



KEITH OF THE BORDER

A TALE OF THE PLAINS
By RANDALL DARRISH
AUTHOR OF 'MY LADY OF THE SOUTH'
'WHEN WILDERNESS WAS KING ETC.
ILLUSTRATIONS BY DEARBORN MELVILL

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CHAPTER V.

The One Way.

Keith said nothing for some moments, staring up at the light stealing in through the window grating, his mind once again active. The eyes of the black man had the patient look of a dog as they watched; evidently he had cast aside all responsibility, now that this other had come. Finally Keith spoke slowly:

"We are in much the same position, Neb, and the fate of one is liable to be the fate of both. This is my story"—and briefly as possible, he ran over the circumstances which had brought him there, putting the situation clear enough for the negro's understanding, without wasting any time upon detail. Neb followed his recital with bulging eyes, and an occasional exclamation. At the end he burst forth:

"Yo' say dar was two ob dem white men murdered—one an' ol' man wid a gray beard, an' de odder 'bout thirty? An' dat it, Massa Jack, an' dey had fo' span ob mules, an' a runnin' hoss?"

"Yes."
"An' how far out was it?"
"About sixty miles."
"Ob, de good Lawd!" and the negro threw up his hands dramatically. "Dat sut'nly am my outfit! Dat am Massa Waite an' John Sibley."

"You mean the same men with whom you came here from Independence?"
Neb nodded, overcome by the discovery.

"But what caused them to run such a risk?" Keith insisted. "Didn't they know the Indians were on the war path?"

"Sho'; I heard 'em talkin' 'bout dat, but Massa Waite was jest houn' foh to git movin'. He didn't 'pear to be 'fraid ob no Injuns; reck'ned dey'd nebber stop him, dat he knowed ebbery chief on de plains. I reck'n dat he did, too."

"But what was he so anxious to get away for?"
"I dunno, Massa. I done heard 'em talk some 'bout dey plans, an' 'bout some gal dey wanted ter fin', but I didn't git no right sense to it. De Gin'ral, he was a might still man."

"The General? Whom do you mean? Not Waite?"
"John Sibley done called him dat."

Then Keith remembered—just a dim, misty thread at first, changing slowly into a clear recollection. He was riding with despatches from Longstreet to Stonewall Jackson, and had been shot through the side. The first of Jackson's troops he reached was a brigade of North Carolinians, commanded by General Waite—General Willis Waite. He had fallen from his horse at the outpost, was brought helpless to the General's tent, and another sent on with the papers. And Mrs. Waite had dressed and bandaged his wound. That was where he had seen that woman's face before, with its haunting familiarity. He drew the gazer from beneath his shirt, and gazed at the countenance revealed, with new intelligence. There could be no doubt—it was the face of her who had cared for him so tenderly in that tent at Manassas before the fever came and he had lost consciousness. And that, then, was Willis Waite lying in that shallow grave near the Cimmaron Crossing, and for whose death he had been arrested. "Was a strange world, and a small one. What a miserable ending to a life like his—a division commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, a Lieutenant-Governor of his state. What strange combination of circumstances could ever have brought such a man to this place, and sent him forth across those Indian-scouted plains? Surely nothing ordinary. And why should those border desperadoes have followed, through sixty miles of desolation, to strike him down? It was not robbery, at least in the ordinary sense. What then? And how was "Black Bart" involved? Why should he be sufficiently interested to swear out a warrant, and then assist in his arrest? There must be something to all this not apparent upon the surface—some object, some purpose shrouded in mystery. No mere quarrel, no ordinary feud, no accident of meeting, no theory of commonplace robbery, would account for the deed, or for the desperate efforts now being made to conceal it.

