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## 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 MELVILLE

He perceived the picture in all its gruesome details—the two mule-drawn wagons moving slowly along the trail in the early morning; the band of hostile Indians suddenly swooping out from some obscure hiding place in the bluffs; the discovery of their presence; the desperate effort at escape; the swerving from the open trail in vain hope of reaching the river and finding protection underneath its banks; the frightened mules galloping wildly, lashed into a frenzy by the man on horseback; the pounding of the ponies' hoofs, punctuated by the exultant yells of the pursuers. Again he swore: "Of all the blame fools!"

#### CHAPTER II

##### The Scene of Tragedy.

Whatever might be the nature of the tragedy it would be over with long before this, and those moving black spots away yonder to the west, that he had discerned from the bluff, were undoubtedly the departing raiders. There was nothing left for Keith to do except determine the fate of the unfortunate, and give their bodies decent burial. That any had escaped, or yet lived, was altogether unlikely, unless, perchance, women had been in the party, in which case they would have been borne away prisoners.

Confident that no hostiles would be left behind to observe his movements, Keith pressed steadily forward, leading his horse. He had thus traversed fully half a mile before coming upon any evidence of a fight—here the pursuers had apparently come up with the wagons, and circled out upon either side. From their ponies' tracks there must have been a dozen in the band. Perhaps a hundred yards further along lay two dead ponies. Keith examined them closely—both had been ridden with saddles, the marks of the cinches plainly visible. Evidently one of the wagon mules had also dropped in the traces here, and had been dragged along by his mates. Just beyond came a sudden depression in the prairie down which the wagons had plunged so heavily as to break one of the axles; the wheel lay a few yards away, and, somewhat to the right, there lay the wreck of the wagon itself, two dead mules still in the traces, the vehicle stripped of contents and charred by fire. A hundred feet further along was the other wagon, its tongue broken, the canvas top ripped open, while between the two were scattered odds and ends of wearing apparel and provisions, with a pile of boxes smoking grimly. The remaining mules were gone, and no semblance of life remained anywhere. Keith dropped his reins over his horse's head, and, with Winchester cocked and ready, advanced cautiously.

Death from violence had long since become almost a commonplace occurrence to Keith, yet now he shrank for an instant as his eyes perceived the figure of a man lying motionless across the broken wagon tongue. The grizzled hair and beard were streaked with blood, the face almost unrecognizable, while the hands yet grasped a bent and shattered rifle. Evidently the man had died fighting, beaten down by overwhelming numbers after expending his last shot. Then those hands had scaped and left him where he fell. Fifty feet beyond, shot in the back, lay a younger man, doubled up in a heap, also scalped and dead. That was all; Keith scouted over a wide circle, even scanning the stretch of gravel under the river bank, before he could fully satisfy himself there were no others in the party. It seemed impossible that these two travelling alone would have ventured upon such a trip in the face of known Indian hostility. Yet they must have done so, and once again his lips muttered: "Of all the blame fools!"

Suddenly he halted, staring about over the prairie, obsessed by a new thought, an aroused suspicion. There had appeared merely the hoof-prints of the one horse alongside of the fleeing wagons when they first turned out from the trail, and that horse had been newly shod. But there were two dead ponies lying back yonder; neither shot, yet both had borne saddles. More than this, they had been spurred, the blood marks still plainly visible, and one of them was branded; he remembered it now, a star and arrow. What could all this portend? Was it possible this attack was no Indian affair after all? Was the disfiguring of bodies, the scalping, merely done to make it appear the act of savages? Driven to investigation by this suspicion, he passed again over the trampled ground, marking this time every separate indentation, every faintest imprint of hoof or foot. There was no impression of a moccasin anywhere; every mark remaining was of booted feet. The inference was sufficiently plain—this had been the deed of white men, not of red; foul murder, and not savage war.

The knowledge seemed to sear Keith's brain with fire, and he sprang to his feet, hands clinched and eyes blazing. He could have believed this of Indians, it was according to their nature, their method of warfare; but

ed very little information, those taken from the older man having no envelopes to show to whom they had been addressed. The single document found in the pocket of the other was a memorandum of account at the Pioneer Store at Topeka, charged to John Sibley, and marked paid. This then must have been the younger man's name, as the letters to the other began occasionally "Dear Will." They were missives such as a wife might write to a husband long absent, yet upon a mission of deep interest to both. Keith could not fully determine what this mission might be, as the persons evidently understood each other so thoroughly that mere allusion took the place of detail. Twice the name Phyllis was mentioned, and once a "Fred" was also referred to, but in neither instance clearly enough to reveal the relationship, although the latter appeared to be pleased. Certain references caused the belief that these letters had been mailed from some small Missouri town, but no name was mentioned. They were invariably signed "Mary." The only other paper Keith discovered was a brief itinerary of the Santa Fe trail extending as far west as the Raton Mountains, giving the usual camping spots and places where water was accessible. He slipped the papers back into his pocket with a distinct feeling of disappointment, and lay back staring up at the little strip of blue sky. The silence was profound, even his horse standing motionless, and finally he felt asleep.

#### OBITUARY

##### JAMES WHITE

The death occurred in Orillia on Saturday last of James White, who during his life was prominently identified with lumbering along the Trent waterway. He came to Longford Mills in 1871, there taking employment with the then firm of Thomosa & Millar. Up to 1879 he was in charge of the depot at Uphill, County of Victoria. In that year he entered the service of the Georgian Bay Lumber Co., at Wauhaushene, where he remained about two years. From Wauhaushene he went, for the same firm, to Byng Inlet. This concern having sold the Byng Inlet mills, Mr. White came to Orillia in 1893, taking employment with McCormick & McLeod, as book-keeper and confidential clerk, remaining with them till the firm was dissolved. From that time up to the time of his death, Mr. White was a valued and trusted employee of Mr. H. J. Bartlett.

