Carson City, charged with the murder, and accused of being a ruffian named Black Bart, a negro companion in his call named Jeff tells him that he knows the Keiths in Virginia. Neighors one of the men, Jack's friend, was John Miller, the other Gen. Willis Wallis, formerly of Virginia, but now a Kansas Senator and Mr. Keith's father. The girl explains some upon a cable and find its occupant to be a young girl, whom Keith thinks he saw at Carson City. The girl explains that she is in search of a brother, who had deserted from the army, and that a Mr. Hawley induced her to accompany him, while on a visit to Carson City, to ride out to Fort Larned. In hiding recognizes him as Black Bart. There is a terrific battle in the darkened room in which Keith is victor. Horses are approaching, and the girl who says that her name is Hope, John is the escort, Keith explains his situation and the fugitives make for the hotel, Keith's friends, Miss Hope, the hotel landlady, Miss Wallis, and that she is the daughter of General Wallis. Keith and the girl find a room, where Keith meets an old friend, Dr. Pallisch. Keith meets the brother of Hope, Walter, under the assumed name of Fred Willoughby, and becomes acquainted. Dr. Pallisch, Hope's uncle, has some plot involving the Wallis fortune, which Keith, Hope, Walter and Dr. Pallisch, with Miss Wallis, go to Atchison, and goes there, where she is mistaken for Christie Malaire, the Frenchy, Keith, Hope, Keith meets the real Christie Malaire.

CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

"Don't you ever do it," he insisted. "The marshal brought her in here, and fired a fellow out o' the room so as to give it to her. I'd be clean out this house if we ran in a coal deck on a friend o' his."

"What do I care for what your marshal does?"

"But he's Bill Hickock, Miss, 'Wild Bill.'"

Miss Maclaire leaned back against the stair-rail, her eyes turning from Tommy to her speechless supporters. Slowly the truth seemed to penetrate her brain.

"Oh," she gasped at last. "Then—then what else can you give me?"

The officers had long since departed, promising, however, to remain over in town and hear her again that night at the Tremont, with Hawley as a late supper; she had received a call from the manager of that most popular resort, and had rendered his life miserable by numerous demands; had passed half an hour practicing with the leader of the orchestra; but now was at least alone, tired, decidedly irritable, and still tempted to invade "Hi" and give that other woman a piece of her mind. Then some one rapped on the door. There was a decided accent of vexation in the voice which bade the one outside enter, but the lady's mood changed swiftly as there in the eyes peered out from the darkened hall, the face of Keith, the light from the window revealing clearly his strong face. The man stood hat in hand, bowing slightly, unable to comprehend why she should have been sent for, yet marvelling again at the remarkable resemblance between this woman and that other whom he had left at Fort Larned. As Miss Maclaire stood with back toward the window, she presented the same youthful appearance, the same slenderness of figure, the same contour of face.

"Miss Christie Maclaire?" he asked, as though in doubt.

"Yes," gradually, "you instantly by the man's appearance and manner. "You wished to see me? Will you be seated?"

He crossed the narrow room to the armchair chair indicated, and the lady sank negligently down into her own, resting her head against a pillow, and regarding him expectantly. He could view her now more clearly, distinctly, observing the slight difference in size, the fuller lips, the darker shade of the hair, and the varied expression of the eyes. It was as if a different soul had taken possession of the same face. He had never before realized how little, apparently trifling, details marked the human consciousness, and, embarrassed by her own scrutiny, his glance swept about the room. Misunderstanding, from the corner of eye, Miss Christie sought to place him more at ease.

"The room is a perfect fright," she observed briskly, "but what can one expect in these musty backwoods towns. Really I had never thought of it before, or I shouldn't have come. They pay good money, though, for the room, and we all have to live, you know. Are you in professional work?"

He shook his head, feeling somewhat perplexed at his reception.

"Really I didn't suppose you were," she went on, briskly, "for I fancy there are so many who come to me to help them that I have grown suspicious of every stranger. May I ask why you desired to see me?"

Another suspicion had taken possession of his mind, for the man in that section were never backward in exhibiting admiration, recognizing this man did not seem exactly of that kind.

"I came merely because I was sent for, Miss Maclaire," he replied, his gray eyes once again upon her face. "Doubtless you know who you are message; I am Jack Keith."

She looked the complete astonishment she felt, sitting up in the chair, her eyes filled with questioning doubt.

"Doctor Fairbain! My message! Surely you are mistaken? I know no one of that name, and have sent no message."

"You did not express a desire to see me?"

She laughed, exhibiting a row of white teeth.

"Certainly not; but until this moment was I even aware of the existence of Mr. Jack Keith."

His own eyes smiled in response to challenge of hers.

"I can assure you the surprise was mine also," he hastened to inform her, now more at ease, as he grasped the situation. "I could not understand how I had become known to you, yet I pledge you, my word the message was actually brought. Of course you may suspicion otherwise, for I have seen you on the stage, and being a normal man, have wished that I could devise some excuse for meeting you."

"Indeed!" her eye-brows slightly lifted.

"Yes, I make that confession frankly, yet this call comes from no such desire. I had no question when I came, but what I had been sent for—you will believe this?"

