

• SERIAL STORY

LUCKY PENNY

BY GLORIA KAYE

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CHAPTER I

FLAMING skies were no novelty to Penny Kirk. She had seen London's inferno of bursting bombs. She had raced against death in blazing France.

Now Penny drove leisurely along a road canopied by heavens of red—but this was different. The glare in the skies was friendly, comforting, reflecting the glowing furnaces of the Kirk mills—her mills.

This, Penny knew, was where she belonged. In all the years she had spent abroad she had never before thought of Kirktown as anything more than a setting for Grandfather John's stories of a career that had brought him excitingly from poverty to riches.

Now the Kirk mills belonged to Penny. For the first time in the 23 years of her leisurely, lazy life, she felt a sense of responsibility, a sense that here she would find a constructive outlet for her energies, a meaning to living.

She had been sheltered, too carefully, by indulgent parents who had sought to protect her from harsh reality. They had never taken an interest in the mills. Their life, and hers, had been luxuriously idle. Now, alone, she would have to rebuild her life from foundations shattered by the thunder of war over Europe.

Penny felt as if she were riding in a fabulously rosy toy balloon. How different, she reflected, from her last long ride through France. There, too, the skies were red. Death and destruction rode in the clouds that awful day.

Penny shuddered, remembering that wild ride from her villa to the safe haven of a port from which she could embark for the United States. She had been crowded into an army car maneuvered by a sullen polu in uniform. Her companions were a diplomat's heavy-set wife and a trench-coated correspondent.

The diplomat's wife fainted regularly every five minutes. The newspaperman betrayed his shakiness by smoking a maddeningly endless chain of cigars. All about them were havoc, destruction, misery.

Penny had never realized how much the simple initials "U. S. A." could mean. Not until she had crossed the dangerous Atlantic in a blackened refugee ship. Not until she stood on deck and wept unashamedly, with all the rest of the passengers, at sight of the Statue of Liberty.

That trip had done something to Penny's point of view. Having Pierre create a new coiffure for her every week didn't seem so important. He would have called the way her naturally beautiful tresses now lay loosely on her shoulders "ter-r-rible!"

Her blue eyes had once expressed a carefully affected boredom, a coolness and hauteur. Aboard ship she had discovered they could inspire confidence and warmth in frightened fellow passengers.

So Penny learned to smile and to laugh. Her quiet "thumbs up" inspired new courage in others, even when she shared their dread of what the next few minutes might bring.

In New York, Penny had gone to only one cocktail party. It was no good. She couldn't help contrasting the false, forced gaiety of her placid friends with the natural laughter of the ship-board children who were so sincere in their appreciation of her half-remembered stories.

Without fanfare, without so much as a single newspaper interview, without posing for a single rotogravure picture, Penny had left New York. "I'm somebody new," she had told herself. "I left the old Penelope Kirk in France. Now I had better go home—really home—and find myself again."

THE Kirk estate, overlooking a valley that was green along its upper slopes and brown along the river that served the steel mills, was more beautiful than she had dreamed it would be. Kirktown, nestled like a doll village down below.

Late in the afternoon of her unheralded arrival, after cautioning the caretaker and his wife to tell no one she had come, Penny selected a gray roadster and started out for Kirktown. The winding road down the river was pleasant, cool in lengthening shadows.

As dusk deepened, the furnaces lit the somber skies with an ever brightening glow. The summer night was calm and peaceful. The roadster neared a fork in the road. One tangent stretched invitingly upward, toward a white building that dominated the street, and past little houses whose lights were just beginning to blink. Another way reached downward to the mills and the river. Penny chose the upward road.

At the top of the hill, the white building she had noticed was framed in brilliant light that flooded from hidden recesses in the shrubbery. Now Penny could see the name above the entrance: "John Kirk Memorial Auditorium." She read the name again. "John Kirk Memorial Auditorium." How like Grandfather John to present so fine a gift to his town.