Some way, these questions, thus surging upon him, became a call to live, to fight, to unravel their mystery. The memory of that sweet-faced woman who had bent above him when the fever began its mastery, appealed to him now with the opportunity of service. He might be able to clear this, bring to her the truth, save her from despair, and hand over to justice the murderers of her husband. It was up to him alone to accomplish this—one who else knew what he knew, suspected what he suspected. And there was but one way—through escape. To remain there in weak surrender to fate could have but one ending, and that swift and sudden. He had no doubt as to "Black Bart's" purpose, or of his ability to use the "Red Light" outfit as desired. The whole plan was clear-

ly evident, and there would be no delay in execution—all they were waiting for was night, and a lax guard. He glanced about at the walls of the room, his eyes grown hard, his teeth clenched.

"Neb," he said shortly, "I guess that was your outfit all right, but they were not killed by Indians. They were run down by a gang from this town—the same fellows who have put you and me in here. I don't know what they were after—that's to be found out later,—but the fight you put up at the camp spoiled their game for once, and led to your arrest. They failed to get what was wanted in Carson, and so they trailed the party to the Cimmaron Crossing. Then I got on their track, and fearing the result, they've landed me also. Now they'll get rid of us both as best they can. These fellows won't want any trial—that would be liable to give the whole trick away—but they have got to put us where they won't talk. There is an easy way to do this, and that is by a lynching bee. Do you get my drift, Neb?"

The whites of the negro's eyes were very much in evidence, his hands gripping at the bench on which he sat.

"Fo' de Lawd, yes, Massa Jack, I sho' does. I corroborates de whole thing."
"Then you are willing to take a chance with me?"

"Willin'! Why, Massa Jack, I've overjoyed; I ain't gwine leave yer no mo'. I use sho' gwine ter be yo' nigger. What yo' gwine ter do?"

Keith ran his eyes over the walls, carefully noting every peculiarity.

"We'll remain here quietly just as long as it is daylight, Neb," he replied finally, "but we'll try every board and every log to discover some way out. Just the moment it grows dark enough to slip away without being seen we've got to hit the prairie. Once south of the Arkansas we're safe, but not until then. Have you made any effort to get out?"

The negro came over to him, and bent down.

"I was layin' on a board what I'd worked loose at one end," he whispered hoarsely, "back ob de bench, but I couldn't jerk it out wid'out something ter pry it up wid'."

"Where is it?"
"Right yere, Massa Jack."

It was a heavy twelve-inch plank, part of the flooring, and the second from the side-wall. Keith managed to get a grip next to the black fingers, and the two pressed it up far enough for the white man to run one arm through the opening up to his shoulder and grope about below.

"There's a two-foot space there," he reported, as they let the board settle silently down into position. "The back part of this building must be set up on piles. I reckon we could pry that plank up with the bench, Neb, but it's liable to make considerable racket. Let's hunt about first for some other weak spot."

They crept across the floor, testing each separate board, but without discovering a place where they could exert a leverage. The thick planks were tightly spiked down. Nor did the walls offer any better encouragement. Keith lifted himself to the grated window, getting a glimpse of the world without, but finding the iron immovable, the screws solidly imbedded in the outside wood. He dropped to the floor, feeling baffled and discouraged.

"It will have to be the plank back of the bench, Neb," he announced briefly, wiping the perspiration from his face. "Get down there, and work it as loose as you can without making any noise, while I keep my ear to the door and listen for any interruption."

They took turns at this labor, discovering a loose nail which gave an opening purchase at the crack, thus enabling the insertion of a small wooden block, and insuring space for a good finger grip when the right time came. A sleepy Mexican brought in their dinner, and set it down on the bench without a word, but on his return with supper, the marshal accompanied him, and remained while they ate, talking to Keith, and staring about the room. Fortunately, the single window was to the west, the last rays of the sun struck the opposite wall, leaving the space behind the bench in deep shadow. Whatever might be the plans of "Black Bart" and his cronies, Keith was soon convinced they were unknown to Hicks, who had evidently been deceived into thinking that this last arrest had created no excitement.