"I suppose I must, yet it seems very peculiar," she replied, feeling convinced that he was a gentleman, and troubled as to what she had best do.

Keith Backed into the Corner—His Hand in His Pocket.

"Let now that you have discovered your mistake—"

"I hope to take advantage of the opportunity," he broke in firmly, leaning slightly forward. "May I ask why a person sent?"

"I could hardly prevent it, and really I do not know that I have anything to conceal."

"Then I will risk the effort—do you know a man named Hawley?—Bartley Hawley?"

Her eyes did not falter, although a red spot shot into her cheeks, and her lips pressed together.

"No; that is I have never met him," she acknowledged, just a little confused. "But I have received two letters signed by that name, and rather expected the gentleman would call upon me here in Sheridan during my engagement. Is that your mission? Were you sent by him? or are you Mr. Hawley?"

"I disclaim all relation, Miss Maclaire, even friendship. You, of course, know who this individual is?"

"No," the short monosyllable was not encouraging. "He messages were of a business character."

"So I presumed, yet one likes to know something even of the person he does business with. I have been acquainted with Hawley for several years, and have never been aware of any honorable business he has ever engaged in. He is a professional gambler, known on the frontier as 'Black Bart;' last night he was running a faro game across there in the Sheridan House, and I wondered what kind of business such a fellow could possibly have with you, Miss Maclaire."

The woman's eyes flashed, hardening in their brown depths.

"What right have you to ask?" she began indignantly. "I am capable of deciding my own affairs. As I have told you I have never met Mr. Hawley, but I am not to be influenced against him merely by the detunciation of an avowed enemy. He has written me of something he has discovered which is of deep personal interest to me, and has promised to tell me the details, as well as place within my hands certain necessary papers."

"I appreciate your feelings," he said gently, as she paused, "but would you mind telling me the nature of those papers?"

"There was something in Keith's face which told of honesty, and inspired confidence. Miss Maclaire's worldly experience had given her deep insight into the character of men, and somehow, as she looked into the clear gray eyes, she felt impelled to answer, a vague doubt of the unknown Hawley in her mind.

"They—they were papers to establish identity. He had discovered them by accident; they have to do with an inheritance. Really that is all I know, for he wrote very briefly, stating he would be safer to confer with me personally—only I imagine there is a large sum involved."

"From whose estate?"

"My grandfather's."

"And his name was?"

"Why—why, Mr. Keith, actually I do not know. It may seem strange, but—but I cannot even tell the names of my parents; I cannot remember, either my father or mother. Oh, I do not know why I should tell you all this! Why do you, really? Why do you ask me such questions?"

He leaned forward, touched by the woman's emotion.

"Miss Maclaire," he said gravely, "I am not prying into your life needlessly, but am endeavoring to serve you as well as others. Hawley may indeed possess papers of great value, but if he has been not found his accident, but stolen from the body of a murdered man. These papers may possibly refer to you, but if so Hawley himself does not believe. It—he has simply chosen you for impression the right party because of your physical resemblance."

"Resemblance to whom?"

"To a young woman, a Miss Hope."

"But how do you know this? Why should you be interested? Are you a detective?"

"No, I am not a detective, but I cannot explain to my interest, nor trying to serve you, to keep you from being drawn into a plot—"

"Rather to keep me from learning the truth, Mr. Jack Keith," she burst forth, rising to her feet indignantly. "You know no more than I do of Hawley, or the Black Bart; last night he was running a faro game across there in the Sheridan House, and I wondered what kind of business such a fellow could possibly have with you, Miss Maclaire."

"Why, Mr. Keith, actually I do not know. It may seem strange, but—but I cannot even tell the names of my parents; I cannot remember, either my father or mother. Oh, I do not know why I should tell you all this! Why do you, really? Why do you ask me such questions?"

He leaned forward, touched by the woman's emotion.

"Miss Maclaire," he said gravely. "I am not prying into your life needlessly, but am endeavoring to serve you as well as others. Hawley may indeed possess papers of great value, but if so they were not found by accident, but stolen from the body of a murdered man. These papers may possibly refer to you, but if so Hawley himself does not believe. It—he has simply chosen you for impression the right party because of your physical resemblance."

"Resemblance to whom?"

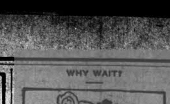
"To a young woman, a Miss Hope."

"But how do you know this? Why should you be interested? Are you a detective?"

"No, I am not a detective, but I cannot explain to my interest, nor trying to serve you, to keep you from being drawn into a plot—"

"Rather to keep me from learning the truth, Mr. Jack Keith," she burst forth, rising to her feet indignantly. "You know no more than I do of Hawley, or the Black Bart; last night he was running a faro game across there in the Sheridan House, and I wondered what kind of business such a fellow

WHY WAIT?



Grace—I just refused to marry Jack. He said he would not be in a position to marry for a year.

Maud—Well, what of that?

Grace—Why, I know a man who is to a position to marry any time.

See Riches in Swamps.

