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C. McArthur

THE GHOST OF LOCHRAIN CASTLE

BY MRS. C. N. WILLIAMSON

Author of "The Princess Passes," "The Lightning Conductor," Etc., Etc.

Copyright, 1906, by Mrs. C. N. Williamson.

Kenrith led Elspeth across the large | "Tou have guessed right. I thought room toward a comfortable sofa, piled you would. And I shouldn't wonder there Framing on shortest with cushions among which could be if Kenrith guessed, too. He admires seen the back of a man's head-a Lady Lambart very much, but he i well-shaped head, thickly covered against her where I am concerned. with close-cropped, rippling bronze He didn't know till yesterday that SHOW ROOMS-Next to Swallows hair. In another moment she saw she disapproved of me as an acquaint-Barber Shop. RESIDENCE-Next the face, which turned toward her as ance for a woman with a marriagedoor South of W. J. Lawrence's she approached, at Kenrith's side, and able daughter, though if he weren't as the handsome eyes and lips smiled rather unworldly in some ways, defaintly in greeting, the girl gave a spite his shrewdness in others, he slight start of surprise.

"Why," she asked herself eagerly, with her. He has too much money "where have I seen him, or someone himself to care about whether others exactly like him, only a short time have it or not, or even think of it;

CHAPTED V.

A second glance at Captain Oxford ed Heaven devoutly if I had been assured Elspeth that, despite the killed last night out of her daughter's haunting likeness to some other face, way forever, instead of just winged, she had certainly never seen him be-fore. He was not a young man to be Elspeth shuddered. "It doesn't mateasily forgotten, and the girl did not ter so much to you about what she wonder that he had attracted Lady feels," said the girl: "But do you Hilary. Not only was he remarkably good to look at, but it seemed to her that, with such eyes-bronze, like his hair, and only a few shades darker than his sunburned skin-he must be honest and sincere. If there were a mystery about his adventure of last night, she told herself that it could be nothing of which he need feel ashamed.

When Elspeth had been made ac-quainted with Captain Oxford, Ken- she could have been mistaken after rith left them alone, and went off to all in fancying him absolutely frank play golf-perhaps, the girl thought and open. Suddenly he looked like grudgingly, with Lady Lambart.

ters, which she would not have judg- The words that Kenrith had said beought to rest now?" she asked, re- blood." What of the ruby drops that membering Mr. Kenrith's instructions. "Yes," the young man answered. "I'm not going to ask you to do any

tated, and Elspeth took up the sentence where it broke off, inquiring if there were anything further that she ould do for him.

"Yes, there is something," he said. 'I-my friend, Mr. Kenrith, told me you traveled up in the same carriage with him yesterday, and—with Lady Lambart and her daughter." People's Mills

Elspeth's eyes brightened, she knew what would please him now, and did not see any wrong in doing it. "Oh, yes," she answered, "it was so crowded, they put me in first-class, and blend of 1 Manitoba and 1 Ontario Lady Hilary Lambart was so sweet theat and is a strictly first class about it. I never saw such a lovely girl as she is, and I am sure she is

as nice as she is beautiful." Captain Oxford's face lighted up. r pure Manitoba flour, made from and he smiled, showing his white Manitoba wheat cannot be beat teeth. "You are very quick in formeither bakers or domestic use. ing your impressions, evidently," he said. "But I believe in the kind of admiration that begins at first sight.' "So do I, and love, too," said Elsmade from selected winter whea.

fallen in love with Lady Hilary Lam- Oxford. bart at first sight. As it is, I would

hop, Bean Shorts and Feed Flour. "It isn't a bit," laughed Elspeth. special Reduction on Flour in 5 and "if you really don't mind my saying

> "Mind? Why, now that I know you are such a stanch alley of hers, it will simply be paradise to have chance of talking about her. Do tell me, since we've come down so quickly to 'bed rock,' as the Americans say how did you find out that I was in love with Lady Hilary Lambart?" "Shall I tell all the truth?"

"Why, of course." seemed pleased with the news that he off a little more successfully. was staying at Lochrain Hydro, and | Elspeth looked blank. "What is he look on Lady Hilary's face that asked. ner emetion was very different.

'Bless her, I should think she was!"

exclaimed the young man. "The only mysterious," said Elspeth. peroine possible for a love story of mine, even if I were banished to some never see her again. She knows I she will never go against her mother's wishes, and marry me. Perhaps I oughtn't even to wish it, for she is so lovely, she could have anybody, and I'm a poor man, heavily handicapped in many ways. But I can't rise to such heights of unselfishness." "I'm sure she would hate you to rise to that," said Elspeth, absolutely on Captain Oxford's side now.