ADMITS KILLING PARENTS AND BOY

Boonville Slayer Finally Weakens and Confesses Crime.

OPPOSED HIS COMING MARRIAGE

Hides Basket Filled With Dishes, Knives and Forks and Kitchen Utensils for Use in Future Home—Lives of Parents Incured.

Evansville, Ind., Aug. 28.—William Lee, twenty-two years old, confessed that he murdered his father, Richard Lee; his mother and younger brother, Clarence, and then set fire to the family home at Boonville early Thursday in the hope of concealing the crime.

In verbal and written statements to Sheriff Davis Lee said that his motive was anger because his parents would not consent to his marriage with Mina Taylor, which he had planned for Thursday evening, and would not give him money with which to set up housekeeping.

When the confession was made public officers started with Lee in an automobile for the state reformatory at Jeffersonville to prevent possible mob violence.

Lee had previously made a statement that he had killed his father in self defense with an axe after the father had murdered his wife and younger son, but Sheriff Davis pressed the restless prisoner for "the true story," and Lee, asking for pen and ink, wrote a haltingly worded confession and afterwards pieced together, in answers to questions, a full description of the crime in the three-room cottage at Boonville.

Tells Story of Crime.

Lee said that he went Wednesday night to Newburg and called on his fiancée. They talked of the arrangements for their wedding. He had \$100 in the bank, but had spent it. He knew his parents had \$50 in the house. He returned home late at night and his mother reprimanded him. He told her he was determined to be married the following day and she answered he should not, that he must stay at home.

Going to his own room, Lee said, he "brooded until he was out of his mind." Suddenly he rushed into the room where his father, mother and brother slept. "I grabbed an axe by the door," he said, "and struck at my father, but hit my mother. My brother rose up and I struck him. Then my father, who had been outside, ran in and started to grab me by the throat. I hit him and he fell. I was scared so bad I did not know what I was doing. What scared me was that my father had threatened my life and I was angry at what my mother had said."

Lee said he lit a match to see what he had done and then dropped the flaming stick on the bed where his mother's body lay. "The flames flashed up and blinded me," he went on, "and I jumped into my room, put on my trousers and ran to alarm the neighbors. I would not have done this thing for anything if I had had any sense at all."

The fire in the Lee home was put out before the bodies, the skulls crushed, had been more than scorched and the youth stolidly helped carry them out to the lawn, insisting that he did not know how they came to their death.

Packs Dishes for Own Use.

Evidence produced refuted Lee's statement that he rushed from the house immediately after he had started the fire. A basin, stained with blood, in which he had washed his hands, was found. Long, gray hairs, supposedly his mother's, clung to the sides of the basin. Hidden behind a door was a basket filled with dishes, knives and forks and kitchen utensils, which, it is believed, he had packed with the idea that he would escape the consequences of the murders and soon have his own home. The lives of his father and brother were insured for \$700 and this would have come to him on their death and that of his mother.

Lee is illiterate and has been an idler since boyhood, according to testimony at the coroner's inquest at Boonville. His father, a plasterer, appeared to fear him and supplied him with money.

Sacred Stream Not Found.

Toledo, O., Aug. 28.—Members of the Revised Spiritualists, who left Findlay, O., last spring for California, where they were to seek the banks of a sacred stream or spring, are stranded, according to word received here from those in the party. Their funds have run low and twenty-six men, women and children now are facing starvation.

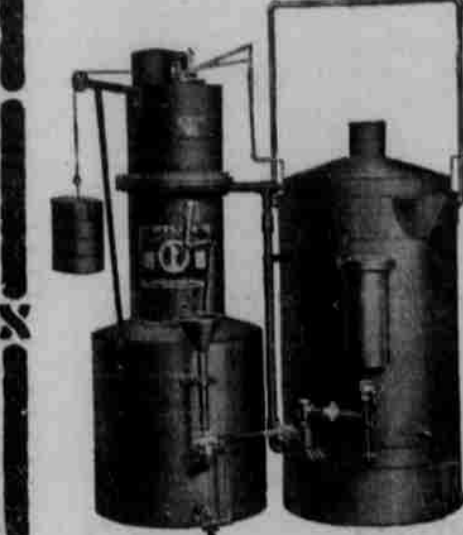
McClure Shot From Ambush.