#### CHAPTER III

##### An Arrest

The Santa Fe trail was far too exposed to be safely traveled alone and in broad daylight, but Keith considered it better to put sufficient space between himself and those whom he felt confident were still watching his movements from across the river. How much they might already suspicion his discoveries he possessed no means of knowing, yet, conscious of their own guilt, they might easily feel safer if he were also put out of the way. He had no anticipation of open attack, but must guard against treachery. As he rode, his eyes never left those far-away sand dunes, although he perceived no movement, no black dot even which he could conceive to be a possible enemy. Now that he possessed ample time for thought, the situation became more puzzling. This tragedy which he had accidentally stumbled upon must have had a cause other than blind chance. It was the culmination of a plot, with some reason behind more important than ordinary robbery. Apparently the wagons contained nothing of value, merely the clothing, provisions, and ordinary utensils of an emigrant party. Nor had the victims' pockets been carefully searched. Only the mules had been taken by the raiders, and they would be small booty for such a crime.

The trail, continually skirting the high bluff and bearing farther away from the river, turned sharply into a narrow ravine. There was a considerable break in the rocky barrier here, leading back for perhaps a hundred yards, and the plainsman turned his horse that way, dismounting when out of sight among the boulders. He could rest here until night with little danger of discovery. He lay down on the rocks, pillowing his head on the saddle, but his brain was too active

to permit sleeping. Finally he drew the letters from out his pocket, and began examining them. They yielded

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" 20 " 50	15 "
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interesting addresses were given by members present, and Dec. 20 was set apart for a degree meeting of the lodge, and a well spent evening was brought to a close.

### TRUSTEE ANDERSON HAS RESIGNED

Resignations seemed to be catching last night at the meeting of the Board of Education. Jas. W. Anderson surprised the board by announcing that as his occupation would call him out of town most of the coming year, he felt it his duty to resign in favor of somebody else who would be in close touch with the work.

Mr. Anderson was persuaded by his colleagues to continue as a member until the close of the current year. His resignation, to take place at that time, was accepted on motion of Trustees McLennan and Dr. White.

During his term of office as a member of the Board of Education Mr. Anderson has been a valued member and has always been willing to undertake any duties assigned him, and has been very regular in his attendance at the meetings.

### MATERNITY HOUSE LOSES ITS LICENSE

The Toronto Star has the following: Irregularity in the management of a maternity house conducted at 19 Wellesley avenue by Mrs. Wm. H. Parker, has resulted in the holder being deprived of her license by the Provincial Secretary's Department. The cause, as explained by the authorities, was a false return submitted to the department regarding the birth of a child about seven months ago. From the story told by the Staff Inspector there were two women. One wished the birth of a child concealed. The second, from a small village near Lindsay came to the city to adopt an infant. To arrange matters to be mutually satisfactory, it is stated the Wellesley avenue house management reported to the Provincial Department that the country woman was the mother.

This class of house recently came under the regulation of the Provincial Secretary's Department, when it was made necessary for them to procure licenses in the same way as private hospitals. This is the first license to be cancelled under the new act.

It is understood the child in question is a ward of the Children's Aid Society.

### BORN

EARL—In Omemeo, on Friday, Dec. 6th, 1912, to Dr. and Mrs. Earl, a daughter.

Women would never be successful as plain clothes detectives.

### WILLIAM THORNBURY INSTALLING OFFICER

The annual meeting of L.O.L. 935 was held in Glenarm on Dec. 3, with a large number present. After the regular business Bro. Wm. Thornbury, of Lindsay was called upon to take the chair during the election and installation of officers. The following officers were elected to office:

D. P. McKenzie—W. M.  
Robt. Hargrave—D. M.  
R. McPadyen—Chap.  
D. A. Spence—Rec. Sec.  
Dougald Spence—Fin. Sec.  
H. Boyde—Treas.  
R. Nicholson—Lect.  
D. Ferguson—D. C.  
D. Campbell—Sr. Com.

After the installation of officers in-

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is the bane of so many lives that here is where we make our great boast. Our pills cure it while others do not.

Carter's Little Liver Pills are very small and very easy to take. One or two pills make a dose. They are strictly vegetable and do not grip or purge, but by their gentle action please all who use them.

CARTER MEDICINE CO., NEW YORK.  
Small Pill. Small Dose. Small Price.

A root cellar like this won a prize last year.

THE drawing was made from a photograph of the root-cellar with which D. A. Purdy, of Lumsden, Sask., won a cash prize in last year's contest. In that contest there were 36 prizes. There will be three times as many prizes (108) in the

### 1912 FARMERS' PRIZE CONTEST

THUS you will have three times as many chances of winning a cash prize. You do not have to use any certain amount of Canada Cement to win a prize. There are absolutely no "strings" to this offer.

There are twelve prizes for each Province (three of \$50; three of \$25; three of \$15; and three of \$10) and you compete only with other farmers in your own Province and not with those all over Canada.

It makes no difference whether you have ever used cement. Many of last year's winners had not used it until they entered the contest. When you write for full particulars, we will send you, free, a book, "What the Farmer Can Do With Concrete," which tells everything you need to know about concrete. It is absolutely free, and you are under no obligation to buy "Canada" Cement or to do anything else for us.

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