

# "RIVALS FOR THE CAPTAINCY!"

A SPLENDID YARN OF GREYFRIARS SCHOOL IN THIS ISSUE.

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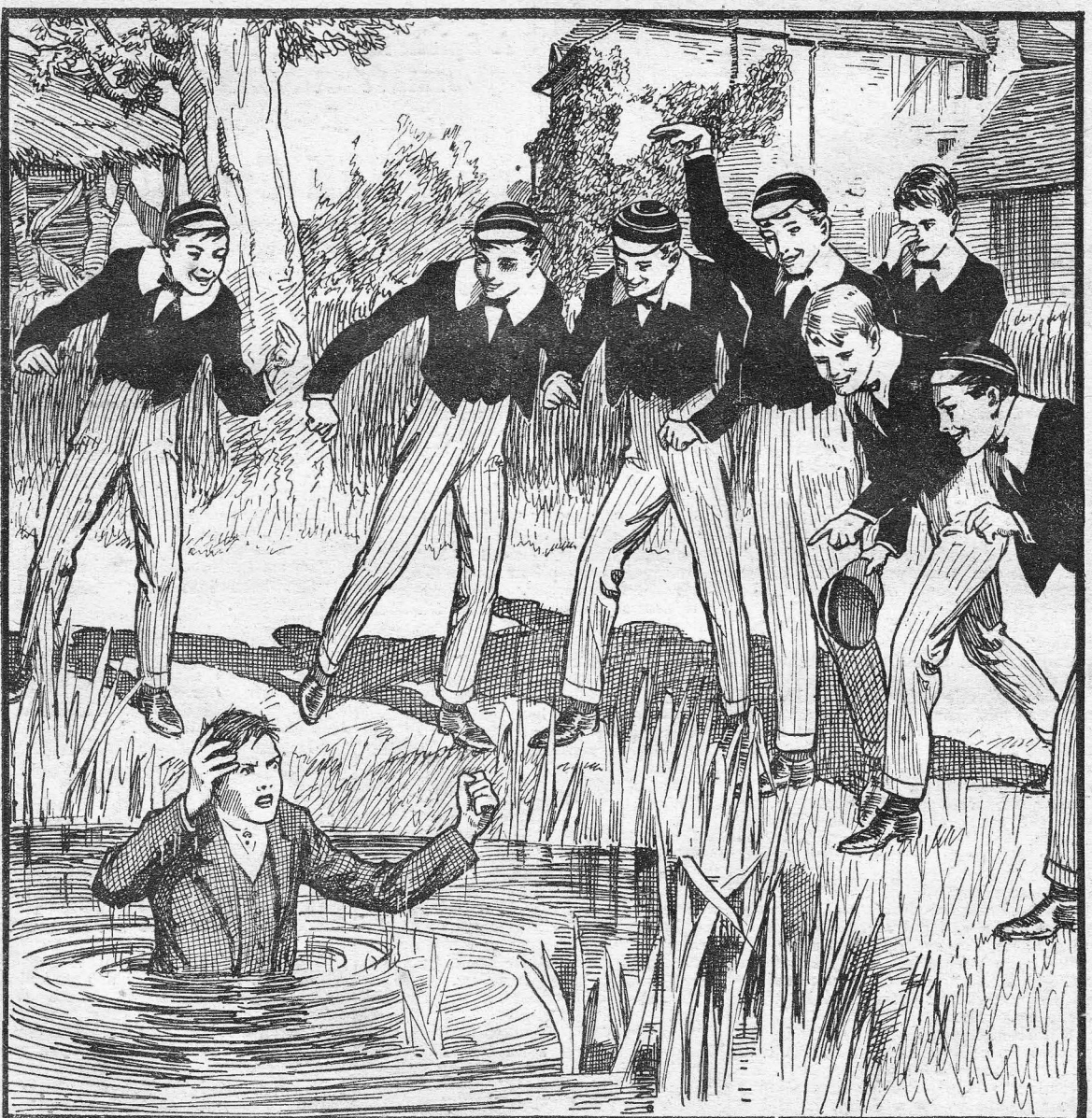
Greyfriars

# The POPULAR

11d  
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Stories, Jokes & Pictures  
of Greyfriars, Rookwood & St. Jims

Rookwood St. Jims



## GETTING RID OF THE CAD FROM TEXAS!

(A Humorous Incident from the Long Complete Tale of Rookwood inside.)