Nothing she had ever experienced could equal Penny's thrill as she stood now, a tiny figure, staring up at the gracefully colonnaded edifice, like a Grecian temple. How appropriate, she thought. At the foot of the hill stretched the giant, busy mills, making fiery sacrifice every night and all through the day to this shrine of their founder.

For a long time Penny remained thus, in worshipful silence, oblivious to the murmur of conversation of strollers who passed by. Her awakening was rude. She heard a bitter, vicious voice, whose words she knew could not have been directed to her. But they seared her like a hot iron pressed against her flesh.

"John Kirk Memorial Auditorium."

rium! They should have shaped it into a heart of stone. That's what John Kirk was really like. The poor devil who sweated and sickened and died to build this thing! They lived in ratholes and dressed in rags so he could have the glory of a pretty marble palace to show them how puny they really are."

SLOWLY Penny turned to face the speaker. Her cheeks were flushed with anger. Her tongue was ready to lash out in biting rebuttal. Then she stopped, and stared in wide-eyed amazement at Jim Vickers? It couldn't be!

There was no mistaking him. The last time Penny had seen Jim Vickers had been several years earlier in Paris. He hadn't changed at all. What strange coincidence had brought this tall, broad-shouldered, tweed-suited man to Kirktown?

She knew that round, boyish face. She knew his searching, troubled blue eyes. Jim Vickers, apple-cheeked, good-humored, ace correspondent for a New York newspaper, had been a familiar figure in her circle abroad.

He passed within a few inches of her, but showed no sign of recognition. Of course he wouldn't know her, Penny realized. She had been much younger then. She had changed.

Strangely, as if she were listening to a hazy voice in an impossible nightmare, she heard Jim Vickers say: "The Kirks were a pretty selfish breed. I met John Kirk's granddaughter abroad. A little snip of a spoiled brat without an ounce of common sense in her head. She owns the Kirk mills now."

Penny felt lonely and sick at heart. Should she risk further disillusionment by visiting the mills and the town named for her family? Would she find the Kirk name

a disgrace rather than a proud heritage? Wouldn't it be better to rediscover herself in some gentler way?

"I'll sleep on it," she decided, driving slowly, thoughtfully home. (To Be Continued)

The only sign of an early fall right now is serious love making

A lot of women have been tired and found wanting—everything money can buy.

Scientist claims crops can be seen on the moon. Maybe grain for moonshine.

Experts are unable to determine the origin of grapefruit. Perhaps it just appeared one morning for breakfast.

"TAKE 90 DAYS TO PAY—THE OREGON WOOLEN WAY!"

- NO INTEREST
- NO CARRYING CHARGE
- NO RED TAPE

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MEN'S COMPLETE FURNISHINGS, WORK CLOTHES and SHOES

OREGON WOOLEN STORE

Klamath's Credit Clothing 8TH and MAIN

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



IN HORSE RACING, THE FAVORITE WINS ONLY ABOUT THIRTY-SEVEN PER CENT OF THE TIME.

PLACING ODDS

SEND UP AN ODD TO QUOTE, DOWN AN ODD TO UNQUOTE, T.M. REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

BARGAINS TODAY

"WE LIKE TO SAVE TROUBLE AND EXPENSE, BUT WE DON'T WANT EITHER," SAYS ROBERT E. WEBB, DUNKIRK, N.Y.

BIRDS

HELP TO PRUNE TREES BY NIPPING OFF SUPERFLUOUS BUDS FOR FOOD, AND BREAKING OFF TWIGS FOR NESTING MATERIAL.



