

SHOW BOAT GIRL

By ROBERTA COURTLAND

YESTERDAY: The only break in Melissa Marlowe's lonely life in her grandmother's cabin beside the Mississippi had been the sudden appearance of an exhausted young hunter from New Orleans one day in a storm. Melissa had played and sang for him, and had felt a little romantic about it all. But he left and sent no word, and now her grandmother has died, and one of the neighbors is making her an offer for the cabin.

Chapter Five Big City

MELISSA'S hands clenched tightly in her lap and for a moment she was very still. Three hundred dollars! It was a vast sum! An incredible sum! She'd never had more than ten dollars at one time in her life. With three hundred dollars she could—why, she could go to New Orleans; maybe get a job, singing! She might even—see Randy Hendricks again! She caught her breath at that thought and her face burned with color, while she tried to tell herself she was a fool even to think of Randy because he would not remember her.

Jim, who was studying her anxiously, brought forth from his pocket a baking-powder tin, unscrewed the lid and pulled out the money he held, counting out to her the limp, tired-looking dirty bills. "Me and Sally's been savin' for years to get us a better place," he explained. "And if you want to sell out, Lissy—well, here's the money. Three hundred dollars—and I got a paper here that will make it all legal and binding if you want to sign. Of course, if you don't feel like it's a fair price we can wait till the lightship comes again and you can ask Cap'n about it—but I think he'd say it was fair."

"Of course it is, Jim," answered Melissa swiftly, her voice shaken a little. "And I'll take it. I don't have to wait for Cap'n's advice." Jim's heavy, friendly face lit up a little and he nodded. "Well, I'm right glad, Lissy. Sally's powerful anxious to get moved. Claims she ain't ever had enough room to plant the kind of flowers she wants, and with your Gran's garden doin' so well—"

Melissa's hand shook a little as she signed her name and accepted the limp, greasy-looking bills that had been buried in that baking-powder tin back of Jim's house for no one knew how many years. A week later she was in New Orleans.

The moment she stepped from the dirty, plodding little old river-steamboat that piled between the mouth of the river, down the Gulf, to New Orleans, she knew that her clothes were out of date and "funny-looking," and a vast wave of homesickness so keen as to be almost physical swept over her.

The noise, the confusion, the hubbub all about her confused and frightened and bewildered her. The heat was much worse here in the baking streets than back beneath the shade of the friendly live-oaks, with the river-wind touching her cheeks. People stared at her; two girls laughed at her; a man whistled at her with a peculiarly irritating whistle that, although she did not quite understand it, made her face burn.

A taxi-driver stared at her and said tentatively: "Taxi?" "Yes," said Melissa grimly. "Drive me to the best hotel."

"Hop in, lady," said the taxi-driver.

Expensive Life
SHE huddled in the taxi, watching while the streets rocketed past. She held her breath as her taxi grazed other cars and escaped by an incredible inch. The clamor of the surface-cars, the screech of brakes, the roar of a large city lay upon her like physical blows beating her down.

Where was the thrill, the excitement, the delight she had gleefully expected? Wildly, she wished that she were back at the cabin, tending her light; feeding the chickens; sitting on the porch with her guitar across her knees, plucking at the strings and singing lazily and peacefully.

"Here y' are, lady," said the taxi-driver, and the car slid to a stop in front of an imposing-looking building. A doorman swung open the taxi door with a flourish and then looked at her as though he wished he hadn't when Melissa, in her shabby, home-made blue cotton dress and the three year old straw hat that she had ordered from the mail-order catalogue, stepped out. There was a straw suitcase which had belonged to her mother.

She handed the taxi-driver a dollar bill, observing that the fare was sixty cents. The taxi-driver pocketed the bill, touched his cap, said, "Thanks, lady," and went whirling off before she could demand her change.

"Certainly with a bath," answered the clerk filled in a number after the place where she had written her name and glanced behind her. A grinning bell-hop significantly held up the battered straw suitcase, and the clerk said suavely, "That will be seven dollars a day, Miss Marlowe—in advance."

Melissa was staggered but set her teeth. Seven dollars a day! And back at the cabin she and Gran had lived all month on ten dollars in cash! She fumbled in the ancient leather handbag that had been Gran's.

She laid down some bills on the counter. The clerk said briskly, "Oh, yes, you're planning to be with us a week? That's fine, Miss Marlowe. I hope you will be very comfortable. Boy, take Miss Marlowe to 618."

To Melissa the room was a marvel of beauty and elegance. But the thought that it was costing her seven dollars a day and the memory of what an awful hole that week's rent had made in her fortune was appalling.

