

# The GREEN PEA PIRATES

By PETER B. KYNE

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Author of  
"WEBSTER-MAN'S MAN,"  
"THE VALLEY OF THE GIANTS,"  
Etc.

## RE-ENTER MCGUFFEY.

Straggled—Captain Phipneas F. Seraggus, who cracked up around the decks of San Francisco, and from there he sailed on a river steamer, then to the coasting of the summer months. He had such annual excursions promised to be the last of the old weatherbeaten vessel, Seraggus naturally had some difficulty in securing a crew. When the work opened, Adelbert P. Gibney, however, had exactly a man whom he would like to have on the ship. He had a young man, a young Swede, constituted the foremast hand, and Harry McGuffey, a student of the Green Pea, to be the chief engineer. With this motley crew and his ancient vessel, Captain Seraggus engaged in trading within three days from the harbor of San Francisco. The Magpie goes ashore in a tug, leaving Seraggus behind the vessel. Mr. Gibney goes to a towing company in San Francisco, that the ship ashore in the Yankee Prince, with promise of a rich voyage. Two days away in putting the Magpie into deep water, and she slips her tow lines and gets away in the fog. Pursued at the description practiced on them, Captain Seraggus and Harry McGuffey, commanding the two tugboats, ascertain the identity of the "Yankee Prince" and leaving the tugboats should the tugboats become known along the water front, determine on personal vengeance. Their heads sail to the "Magpie" results in Captain Seraggus promising to get a new boiler and make needed repairs to the steamer. Seraggus refuses to fulfill his promise and Gibney and McGuffey's "pleas" with marvelous luck, Seraggus allows a fresh crew at the end of a few days of all convicts, Gibney and McGuffey are stranded and save their old positions on the Magpie. They are hastily received, but remain on their way to San Francisco. They arrive at San Francisco, and McGuffey proves to be the "Yankee Prince," which is a steamer. McGuffey, who is a doctor, is sent to San Francisco, their salaries being appointed to \$1000 a month. His crew having deserted him, Captain Seraggus induces them to return. At an "old house" in the city, McGuffey has two mysterious letters which he believes to contain valuable "secret" goods. They find, instead, two dead children. Seraggus sends to "double cross" the two men, but Mr. Gibney outwits him and makes a satisfactory financial settlement with the Chinese company in which the bodies have been consigned, leaving Seraggus out in the cold. Gibney, who is a doctor, is sent to San Francisco, their salaries being appointed to \$1000 a month. His crew having deserted him, Captain Seraggus induces them to return. At an "old house" in the city, McGuffey has two mysterious letters which he believes to contain valuable "secret" goods. They find, instead, two dead children. Seraggus sends to "double cross" the two men, but Mr. Gibney outwits him and makes a satisfactory financial settlement with the Chinese company in which the bodies have been consigned, leaving Seraggus out in the cold.

## CHAPTER IX—Continued.

As the first muzzles burst-raked the Mexican, Captain Seraggus saw that most of the terrible host of dead had gone to hell. Nevertheless, it was sufficient for him to see the crews of the ships scattered about their posts and scattered behind smoke which the Indians in command lost his nerve. It was only a matter of time that the infernal Magpie possessed remaining him he had resolved that the filibuster should see a station when she had reached with that the did not know it was a pretentious tramp and in sudden judgment decided that the Magpie, mortally wounded, pursued getting close enough to sink him with shell-fire if she failed to ram him whereupon the yellow streak came through and he waved his arms frantically above his head in token of surrender.

"She's hauled down her flag," roared Seraggus. "The powerful, Gib, there's meek 'dink' on that boat."

"Lay alongside that craft," Mr. Gibney shouted to the helmsman. The schooner had to wait until when the Magpie also gave to some thirty yards to windward of her Mr. Gibney informed the Mexican, in instructions Spanish well mixed with English, that if the latter so much as lifted his little finger he might expect to be sunk like a dog. "Down below, everybody but the helmsman, or I'll swamp your deck with another muzzle burst," he threatened.