**TWO LONG  
COMPLETE SCHOOL  
TALES  
EVERY WEEK.**



**"BILLY BUNTER'S  
WEEKLY!"**

Grand Four-page Supplement.  
Edited by WILLIAM GEORGE  
BUNTER of Greyfriars.



# Going for Gunter!

A Splendid, Long, Complete Tale of  
**JIMMY SILVER & CO. at  
Rockwood.**

**By OWEN CONQUEST.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### Uncle Jimmy Does His Duty.

**J**IMMY SILVER sat up in bed. There was a glimmer of moonlight at the windows of the Fourth Form dormitory on the Classical side at Rockwood.

Jimmy Silver rubbed his eyes and blinked round him.

It was very quiet in the dormitory. From most of the beds came a low sound of steady breathing. It was half-past ten—the half-hour had chimed out from the clock-tower. Jimmy Silver listened. There was a faint sound of movement in the silence, a whispering voice.

"Put your boots on outside, Topham." Low as the voice was, Jimmy Silver recognised the tones of Townsend, the dandy of the Fourth.

"Right-ho!" came Topham's whisper in reply.

Cautious feet in socks moved towards the door.

Jimmy Silver's eyes gleamed. He had not been mistaken. The two slackers of the Fourth were out of bed, and about to leave the dormitory upon a nocturnal excursion.

Properly speaking, it was none of Jimmy Silver's business. Certainly, he was the great chief of the Classical Fourth, but he had never set up as censor of morals in the Fourth Form. If Townsend and Topham chose to smoke cigarettes with Smythe of the Shell and the other nuts of Rockwood, if they played cards, and put surreptitious bobs on gee-gees, Jimmy Silver was not really called upon to chip in. He regarded the "Giddy Goats" and their proceedings with contemptuous scorn, and let them alone, as a rule.

But circumstances alter cases. In the present case, Jimmy Silver felt that he had good reasons for chipping in. He intended to chip in. And when Jimmy Silver meant to do a thing, he did it promptly and efficiently.

He slipped out of bed, and grasped his pillow.

Townsend and Topham were sneaking cautiously towards the door, never doubting that the rest of the Classical Fourth were fast asleep. Jimmy Silver's wakefulness came as a surprise to them.

Jimmy did not trouble to be cautious. With his pillow gripped in his hands, he made a rush towards the door, overtaking the two nuts just as they reached it. They spun round as they heard him.

Whop! Jimmy's pillow swept through the air at the two dim forms, and there was a gasping howl from Townsend as he caught it with his chin.

Crash!  
"Yow! Oh! Ah!" howled Townsend.  
"What the thunder—" gasped Topham. "Oh, you beast! Ah!"

Jimmy Silver's pillow smote Topham fairly on the napper. Topham went over with a yell, and landed on the floor, bumping.

"Oh dear! Ah! Yow!"  
"By gad! Yaroooh! Oh!"

"What the dickens is the row?" exclaimed Lovell, sitting up in bed, and from most of the beds came surprised and inquiring voices. The fall of the two nuts had awakened all the Classical Fourth.

"Who's up?"  
"What the dickens—"  
"Is it a Modern raid?"  
Jimmy Silver chuckled.  
"Only little me!" he said cheerily.  
"Put a light on, Lovell."

A match scratched, and a candle-end was lighted. In the glimmering light the juniors stared in amazement at the two sprawling and gasping forms on the floor, and Jimmy Silver standing guard over the door with his pillow.

"What the dickens!" exclaimed Raby.

"Yow! Wow! You rotter!" gasped Townsend, sitting upon the floor and blinking furiously at Jimmy Silver.  
"You interfering beast!"

"Ow! Yow! I'm hurt!" moaned Topham. "Oh, my napper! Yow-ow-ow!"

"Our dear young friends were going

on the tiles," explained Jimmy Silver. "I've chipped in for their good. They are going to thank me nicely and get back to bed."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Townsend and Topham were fully dressed, save for their boots, which they had carried in their hands. There was no doubt as to what their intentions had been. But there was very great doubt as to whether their intentions would be carried out. Jimmy Silver was a lion in the path.

Townsend staggered to his feet.

"You interfering beast, Silver! What's it got to do with you, anyway? Let me pass! I'm going out!"

"So am I!" mumbled Topham.

"Get back into bed!" said Jimmy autocratically.