Porcupine, Okla., Aug. 28.—Charles McClure, an adherent of Pony Starr, who on May 25 last killed three members of a mob that attacked him, was shot and killed from ambush here. There is no clue to McClure's assailant. McClure had been warned to leave town.

Conley Knocks Out Kline.

Los Angeles, Cal., Aug. 28.—Frankie Conley of Kenosha, Wis., knocked out Patsy Kline of Newark, N. J., in the fourteenth round of what was scheduled to have been a twenty-round fight before the Pacific Athletic club at Vernon.

- GAS LIGHTING - FOR COUNTRY HOMES!



This style of lighting makes gas just as you use it at the jets or stove and no faster.

The entire machine is automatic in operation and requires no attention whatever except to occasionally put in carbide and water, and that takes only a few minutes of your time and will last from two to three weeks at one filling.

JOHN BAUER,

Plattsmouth, Nebraska.

THE HARDWARE MAN

LOCAL NEWS

From Saturday's Daily.
W. R. Graham of Avoca was in town yesterday on business.

Mrs. Sam Long returned to South Bend yesterday, after visiting friends here.

Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Meisinger went to Benson today to spend Sunday at the home of P. M. Meisinger.

J. W. Holmes, from Murray, was looking after some business matters in the county seat yesterday evening.

August Engelkemeier, from west of Murray, was in the city today, coming up for a short visit with his county seat friends.

Glen Perry, one of the Journal readers from south of Plattsmouth, was in the city yesterday, and while here paid this office a pleasant call.

J. C. Snavely, from near Murray, was a county seat visitor today, coming up this morning for a short visit with county seat friends.

Mr. and Mrs. George M. Hild and daughter, Helen, went to Omaha this morning to see Mr. Hild's sister, who is ill at the Immanuel hospital.

William Puls, from west of Murray, was a county seat visitor today, driving in from his home to look after some business matters and visit with his many friends.

From Monday's Daily.
Jacob Kamm of Avoca was in town Saturday.

R. E. Lloyd came in from Lincoln yesterday.

J. Lohnes of Cedar Creek was in town Saturday.

George Lutz of Cedar Creek was in town Saturday.

George Kamm of Alvo was in town Saturday on business.

G. H. Wolfe of Alvo was a visitor in Plattsmouth Saturday.

C. T. Graham returned to Avoca Saturday, being here on business.

H. A. Guthmann returned to Murdock this morning, having spent Sunday here.

John Kaffenberger went to Denver and the San Luis Valley Saturday with the Rosencrans' party.

Sam Waugh, a former Plattsmouth boy, returned to Lincoln this morning, after spending Sunday with Ed Fricke.

Durwood Lynde came down from Omaha Saturday evening and visited with friends here, going to Union Sunday, where he visited his parents.

Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Foster and little daughter of Union drove to this city yesterday morning and spent the day at the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Larson.

Dr. Herman Greider has returned from Toronto, Canada, where he attended the International Convention of Veterinarians. He reports a great convention.

W. G. Mathews and wife were called to South Omaha yesterday on account of the serious illness of his father, Colonel G. P. Mathews, who has been a sufferer from chronic troubles.

C. F. Vallery and William Rummel were in the party that went to the San Luis Valley Saturday.

FEW ENCOMIUMS FOR VIAL, FORMER RESIDENT, KILLED AT FREMONT

Is Well Remembered Here, But He Had Reputation of Being a Desperate and Dangerous Man—Negro Murderer Says He Killed for Revenge, But Names No Specific Reason.

