

The Free Press' Short Story

The Case of Jerry Tompkins

By HENRY L. THURSTON

"Do you plead guilty or not guilty to the charge against you?" asked young Judge Wilkins. Jerry Tompkins, at the bar, raised his heavy black eyebrows whimsically and shrugged his shoulders. The corners of his mouth quirked oddly. "Sorry to disappoint Your Honor." He spoke with a chuckle in his voice. "I plead not guilty. Too bad my conscience won't permit me to save the county the expense of my trial in these hard times."

Howard had gone to college and then to law school and had shone brilliantly. Jerry had entered an engineering school and had made a wonderful record in his classes, and had graduated with honors. He had been in high favor at the time Howard had come from law school and had applied to Mr. Harrison for a position as law man of the firm. Jerry had been in the office the day Howard had discussed the matter with Mr. Harrison, and he had eyed the other young man oddly as he left. The next day Howard's application had been turned down. No doubt about it, Jerry had put some spoke in that wheel, and Howard had never forgiven it.

Howard began to question closely concerning the episode involving the loss of money. "And one thing more. Have you arranged for bail for Jerry, until the case comes up?" "Who would go on his bond?" exclaimed Howard. "I will," laughed Norma. "I'd like to see this case carried out right, Howard, for your sake as well as his. I've a little legacy put away. I can arrange the money for a cash bail. Will you see to it?" Howard started to burst forth again in protest, but thought better of it. He forced a smile, a rather wry one, it is true. "Oh, all right," he agreed, getting to his feet. "I'll arrange for it somehow. I guess I can't fix it without taking your money. And, young lady, I'm going now, before you get me in deeper yet." He held out his hand, and he flushed again at the warm grasp he received in return. Having executed a turn-about, Howard sped back down town, in a confused and more or less unhappy frame of mind. A promise was a promise, especially to Norma. He could not disappoint her, but the "what" looked large. Still, it had to be done. Let's see, his first grade against Jerry was wholly personal, that was of the position he had sought under Mr. Harrison. He would go and see that gentleman.

"Mr. Harrison," he said ten minutes later, "do you recall my applying to you for the position of law clerk in your firm? I have a very special reason for asking just why you turned me down." Mr. Harrison hesitated. "Will you assure me that my telling will not be allowed to affect anyone else adversely?" he asked at last. "I promise." "Well—" Mr. Harrison smiled—"it may surprise you, I was ready to engage you, but Jerry Tompkins, who was in the office, argued me out of it." Howard stiffened. "Why?" he asked. "Jerry said," went on Mr. Harrison, "that he thought you had the thoroughness and sense of fair play and justice to make a fine lawyer in general practice. If I engaged you, he held, you'd be hurried and side-tracked. Better, he thought, to let you get out and struggle and gradually build up. He convinced me—and I turned you down. After all, Lathrop, he was right, wasn't he?" Howard kept silent for a long moment. "Yes," he conceded finally, "though I would never have thought of Jerry's taking that attitude." "Some fine things about Jerry," said Mr. Harrison, "though he keeps them hidden. I never really believed he stole that money."

Howard's mind in somewhat of a tumult, took his leave and went on a search for Billy Decker. He finally found Decker and again put his question squarely to the point. "Billy," he said, "I have to defend Jerry Tompkins in the case now against him. I know you were in with him and his friends for a time and then you pulled out, yet you still believe in Jerry. It might help me to know just why." Billy Decker took two or three minutes to think, then he grinned rather shamefacedly. "If it won't go any farther, I'll tell you Jerry found out I was losing money that was needed at home. Mother had been kind to him after his own mother died. He tried to persuade me and reason me into getting out. When I still sort of hung fire, he threatened to leak me every time I played with that ring. I was afraid he would. I stopped. And—and—afterwards I was glad he did threaten. I stayed out."