The Mexican obeyed and Captain Seraggus went up to the pilot house and laid the heavily battered Magpie alongside the schooner. The instant she touched, Mr. Gibney sprang about, quickly followed by Captain Seraggus, who had relinquished the helm to his first mate.

Suddenly Captain Seraggus shouted, "Look, Gib, for the love of the Lord God!" and pointed with his finger. At the head of the little boat-rat boat, panting and leading down into the engine room a man was standing. He

had a monkey wrench in one hand and a greasy rag in the other.

Mr. Gibney turned and looked at the man.

"McGuffey, for a thousand!" he yelled, and ran forward with outstretched hand. Captain Seraggus was at Gibney's heels, and between them they came very nearly dislocating Barlow's McGuffey's arm.

"McGuffey, my dear boy," said Captain Seraggus. "Whatever are you doin' on this heathen battleship?"

"Me!" ejaculated Mr. McGuffey, with his old-time deliberation. "Why, I'm the chief engineer of this craft. I had a good job, too, but I guess it's all off now, and the Mexican government'll fire me. Say, who checked that look shot down into my engine room?"

"Admiral Gibney did it," said Seraggus. "The old Magpie's alone side and me and Gib's filibusters. Bear a hand, Gib, and help us clap the hatches on our prisoners."

"Thank God," said Mr. Gibney plonk. "I didn't kill you. Come to look into the matter, I didn't kill anybody, though I see half a dozen Mexicans around decks more or less cut up. Where you been all these years, Mac?"

"I been chief engineer in the Mexican navy," replied McGuffey. "Have you captured in the name of the United States or what?"

"We've captured you in the name of Adelbert P. Gibney," was the reply. "I been huntin' all my life for a ship of my own, and now I've got her. Lord, Mac, she's a beauty, ain't she? All hardwood finish, teal rail, well found, and just the ticket for the island trade. Well, well, well! I'm Captain Gibney at last."

"Where do I come in, Gib?" asked Captain Seraggus modestly.

"Well, soot's in the Magpie has two holes through her hull below the waterline and is generally nicked to pieces, you might ask questions and get back aboard and put the pumps on her. You're lucky if she don't sink on you before we get to Desencusa bay. If she sinks, don't worry. I'll give you a job as my first mate. Mind, you're my engineer, but not at no fancy Mexican price. I'll pay you the union scale and not a blasted cent more or less. Is that fair?"

McGuffey said it was, and went below to tune up his engine. Mr. Gibney took the wheel of the gunboat, and sent Captain Seraggus back aboard the Magpie, and in a few minutes both vessels were heading along toward Desencusa bay. They were off the bay at midnight, and while with Mr. Gibney in command of the federal gunboat, Captain Seraggus had nothing to fear, the rapid rise of water in the hold of the Magpie was sadly disconcerting. About daylight he made up his mind that the vessel sink within two hours, and without pausing to think over his predicament, he promptly beached her. She drove far up the beach, with the sick water breaking around her scoured stern, and when the tide ebbed she lay high and dry. And the rebel soldiers came trooping down from the Mezquitas and falling upon her carcass like so many ants, quickly distributed her cargo amongst them, and disappeared.

Captain Seraggus sent his crew out aboard the captured gunboat to assist Mr. Gibney in rowing his prisoners ashore, and when finally he stood alone beside the wreck of the brave old Magpie, piled up at last in the port of missing ship, something snapped within his breast and the big tears rolled in quick succession down his sun-stained cheeks. The old bulk looked peculiarly pathetic as she lay there, listed over on her beam ends. She had served him well, but she had failed for last voyage, and with some vague idea of saving her old bones from rotting hands, Captain Seraggus, sitting amidst, scattered the contents of half a dozen cans of kerosene over her decks and in the cabin, lighted fires in three different sections of the wreck, and left her to the consuming flames. Half an hour later he stood on the battered decks of the gunboat beside Gibney and McGuffey and watched the dense clouds of smoke that heralded the passing of the Magpie.