She was no fool. She knew that she must get a job and soon; but she knew, too, that first of all she must have clothes, city clothes. She looked lovingly at the hat that had been her "best" (and only!) hat for three years; the dress that Gran's gnarled, rheumatic fingers had made for her; the thick, bright, shiny stockings that had seemed to her so beautiful and for which the mail-order people had charged her forty-nine cents, a sum to be regarded with respect along the river back-country.

But before she went out to buy the things she knew she must have, she took up the telephone book and looked up a name. Yes, there it was, "Randolph Hendricks," followed by an address and a telephone number. Her hands shook a little. She reached for the telephone—and then shyness and panic took her.

Would he remember her? Oh, he had to! He must! She couldn't bear it if he didn't! She would call him, she promised herself; but later, after she had made herself over into a city girl. The thought gave her courage to face what lay ahead. She picked up her bag and went out into the glaring sunlight.

New Girl

THE big shops frightened her. She walked and looked in windows and once or twice she even ventured into one of the big department stores. But the well-dressed people, the air of superb assurance that all the salesgirls wore frightened her, and she retreated to the street again.

Finally a small shop in a side-street lured her. She was hot and frightened and bewildered by now, but desperate. And when a tall, bored-looking, blonde girl came toward her, wise blue eyes taking her in from the top of that awful hat—she had a vague idea of just how awful it was, by now—to the tips of her scuffed, dusty white canvas shoes, Melissa was ready to burst into tears.

"I want a dress," she said unsteadily. "And a hat—and some shoes—and—things—"

The blonde girl's blue eyes raked her from head to feet and were about to dismiss her with supercilious contempt. And then the too wise blue eyes met the desperate, pleading intensity of frightened, red-brown eyes and for a moment the two girls stared at each other.

The blonde girl grinned suddenly—a gay, friendly, heartwarming little grin and she said, unexpectedly kind, "Well, I don't blame you for that—but don't take it so hard, honey—we've got plenty of what you need right here."

"T-t-thank you," stammered Melissa, and her chin quivered and tears filled her eyes and she fought desperately not to let them fall.

"Think nothing of it," said the blonde girl cheerfully and turned away, busying herself with a swift, cursory inspection of a rackful of gowns behind her, giving Melissa time to pull herself together before she began displaying the frocks.

An hour later Melissa stared at the girl who looked back at her from the mirror and could not believe that she was really Melissa Marlowe. Her frock of cool, jade-green linen was severely simple, and therefore very smart. It revealed that her figure was really exquisite, and it lent magic to the copper-red masses of her hair and her pale-gold, sun-tanned skin.

There was a cool white hat, cool white gloves, a flat white linen bag, brown and white pumps on her slender feet, and beige-colored chiffer stockings to caress her legs. The blonde looked at her and grinned, nodding a little. "Not bad, keep, not bad at all!" she said cheerfully, and by the tips of her fingers lifted the blue cotton dress and asked, "What'll I do with this—burn it?"

"No," said Melissa swiftly, and caught the dress. "My grandmother made it for me—it's the last thing she ever made me, but you can burn the other things please."

The blonde nodded in swift understanding, and her hands were even gentle as she folded the despised blue cotton neatly into a box.

There were other clothes, and when the blonde added up the amount and told her, Melissa caught her breath.

To be continued

On the Radio Chains

STATIONS:
Chain affiliation and where they are on the dial:
KALE (NBC) 1330, Portland
KEX (NBC-Blue) 1150, Portland
KGA (NBC-Blue & MBS) 1310, Spokane
KGO (NBC-Blue) 810, San Francisco
KJW (NBC-Red) 630, Portland
KJH (NBC-Blue) 1000, Seattle
KNN (CBS) 1670, Los Angeles
KOA (NBC-Red) 850, Denver
KOIN (CBS) 970, Portland
KOMO (NBC-Red) 950, Seattle
KFO (NBC-Red) 680, San Francisco
KSL (CBS) 1160, Salt Lake City