"Secre two," said Howard to himself, as he went down the street, "and both against me. Let's try Joe." Joe Wilcox was not hard to find but he was exceedingly hard to pin down. His pale blue eyes would not meet Howard's frankly. He sidestepped when Howard began to question closely concerning the episode involving the loss of money. "And one thing more. Have you arranged for bail for Jerry, until the case comes up?" "Who would go on his bond?" exclaimed Howard. "I will," laughed Norma. "I'd like to see this case carried out right, Howard, for your sake as well as his. I've a little legacy put away. I can arrange the money for a cash bail. Will you see to it?" Howard started to burst forth again in protest, but thought better of it. He forced a smile, a rather wry one, it is true. "Oh, all right," he agreed, getting to his feet. "I'll arrange for it somehow. I guess I can't fix it without taking your money. And, young lady, I'm going now, before you get me in deeper yet." He held out his hand, and he flushed again at the warm grasp he received in return. Having executed a turn-about, Howard sped back down town, in a confused and more or less unhappy frame of mind. A promise was a promise, especially to Norma. He could not disappoint her, but the "what" looked large. Still, it had to be done. Let's see, his first grade against Jerry was wholly personal, that was of the position he had sought under Mr. Harrison. He would go and see that gentleman.

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Howard Lathrop was a tall, slim, self-possessed young man, but at this assignment his jaw dropped, and he gasped like a fish out of water. "But—J—Judge—Your Honor, I—"

"A chance to gain experience," smiled the judge, "as well as to render service. The assignment stands—!" Judge Wilkins hesitated, and his brow wrinkled. He turned back to the prisoner—"If the assignment is satisfactory to you."

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"Thanks, Howard." She smiled at him.

CARROLL'S LIMITED

AIRIAL FOREST SURVEYS Canada has taken a long step forward in the utilization of air photographs for the future development of the Dominion's natural resources. As a result of methods worked out by the Dominion Forest Service of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, it is now possible to map areas but volumes of merchantable timber in the forests can now be arrived at by a study of air photographs. This new technique has been carefully tested and now makes possible the mapping and estimating of extensive forests in remote regions with a degree of ease and accuracy not dreamed of twenty years ago. During the Great War aerial photography was developed to a comparatively high degree for purposes of military reconnaissance. After the war the new technique was adapted to civil uses and was found to provide a rapid, accurate, and relatively inexpensive method for the preparation of maps. Survey organizations of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys were among the first to realize the immense possibilities of mapping from air photographs. From the original use of pictures for the making of topographic maps it was but a step to the preparation of forest type maps from the same prints. Up to the present forest maps covering hundreds of thousands of square miles of the timbered areas of Canada have been prepared by this method. Some idea of the value of this new method can be gained by consideration of the fact that a field survey party can cover hardly more than two or three hundred square miles in a field season, whereas the same area can be photographed from an airplane in one or two days. Believing that it was possible to obtain more information from aerial photographs than a mere map of forest type boundaries, the Dominion Forest Service began a program of research intended to lead to the still further use of the details shown on the photographs. Some of the work was undertaken by certain provincial governments and by commercial organizations. As a result, methods have been devised for accurately measuring heights of trees either from the shadows visible on the photographs or by direct measurement of the pictures of the trees themselves. Within the last two years the Dominion Forest Service has developed a method for directly estimating not only forest areas and heights of trees but also the volume of merchantable timber which the forests contain. Accurate knowledge of our forest resources is essential to the sound development of the wood-using industries, this simple and cheap method of making forest inventories is a definite contribution to the future economic development in Canada.

RETORT IN KIND A man from California was visiting an old friend living in Florida. In the garden stood a young orange tree. Said the California man: "Now, out in my State we grow a tree that size in about a year." Said the Florida man: "Well, I can't say for sure, but I don't think that this tree was here yesterday."

OR WAS IT? A man had a slight difference of opinion with his wife. But he acknowledged his error generously by saying: "You are right, and I am wrong, as you generally are. Good-bye, dear," and he hurried off to establish truth. "So nice of him to put it like that," his wife said to herself. And then—she began to think about it.

Can-Born Promoter Arrives on Honeymoon



Recently wed at the British Consulate in Paris, Brigadier-General Alfred C. Critchley, a former native of Calgary, Alta., and his bride, the former Miss Diana Polwick, are shown as they arrived in New York for a honeymoon in the United States. The General, former British sports promoter, and his bride have been golf partners for many years, having won many amateur competitions. Mrs. Critchley once held the women's championship of Great Britain.

CARROLL'S LIMITED advertisement listing various food items and prices such as Biscuits, Flour, Jam, and Oats.

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