ISLAND'S HEAD

HORIZONTAL 1 Pictured commander of Martinique,

12 Scarce.

13 Males.

14 Elevate.

16 Peruse.

18 Proposed law.

20 Paid notices.

22 Ship's record.

23 Label.

24 Finish.

26 Behold!

29 Dined.

31 Cerium (symbol).

32 Twist.

33 Jewel.

35 Attempt.

37 Honey producer.

38 Pastoral.

40 Encountered.

42 Obtain.

43 He is an — in the French navy.

45 Ocean.

47 Egyptian sun god.

48 Like.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

LOUISIANA

MOURN NILEPA

DOOR SATI EIRE

LINK CERES SOAP

LIRA RETURNS STA

BE RA APTI SR

E BET ROOTI SR

RE DE ERGIMS

ART S RT BAH

LARS S SERE

SATE LAC PEAS

PAORE OTTER

NEWORLEAN

VERTICAL

1 Gram (abbr.).

2 Auricles.

3 Mineral rock.

4 Real estate.

5 Print measure.

6 Fixed.

7 Registered Nurse (abbr.).

8 Brilliant.

9 Elongated fish.

10 Respiratory sound.

11 Transpose (abbr.).

15 Wan.

17 Animal.

18 Sheep's cry.

19 Paradise.

21 Accomplish.

25 North Carolina (abbr.).

27 Beverage.

28 Air.

30 Provide with weapons.

32 Fondle.

33 Part of jaw.

34 Spoil.

36 Affirmative.

37 Defeat.

38 Road (abbr.).

39 Disembark.

41 Canvas lodge.

42 Determined.

43 Donkey.

44 Lion.

46 Aid.

48 Plentiful.

50 Pass as a law.

53 Hen products.

55 Pain.

58 Ohio University (abbr.).

59 Boy's nickname.

60 Virginia (abbr.).

61 Exists.

62 Year (abbr.).



THE VACATION JOB By J. R. Williams



Red Ryder



Little Orphan Annie



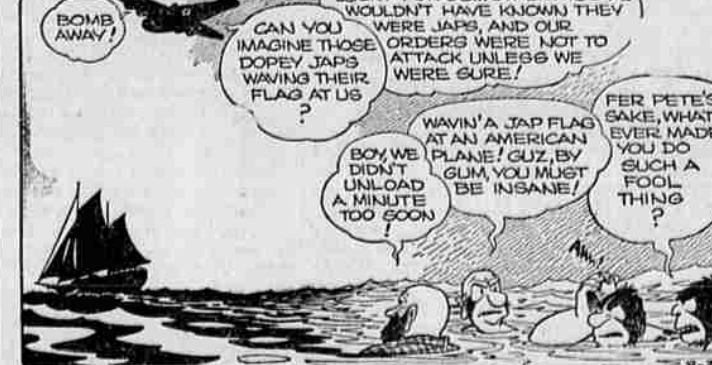
Freckles and His Friends



WHAT CAN A SOLDIER DO WITH HIS BEST GIRL 3000 MILES AWAY, AND ONLY 24 HOURS' LEAVE? Wash Tubbs



Boots and Her Buddies



Alley Oop



THE GREAT SACRIFICE



By Fred Harmon



By Harold Gray



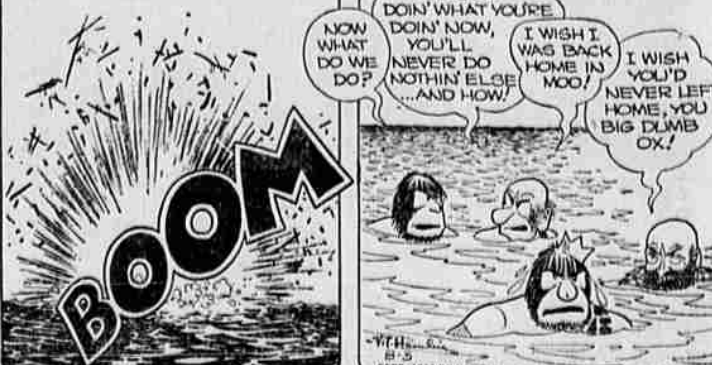
By Blosser



By Crane



By Martin



By V. T. Hamilton