Time shown is PST

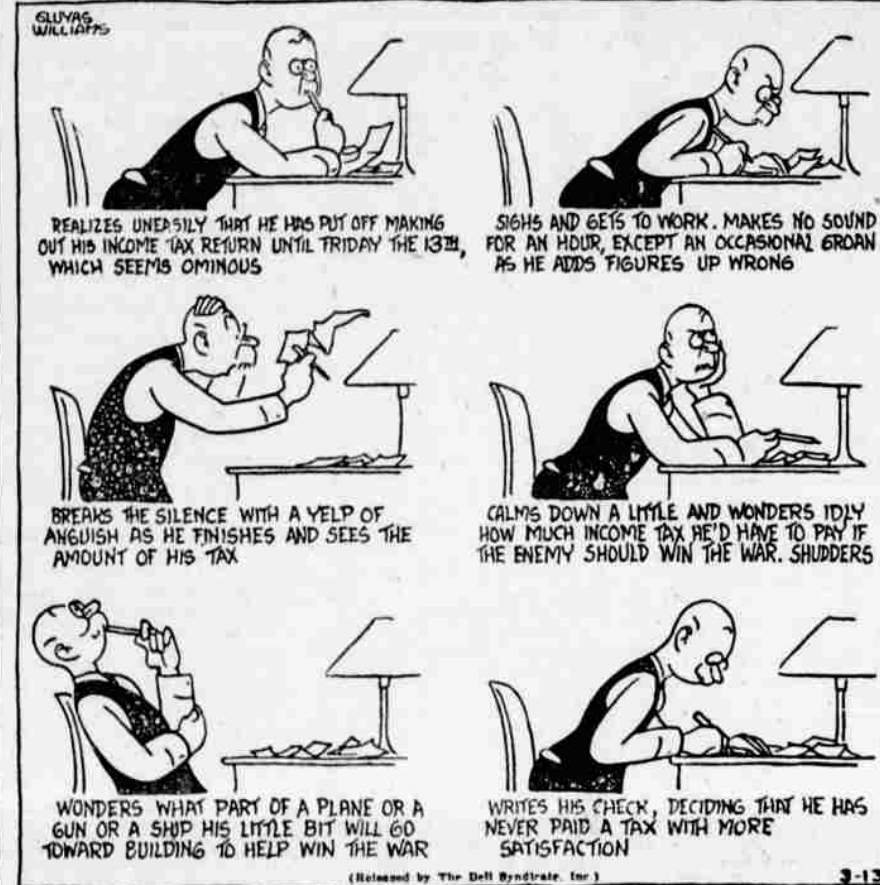
Friday
5:00 p. m.—Adventure Stories, KGO, KJR; Stars of Today, KGW; Don Winslow of the Navy, KPO; Kate Smith Hour, KSL; Ed Stoker's Music, KOMO.
5:30 p. m.—Bill Sabransky, KOMO; Cocktail Hour, KGW; Leon F. Drews, KGO; News of the World, KEX, KGO, KJR.
6:00 p. m.—Waltz Time, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Secret City, KGO, KEX; What's On Your Mind, KNX, KOIN, KSL; On With the Dance, KJR.
6:30 p. m.—March of Time, KEX, KGO, KJR; Plantation Party, KPO, KGW, KOMO; First Nighter, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
7:00 p. m.—Ella Maxwell's Party Line, KGO, KJR, KEX; Glenn Miller's Orch., KSL, KNX, KOIN; Capt. Flag and Sgt. Quirt, KPO, KOMO, KGW.

7:30 p. m.—Bob Hawk Quits, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Grand Central Station, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Modern Music Box, KEX.
8:00 p. m.—Fred Waring, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Herbert Marshall, KGO, KEX, KJR; Amos 'n' Andy, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
8:15 p. m.—Lanny Ross, KNX, KSL, KOIN; Lum and Abner, KPO, KGW, KOMO.
8:30 p. m.—Variety Show, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Gang Busters, KPO, KEX, KJR; Playhouse, KNX, KOIN, KSL.
9:00 p. m.—Who Done It, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Erskine Hawkins Orch., KGO, KJR; Kate Smith Hour, KNX, KOIN; Candlelight Concerto, KEX; Sports, KSL.
9:30 p. m.—Dark Fantasy, KGW; News, KSL, KJR; Moonlight Sonata, KEX; Devlin for Mayor, KOMO; Floyd Wright, KPO.
10:00 p. m.—Hollywood Legion Stadium Fights, KGO; Reporter News, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Red Nichols Orch., KSL; News, KNX; Dance Orch., KEX; Shining Hour, KJR; Five Star Final, KOIN.
10:30 p. m.—Bill Sabransky, KGO; Unlimited Horizons, KOMO; Broadway Bandwagon, KEX; Moonlight Sonata, KGW; Northwest Bible Institute, KJR; War Time Women, KOIN.
11:00 p. m.—Dance Orch., KPO, KGW; This Moving World, KEX, KJR; Gene Grounds, KOIN; News, KNX; Reveries, KOMO.