"She was a good old hulk," said Mr. Gibney. "And now, as the special envoy of the Liberal army of Mexico, here's a draft on Los Angeles for five thousand bucks, Seraggus, which constitutes the balance due you on this here filibuster trip. Of course, I needn't remind you, Seraggus, that you'd never have earned this money if it hadn't been for Adelbert P. Gibney workin' his imagination overtime. I've made you a check of money, and while I couldn't save your ship, I did save your life. As a reward for all this, I don't claim one cent of the money due you, as I could if I wanted to be rotten mean. I'm goin' to keep this little power schooner for my share of the loot. She's nicked up some, but that only bears evidence to—but a bully good shot I am, and I won't take much to fix her up all ship-shape again. Ain't high brass straight out very destructive. All them humps an' bumps she's got she'll blow. But we'll have to do some mendin' on her engines—I'll let some men in the harbor call the Reim-

aria, but I'm going to run her to Panama and change her name. She'll be known as Maggie II, out of respect for the old girl that's burnin' up there on the beach."

Captain Seraggus was so touched at this delicate little tribute that he turned away and burst into tears.

"Aw, shut up, Seraggus, old hunk," said McGuffey consolingly. "You ain't got nothin' to cry about. You're a rich man. Look at me. I ain't a-havin', am I? And I don't get so much as a bean out of this mix-up, all on account of me bein' tied up with a lot of hounds that quills fightin' before they're half baked."

"That's so," said Captain Seraggus, wiping his eyes with his greasy fist. "I declare you're out in the cold, McGuffey, and it ain't right, Gib, my boy, you three has had some stirrin' times together and we've had our differences, but I ain't a-goin' to think of them past grinds. The sight o' you, single-handed, mebbe' and amblin' the pride of the Mexican navy, calm in the moment of despair, generous in victory and delicate as blazes to a fallen shipmate, goin' to work an' maulin' your vessel after him that way, is somethin' that wipes away all sorrow and welds a friendship that's bound to endure till death us do part. If McGuffey been on our side, we know from past performances that he'd a fit like a tiger, wouldn't you, Mac?" (Here Mr. McGuffey coughed slightly, as much as to say that he would have fought like ten tigers had he only been given the opportunity.)

Captain Seraggus continued: "I should say that a fair valuation of this schooner as she stands is ten thousand dollars. That belongs to Gib. Now I'm willin' to chuck five thousand dollars into the deal, we'll form a close corporation and as a compliment to McGuffey, elect him chief engineer in his own ship and give him, say, a quarter interest in our layout, as a little testimonial to an old friend, tried and true."

"Seraggus," said Mr. Gibney, "your gin. We've fought, but we'll let that go. We wipe the slate clean and start in all over again on the Maggie II, and I'm free to state, without fear of contradiction, that in the last embrace you showed up like four aces and a king with the entire company standin' pat. Seraggus, you're a hero, and what you propose proves that you're considerable of a shined cut—better'n you look. We'll go freshin' down on the Gold coast. There's war, red war, breakin' loose down there, and we'll shy in our horseshoe with the strongest side and pry loose a fortune somewhere. I'm for a life of wild adventure, and now that we've got the ship and the funds and the crew, let's go to it. There's a deal of the liquor in the wardrobe, and I suggest that we nominate Phipneas Seraggus, late-master of the battleship Magpie, now second in command of the Maggie II, to brew a kettle of hot grog to celebrate our victory. Mac—Seraggus—your fins. I'm proud of you both, Shunk."

They shook and as Captain Gibney's eye wandered aloft, First Mate Seraggus and Chief Engineer McGuffey looked



"She'll Be Known as Maggie II, Out of Respect for the Old Girl That's Burnin' Up There on the Beach."

up also. From the main topmast of the Maggie II floated a long blue burgee, with white lettering on it, and as it whipped out into the breeze the old familiar name stood out against the noonday sun.

"Good old dishcloth!" murmured Mr. Gibney. "She never comes down."

"The Magpie forever!" shrieked Seraggus.

"Hoony!" belted McGuffey. "An' now, Seraggus, if you've got all the enthusiasm out of your blood, kick in with a hundred an' fifty dollars an' interest to date. An' don't tell me that

you've outlived, or I'll feed you to the fishes."