The Russian department of agriculture has founded at the Riga Polytechnic a school for specialists in swamp cultivation. The North Pacific expedition worked many years with great success in the desert of region of the northern swamps, and proved that the swamps of the Arctic angel province are full of wealth, and that millions of peasants, devoured by poverty and hunger in their native places, can find food and shelter in the swampy regions after their cultivation. With small expense the swamps can be turned into land covered with rich grass.

Indian Sacred Buildings.

The rock-hewn temples of Elephanta, in Bombay harbor, which were visited recently by the king and queen, numbered six, and four of them are nearly complete. They date from the eighth century A. D. or somewhat later. The Great Cave, 250 feet above high-water mark, belongs to a class of sacred buildings very common in India. It is a Siva temple, fully 130 feet long, the main body being a square of about 90 feet, hewn from the rock so as to present three open sides, and supported by six rows of stone columns.

Superstitious Waiter.

A man dining at a cafe observed that though he had ordered one dozen oysters, he was served with only eleven. The next evening the same thing occurred again. Then the diner became somewhat irritated.

"Why," he demanded of the waiter, "do you serve me only eleven oysters when I order a dozen?"

The waiter replied apologetically, "I didn't think you'd wanting to be sitting thirteen at table, sir."

Vest Pocket Telephones.

They are introducing vest-pocket telephones in some of the cities of Germany. Connections are placed on walls all over town and if you happen to walk along the street and find time in a hurry to tell your wife that you will bring a friend home for dinner you have to do is to connect your pocket instrument with the one on the wall, call the exchange, get your party and talk to your heart's content.

Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it

Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher

In Use For Over 30 Years.

Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Much Better Purpose.

Miss Charmynne—Don't you think I was made for a business woman?

Miss Hustler—No, I don't. I think you were meant for a business man.—Stray Stories.

CREAM OF RYE

For health and energy eat it for breakfast. Sold by leading druggists. Free Silver Spoon in every package. Ask your grocer for a package.

His Test of Religion.

The ordinary man cares only for what religion does, and not a jot for what religion is.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

Marriage separates a bachelor from a lot of illusions.

TO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY
Take LAXATIVE BROMO Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. E. W. Grove's signature on each box. 25c.

A woman wants protection, but favors free speech.

A Poor Weak Woman

As she is termed, will endure bravely and patiently agonies which a strong man would give way under. The fact is women are more patient than they ought to be under such troubles.

Every woman ought to know that she may obtain the most competent advice free of charge and in absolute confidence and privacy by writing to the World's Dispensary Medical Association, N. V. Pierce, M. D., President, Buffalo, N. Y. Dr. Pierce has been chief consulting physician to the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, of Buffalo, N. Y., for many years and has had a wider practical experience than any other physician in this country, for his medicines are world-famous for their astonishing efficacy.

The great medical remedy, over devoted four years and daily, some women, Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription.

IT MAKES WEAK WOMEN STRONG, SICK WOMEN WELL.

The many and varied symptoms of women's ailments are fully set forth in Plain English in the People's Medical Adviser (1008 pages), a newly revised and rewritten edition, which will be mailed, free on receipt of 21 one-cent stamps to pay cost of mailing only. Address as above.

FREEDOM FROM COLDS & HEADACHES INDIGESTION & SOUR STOMACH BILIOUSNESS & CONSTIPATION

and other ills, due to a disordered condition of the Liver, Stomach and Bowels, may be obtained most pleasantly and most promptly by using Syrup of Figs and Elixir of Senna. It is not a new and untried remedy, but one of the millions of well-informed Americans, who out the world to cleanse and sweeten and strengthen the system whenever a laxative remedy is needed.

Be sure to buy only the full name of the Company—California Fig Syrup Co.—printed on every package of the genuine.

Regular price 50C per bottle, one size only. For sale by all leading druggists.

THE ORIGINAL AND GENUINE SYRUP OF FIGS AND ELIXIR OF SENNA IS MANUFACTURED BY CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO.

44 Bu. to the Acre

It's heavy yield, but that's what John Kenyon of Lacombe, Alberta, got from 40 acres of wheat. Yields of 40 bushels per acre are not uncommon in Western Canada. Thousands of farmers in the District of Lacombe have showed other settlers what can be done in Western Canada. Lands can be had from 12 acres, or 160 acres, free, and 160 acres more at $3 per acre. As yet only a small area has been crossed from railway station. Write for

The Silver Cup

to the second farmer in Western Canada who raises the greatest quantity of bushels per acre of fall wheat, spring wheat, barley, oats, and potatoes, and relinquishing production of the cup for the next year and to be held by her every area to be held by the second farmer. Crops in Western Canada were better than ever before excellent, and the yield of wheat, oats, barley and potatoes, and other crops, cheap, land easy to get and prosperity is the rule. Thousands prospered, and hundreds made their homes.

Write for Atlas, Map, Pamphlets, Settlers' Rates, Information, etc. Address Superintendent of Immigration, Ottawa, Canada, or C. A. Broughton, Room 1, Merchants Bank Building, Winnipeg, Man., Regina, Sask., Calgary, Alta., Edmonton, Alta., Prince Albert, Sask., Saskatoon, Sask., Lethbridge, Alta., Macleod, Alta