"Do tell me why you think so-or do you only say it to be kind?" "I think so, because of something that happened this morning." And stock in men's fedora and stiff then she told him how Lady Hilary hats, in brown, black and dove. had been as one struck with a blow, on hearing from the gossip of Lady Ardcliffe that he had been dangerously wounded. She told also how she had managed to give the girl news

of the real state of his health, when she heard of it from Mr. Grant. "You really do seem to have been sent here by Providence, Miss Dean,"
said Captain Oxford, half laughing, half serious. "Of course, you guessed why I asked that I might have you to write letters for me?"
"You hoped that, as I had seen

talk about her, and that is just what

might have guessed how it would be but Lady Lambart has very little,

right of entrance. really think that it was a poacher who shot you by mistake for a keeper?"

"Mr. Grant and, I suppose, Mr. McGowan are certain it was."

"No. I'm certain it was not," he

unfortunately for me, otherwise she

would perhaps not mind so much. As

it is, I'm sure she would have thank-

"I haven't told them everything. I have my own reasons for not doing so," said Captain Oxford, thoughtfully. His face changed to sternness as a man who could keep a secret well, She wrote two or three short let- and might have secrets of his own. ed to be very important, and then fore going out darted back into Elscame a pause. "Don't you think you peth's brain, "He lost a good deal of had fallen through the crack in her ceiling, from that mysterious place above, inhabited by no one save ghosts-the ruby drops that had stainmore letters to-day. But"- he hesied the face of the boy in the sketch!

But at the thought of that sketch, something which had been puzzling Elspeth was made clear. The likeness which had so bewildered her was between Captain Oxford and the boy in the portrait.

It was not so noticeable now, for the young man was looking grave to sombreness, while the face of the boy was bright and smiling still Elspeth could see it, and it was marked enough to seem rather odd. But, after all, what could it mean? The boy. who was by this time either an old man, or dead, had been one of the same type with Captain Oxford, perhaps not an extraordinary one, although she had not happened to see any others, save these two. She was half-inclined to speak of the pencil- start, fearing that she had missed her led portrait she had found, but she pink stain, as she probably would be, beth. "If I were a man I should have if she showed the sketch to Captain

lo anything I could to please or help features with the pictured features, This was encouraging, and the girl her, and I told her so this morning." the young man spoke again. "Natur- felt very happy as she went to begin "What? You've been talking to ally, Mr. McGowan would prefer to her hour of work with Mr. Trowastantly on hand the best brands rether this morning? I was going to think that I had been attacked by bridge. She did not like him much, Rolled Oats. Also our make of try and pump you, without letting some poacher, while straying about but she fancied that he could be very Bolled Cereal, the best on the market. you find out what I was doing, but in lonely places, where I had no busi-Also Chopped Oats, Mixed Chop, Pea now I begin to see it isn't necessary ness to be after dark. Any other would be bad for the hotel."

"Why?" asked Elspeth. "He wouldn't like to have it said that there were thieves and murderers lurking about. That sort of thing would probably keep a great many guests away from the Hydro. The sort of people who come here don't

want adventures. "But do you think it was a thief who attacked you?" the girl impulsively asked.

Captain Oxford laughed. "I've noth-At this encouragement Elspeth pro- ing worth stealing, and everybody ceeded to give Captain Oxford a short who knows me, knows that. Othersketch of the journey; how she had wise, the whole affair might have heard his name mentioned by Mr. been almost worthy of the Under-Kenrith; how Lady Lambart had not ground Syndicate-if only it had come

now she (Elspeth) had fancied from the Underground Syndicate?" she "You've never heard of the Under-

"I didn't try to listen," the girl ground Syndicate? Well, I can't tell pologized, "but I could't help being you precisely what it is, or even wheinterested, because it seemed such a ther it exists. And if it does, that comance, and Lady Hilary is such an probably isn't its own name for it-

"It sounds rather vague-but very

"If there is such an association as the Underground Syndicate, it is very far country, and knew that I could mysterious—so mysterious that it has puzzled England in general, and Scotlove her, of course, and I do think land Yard in particular, for years. she likes me a little, but I am afraid It's supposed, you know, to be an association banded together to commit crimes for important clients who don't wish to commit them themselves. Several famous murders have been set down to the account of the