Captain Seraggus looked crestfallen, but produced the money.

CHAPTER X.

"Well, Seraggus, old hunk, this is pleasantly sure it," said Mr. Gibney, and spat on the deck of the Maggie II.

"Right-o," replied Captain Seraggus cheerily. "Though when I was a young feiler and first went to sea, it wasn't considered no pleasantry to spit on a nice clean deck. You might cut that out, Gib. It's vulgar."

"Passin' over the fact, Seraggus, that you ain't got no call to jerk me up on sea etyette, more particular since I'm the master and managin' owner of this here schooner, I'm free to confess, Seraggus, that your observation does you credit. I just did that to see if you was goin' to take as big an interest in the new Maggie as you did in the old Magpie, and the fact that you object to me expectoratin' on the deck proves to me that you're leavin' behind you all them bad scow tendencies of the green-pea trade. It leads me to believe that you'll rise to high rank and distinction in the Columbian navy. Your fin, Seraggus. Expectoatin' on the decks is barred, and the Maggie II goes under navy discipline from now on. Am I right?"

"Right as a right whale," said Captain Seraggus. "And now that you've given that old mate of mine the course, and we've temporarily plugged up the holes in this here Mexican gunboat, and everything points to a safe and profitable voyage from now on, suppose you delegate me as a committee of one to brew a kettle of grog, after which the syndicate holds a meetin' and lays out a course for its future conduct. There's a few questions of rank and privileges that ought to be settled once and for all, so there can't be no come-back."

"The point is well taken and it is so ordered," said Mr. Gibney, who had once held office in Harbor 15, Master and Pilot's Association of America, and knew a fragment or two of parliamentary law. "Bustle up the grog, call McGuffey up out of the engine room, and we'll hold the meetin'."

Twenty minutes later Seraggus came on deck to announce the successful concoction of a kettle of whisky punch; whereupon the three adventurers went below and sat down at the cabin table for a conference.

"I move that Gib be appointed president of the syndicate," said Captain Seraggus.

"Second the motion," rumbled McGuffey.

"The motion's carried," said Mr. Gibney, and banged the table with his hoony fist. "The meetin' will please come to order. The chair hereby appoints Phipneas Seraggus secretary of the syndicate, to keep a record of this and all future meetin's of the board. I will now entertain propositions of any and all natures, and I invite the members of the board to knock the stopper out of their jaw tackle and go to it."

"I move," said Captain Seraggus, "that B. McGuffey, Esquire, be, and he is hereby appointed, chief engineer of the Maggie II at a salary not to exceed the wage schedule of the Marine Engineers' Association of the Pacific coast, and that he be voted a one-fourth interest in the vessel and all subsequent profits."

"Second the motion," said Mr. Gibney, "and not to hamper the business of the meetin', we'll just consider that motion carried unanimously."

B. McGuffey, Esquire, rose, bowed his thanks, and sat down again, apparently very much confused. It was evident that he had something to say, but was having difficulty framing his thoughts in parliamentary language.

"Heave away, Mac," said Mr. Gibney.

"Cast off your lines, McGuffey," chirped Seraggus.

Thus encouraged, McGuffey rose, bowed his thanks once more, moistened his larynx with a gulp of the punch, and spoke:

"Feller members and brothers of the syndicate: In the management of the deck department of this new craft of ours, my previous knowledge of the worthy president and the unworthy secretary leads me to believe that there's goin' to be trouble. A ship divided again herself must surely go on her beam ends. Now, Seraggus, here has been master so long that the juice of authority has sorter soaked into his marrow bones. For twenty years it's been Howdy do, Captain Seraggus. Have a drink, Captain Seraggus. Captain Seraggus this an' Captain Seraggus that. I don't mean an offense, gentlemen, when I state that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. No man that's ever been a master makes a good mate. On the other hand, I realize that Gib here has been a-painin' and a-bellyachin' all his life to get a ship of his own an' have folks call him 'Captain Gibney.' Now that he's gone an' done it, I say he's entitled to it. But the fact of the whole thing is, Gib's the natural leader of the expedition or whatever it's goin' to be, and he can't have his peace of mind wrecked and his plans disturbed a-chusin' sailors around the deck of the Maggie II. Gib is sorter what the feller calls the power behind the throne. He's too big a figger for the grade of captain. Therefore, I move you, gentlemen, that Adelbert P. Gibney be, and is hereby nominated and appointed to the grade of commodore, in full command and supervision of all or the property of the syndicate. And I also move that Phipneas Seraggus be appointed chief navigatin' officer of this vessel, to remain as little of captain, and to be obeyed and respected as such by every man aboard with the exception of me and Gib. The pres-