Saturday
5:00 p. m.—Ran Wilde's Orch., KGO, KEX; Organ Concert, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Sports Story, KNX, KSL, KOIN.
5:30 p. m.—Ed Stoker's Music, KGO, KOMO; Swap Night, KGO, KEX, KJR; News Review, KNX; News, KOIN; This World, KPO; Popular Strings, KSL.
6:00 p. m.—Your Hit Parade, KSL; Toscanini Treasury Concert, KGO, KEX; Who, What, Where and Why, KNX, KOIN; Barn Dance, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Studio Party, KJR.
6:30 p. m.—Toscanini Treasury Concert, KJR, KEX; This World, KGO; Here's the Story, KNX; Leon F. Drews, KOIN.
7:00 p. m.—Sports Newscast, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Tune Out Time, KGO, KEX, KJR.
7:30 p. m.—Grand Ole Opry, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Voices in the Night, KNX; Red Ryder, KGO, KJR, KEX; Air Flo, KOIN; American Challenge, KSL.
8:00 p. m.—Robert Ripley, KGO, KJR, KEX; Truth or Consequences, KPO, KGW, KOMO; Guy Lombardo's Orch., KNX, KOIN, KSL.
8:30 p. m.—Able's Irish Rose, KPO, KOMO, KGW; Green Hornet, KGO, KJR, KEX; Bobby Lobby, KNX, KOIN, KSL.
9:00 p. m.—News, KPO, KGW.

TAXPAYER

By GLUYAS WILLIAMS



HAP HOPPER Washington Correspondent

Down the Grade

Edited by Drew Pearson and Bob Allen



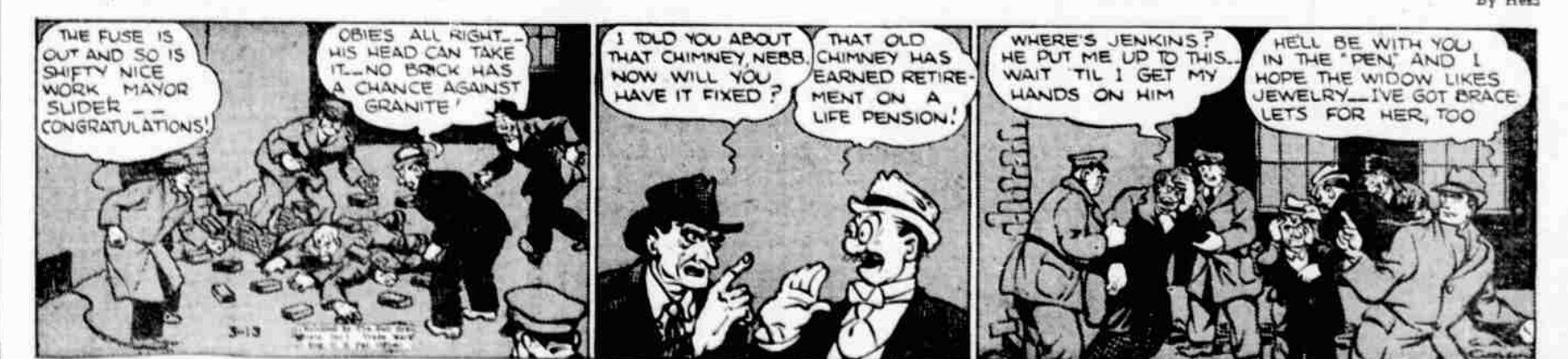
LIL' ABNER—Angels Fear To Tread

By Al Capp



THE NEBBS—The Aftermath

By Hess



CHAMPION GRANDMOTHER
Deer Lodge, Mont. (UP)—Mrs.

SHOP AT NIGHT

Barker's are open until 8 o'clock EVERY night.

Barker's
Store for Men

John Burch, with 94 living descendants to his credit, ranks as Montana's "champion grandmother."

A "breakdown" of her statistics shows 17 children, 60 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.

BOATWRIGHT QUITS WPA
Salem, March 13.—G. R. Boatwright, district WPA engineer since 1935 for Marion, Benton, Linn and Yamhill counties, resigned today to become purchasing agent for a contracting firm at the Corvallis army cantonment.

False Raid Alarm Boon For Children

Victoria, B. C., March 13.—(CP)—Eleven hundred school children in the nearby Oak Bay district were dismissed from classes and ARP workers rushed to their posts today when a telephone engineer making a cable transfer left a switch open and allowed two air raid sirens to blast for about five minutes.

Sacramento, Cal., March 13.—(AP)—The U. S. bureau of reclamation, already engaged in building the mighty Central Valley project, disclosed plans today to survey the proposed Trinity river project as a possible source of additional water for irrigation and electric energy for the Sacramento valley.

Branches of the Chinese government are called yuans.

Use Mail Tribune want ads.

STRANGE AS IT SEEMS

by JOHN HIX