Underground Syndicate, but though there have been clues and traces, there have never been enough to help the police to make arrests, or even actually suspect any one person. They have, as it were heard stirrings behind a veil, but the veil has never been lifted. Now, if I were a very rich man with millions to leave to relatives, or if I were in any one's way, I should say to myself-because of certain things that have happened-'Aha, the Underground Syndicate has distance. "It will be good of you, Miss put a black mark against my name. Dean, if you will copy out the poem But there is absolutely nobody ex- for me. As it's a valume out of the cept Lady Lambart-who would be hotel library, I"-she stopped, for the better off for my death; and poor her purpose was served. Trowbridge Lady Lambart, even if she were pre-pared to go to such lengths to wipe out a would-be son-in-law, couldn't out a would-be son-in-law, couldn't ed him to hear. afford to pay the Syndicate's prices. They charge thousands, so the story goes. And they are very rich-according to the same stories-for they of-Lady Hilary, you might get me to

their Jewels. I often warn Kenrith that he had better look out." "It sounds too extraordinary," said

"I don't believe there is such a

syndicate really, do you?" "No, I don't," replied Captain Oxford. "As you say, it is too fantastic. People will get up any theory to account for crimes which remain mysteries; and I believe that rather a sensational morning paper is responsible for suggesting the idea that there was a syndicate. After a murder that baffled the police last year, the editor published a series of extraordinary anonymous letters that served the object of selling the issues in which they appeared, if no other." At this moment, the resident doctor

appeared to see how his patient was getting on, and Elspeth was banished from the room. It was now her hour of freedom, and she was glad of it, for she had much to think of. She went to her room, where tea was sent to her, and rested luxuriously on the old-fashioned sofa. What a wonderful day it had been, she thought. More had happened in it, than happened in weeks in her old London life, where one day told another, and she forgot whether it was Monday or Saturday. She seemed to have been plunged into the midst of many lives, and to have some influence, large or small, upon each one. It was almost as if she, an insignificant young girl, a paid employe of the hotel, were watching the performance of a play in a theatre to which she alone had the

She tried hard to join all the different loose threads, which she felt vaguely ought somehow to match together, but she could not find the way; and at last the effort culminated in an absurd jumble which was a

Sleep did her good, although her nap was short, and she awoke with a



It sounds rather vague, but very mysterious," said Elspeth.

next appointment; but it was only did not wish to be called upon at half-past five, and ten minutes later, present for an explanation of the with smooth hair and bright eyes, she was in Mr. McGowan's room. He was there, and had kind things to say concerning the reports he had re-As she mentally compared the real ceived of her work during the day. be, she was sure that her time in his society would not be dull. In the great hall, through which

she had to pass on her way to Mr. Trowbridge's sitting room, she saw, him deep in talk with Lady Hilary. He was leaning far forward in his chair, his elbows on his knees, lost to everything but his interest in the beautiful girl who listened with an indifference which she did not try to hide. His back was turned towards Elspeth, but Lady Hilary saw her, and with a word to Trowbridge, which Elspeth did not hear, sprang up and gave the young stenographer a look which said "Come to me.

The two girls met half way across the hall, and Lady Hilary handed Elspeth a book. "A pretence," she said hurriedly. "Open it anywhere, and we will seem to be talking about it Now; have you seen him? Mr. Kenrith happened to mention you were going to write for him this after-

There was no need to speak the name. Elspeth well knew who was meant by "him," and she doubted very much that Mr. Kenrith had "hap-

"Yes," she answered, as her head and Lady Hilary's were bent over the book. "He only wanted me because he had heard that I'd traveled in the same carriage with you, and hoped I could be got to talk about you to him. He confessed that after I'd been in the room a little while. Oh, Lady Hilary, he worships you. I do wish I might take the liberty of saying something"-'Say it, quickly. It won't be

"It's only that I do hope nobody will persuade you to give him up, because such a love can come but once in a life, it seems to me, and"-"Hush! Here comes that Mr. Trowbridge," whispered Lady Hilary. "Oh, he is most oppressive. I wish Lady of trimmed hats We have Ardcliffe hadn't introduced him to mother. I'm afraid I'm going to have reduced the prices and have trouble with him." Her voice chang- six tables of hats, ranging ed suddenly, as Trowbridge, strolling towards them, came within hearing in price from \$1.00 up. We

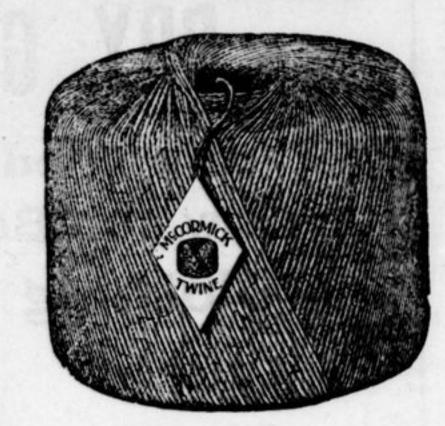
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