The account in last evening's Journal was read with much interest by the older residents who remember very well Charles Vial, the hotel man at Fremont, who was killed night before last by a negro.

Vial was a saloonkeeper here at one time, and his reputation as a dangerous man was wider than the limits of Plattsmouth. There were many stories told about him on the streets yesterday and today, but there were few encomiums for him. Although he was cleared of the murder of William Armstrong, many of those who heard the evidence in the case shake their heads when the verdict of the jury is discussed.

Harry Earl, the negro who shot him, was arraigned before a justice of the peace yesterday at Fremont. He said: "I plead guilty and waive preliminary examination." He has no attorney. He says he has been arrested twice before, once for singing on

a street in Coffeyville, Kansas, and once in Omaha as a suspicious character.

He said that he had once roomed at the Midland hotel, that Vial had "done him dirt," and he had determined on revenge. Yesterday afternoon he secured a revolver and later went to the hotel. "The old man was behind the counter," he said. "He looked at me kind of hard and as he raised his hand toward a drawer in the desk I fired. He kind of fell back into a chair and I fired again."

Vial was 71 years of age and a veteran of the civil war, serving in a Pennsylvania regiment. He had lived in Fremont about twelve years, most of the time running a rooming house or hotel, and for the last few years had conducted the Midland, a hotel of a cheap grade. He leaves a widow and two children by a former wife, Robert Vial of Nehawka, Neb., and Mrs. H. Bauman of Fremont.

They will be joined at Denver by several others interested in the Costella estate in the famous valley.

J. A. Pollard, jr., of Salem was in town Sunday, a guest at the Riley.

Mrs. R. M. Young of Murray passed through town today on her way to Omaha to spend the day.

Mrs. George S. Rosenwall returned to La Platte this afternoon, after a shopping trip here.

F. W. Hager of Lincoln returned home today. He came here for the funeral of David Hawksworth.

Mrs. F. N. Herzog returned to Lincoln this morning, after spending Sunday with Mrs. John Hall, sr.

Miss Gwendolyn Garlow returned to Columbus today, after visiting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Donnelly.

R. L. McElwain of Kansas City is visiting his brother, B. A. McElwain. He is on his way to San Francisco, where he will locate.

Mr. and Mrs. James Newell of Chicago, who have been visiting at various northern points for the past several weeks, arrived in this city yesterday morning for a few days' visit with relatives and friends.

Ed W. Schafer returned to Burlington, Iowa, this morning, after coming here to attend the funeral of David Hawksworth. He is an old friend of the deceased and was much grieved at the news of his death.

C. R. Woodruff of Omaha was in town yesterday.

Miss Mary E. Foster returned from Union today.

Frank Siczowski went to Omaha this afternoon.

R. W. Dyson of Nebraska City was in town yesterday.

Henry Reichmann of Elmwood was in town today.

Miss Lillian Bookmeyer went to Omaha this afternoon.

Chris and Fred Dreamer of Alvo were in town today.

Mrs. Bartlett of Omaha was a visitor in Plattsmouth Sunday.

George B. Mann went to Okeech today, where he will visit friends.

D. E. Woodward of St. Louis was a guest at the Riley Sunday.

H. F. Comer and J. W. Comer of Union were in town today on business.

Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Peterson and Milton and Luella Peterson were here yesterday, guests at the Riley.

Miss Eleanor Worth of Council Bluffs came in today to attend a bridge party given this afternoon by Mrs. H. N. Dovey.

Mrs. R. N. Schlaes went to Omaha today to spend a few days with relatives.

Roy McElwain of Kansas City arrived in the city yesterday morning for a brief visit with home folks, before departing for San Francisco, California, where he will make his future home. Roy has resigned his position with the Jaecard Jewelry company of Kansas City to accept a better one of a similar nature in San Francisco. After a brief visit with his mother and brother, B. A., he will take up his westward journey to the coast.

(To Be Continued.)