ent match to the navigatin' while Seraggus's learnin' the deep sea stuff."

"Second the motion," said Captain Seraggus briskly. "McGuffey, your argument does you a heap of credit. It's—It's—dog my cats, McGuffey, it's masterly. It shows a keen appreciation of an old skipper's feelin's, and if the move is agreeable to Gib, I'm willin' to trail him as commodore and fight to maintain his office. I—I dunno, Gib, what I'd do if I didn't have a mate to order around."

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Gibney, beaming, "the motion's carried unanimously. Captain—chief—your fins. Look me, I'm honored by the handshake. Now, regarding that crew you brought down from San Francisco on the old Maggie, Seraggus, they're a likely lot and will come in handy if times is as lively in Colombia as I figger they will be when we arrive there. Captain Seraggus, you will have your mate pipe the crew to muster and ascertain their feelin's on the subject of takin' a chance with Commodore Gibney. If they object to goin' further, we'll land 'em in Panama an' pay 'em off as agreed. If they feel like followin' the Jolly Roger we'll give 'em the coast seaman's scale for a deep-water cruise and a five per cent bonus in case we turn a big trick."

Captain Seraggus went at once on deck. Ten minutes later he returned to report that the mate and the four seamen elected to stick by the ship.

"Bully boys," said the commodore. "Bully boys. I like that mate. He's a smart man and handles a gun well."

"Gentlemen and Brothers of the Syndicate," He B. Jan.

While I should hesitate to take advantage of my prerogative as commodore to interfere with the normal workin's of the deck department, I trust that on this special occasion our esteemed navigatin' officer, Captain Seraggus, will not consider it beneath his dignity or an attack on his office if I suggest to him that he brew another kettle of grog for the crew."

"Second the motion," replied McGuffey.

"Carried," said Seraggus, and proceeded to heat some water.

"Anything further?" stated the president.

"How about uniforms?" This from Captain Seraggus.

"We'll leave that to Gib," suggested McGuffey. "He's been in the Columbian navy and he'll know just what to get us."

"Well, there's another thing that's got to be settled," continued Captain Seraggus. "If I'm to be navigatin' officer on the flagship of a furin' fleet, strike me pink if I'll do more cookin' in the galley. It's degradin'. I move that we engage some caterprisin' Oriental for that job."

"Carried," said Mr. Gibney. "Any further business?"

Once more McGuffey stood up. "Gentlemen and brothers of the syndicate," he began, "I'm satisfied that the back-bitch, the scrapper, the petty jealousies and general enmities that characterized our lives on the old Maggie will not be duplicated on the Maggie II. Them vicious days is gone forever. I hope, an' from now on the motto of us three should be:

"All for one and one for all—United we stand, divided we fall."

This earnest little speech, which came straight from the honest McGuffey's heart, brought the tears to the commodore's eyes. Under the inspiration of McGuffey's unselfish words the glasses were refilled and all three pledged their friendship anew. As for Captain Seraggus, he was naturally of a cold and selfish disposition, and McGuffey's toast appealed more to his brain than to his heart. Had he known what was to happen to him in the days to come and what that simple little motto was to mean in his particular case, it is doubtful if he would have tossed off his liquor as gaily as he did.

The Maggie II sails for the South seas.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Has One Good Point, Scribbler—"Do you find any merit in my poem?" Editor—"Well, it isn't very long."—Boston Transcript.

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