"I won't!"

"Take off your clothes!"

"Shan't!"

"Little boys shouldn't say sha'n't!" said Jimmy Silver chidingly. "It's rude, especially to a kind uncle. Volunteers to help giddy goats to bed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There were plenty of volunteers. Lovell and Raby and Newcome turned out at once, and Flynn and Jones minor followed their example. Townsend and Topham simply panted with wrath. Going out on the razzle was, in the eyes of the nuts, a lofty and man-of-the-world sort of thing to do. Being undressed and put to bed like naughty children was humiliating. But there was no help for it.

The two nuts were in the hands of the Philistines. Their clobber was yanked off by disrespectful hands. There were sounds of tearing and rending, too, as the well-fitting clobber came off. The chums of the Fourth did not stand upon ceremony.

Townsend and Topham were soon reduced to a state of Nature, and they gasped and panted with helpless fury. Jimmy Silver took away their clothes, threw them into the cupboard at the end

of the dormitory, locked the cupboard, and took out the key.

"You can have your clobber again in the morning," he remarked. "Even giddy goats like you won't want to go down to Coombe in your pyjamas."

The Fourth-Formers chuckled at the idea.

"Oh, you rotters!" moaned Topham. "Ow! Smythe's expectin' us! Oh dear!"

"Smythe is, is he?" said Jimmy Silver. "All serene! Let him expect! He won't see you to-night, my pippins! He'll have to put his little party off!"

"You're a beast, Silver!"

"Good! Put the dear little kids to bed, my sons, and spank 'em for getting up!"

Townsend and Topham were bumped into their respective beds. Then there was a sound of heavy spanking. Townsend and Topham howled, though with suppressed howls, for they were in deadly fear of drawing a prefect or a master to the scene. If old Bulkeley, the captain of Rookwood, had discovered their little game, their sufferings would have been much more severe.

"There, now, I think they're brought to a proper state of mind!" said Jimmy Silver. "Don't you feel obliged to us, Towny, for saving you from playing the giddy ox?"

"Yow-ow! Oh!"

"Give him some more!"

"Spank, spank, spank!"

"Yaroooh! Leave off! Ow! Help!"

"Do you feel obliged now, Towny?"

"Oh crumbs! Yes, yes, yes!" shrieked Townsend.

"That's better! Always thank your kind uncle nicely! Do you feel obliged, Toppy?"

"Yes!" gasped Topham. He did not wait for the extra spanks.

"Good!"

And Jimmy Silver & Co., chuckling, went back to bed.

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.**

**The Only Way!**

**J**IMMY SILVER wore a thoughtful look the next morning.

Smythe & Co. wore sullen and savage looks. Their expedition had been nipped in the bud; they had been unable to keep their appointment, and it was all due to the extremely high-handed interference of Jimmy Silver.

It was not surprising that the nuts of Rookwood were savage and ratty. If the noble nuts had been fighting-men, Jimmy Silver would certainly have had several fights on his hands that day.

Jimmy Silver would not have minded. He thrived on "scraps." But the nuts were not looking for scraps. They contented themselves with scowling and muttering vengeance—the said vengeance being postponed to some indefinite date in the future.

Jimmy Silver was not bothering about the nuts. He had other and more important matters to occupy his thoughts. There was the question of Gunter.

Gunter, the Head's nephew, had been expelled from the school. He had been an arrant blackguard while he was there, and he seemed to have become still worse since he had left.

Dr. Chisholm had made arrangements to send him back to America, where his people lived. Gunter had taken himself off, and disappeared for a time. Then he had turned up in the village of Coombe, near Rookwood.

He cherished a bitter animosity against the Head for having "sacked" him, and against the Rookwood fellows, who had all been glad to see him go. And his

intention—which he had plainly stated to Jimmy Silver—was to hang about the neighbourhood of the school, and bring as much shame as he could upon the school and upon the Head.

Only a thorough rascal could have thought of such a scheme; but Gunter was the biggest rascal it had ever been Jimmy Silver's fortune to encounter.

And the rascal was keeping up his connection with fellows at Rookwood who had vicious inclinations, such as Smythe & Co. He delighted in leading them into reckless escapades—deeper into the mire than their own inclinations would have led them, slackers and "rotters" as they were.

Jimmy Silver had a shrewd suspicion that Gunter's object was not so much to enjoy their society as to bring them to his own fate. He could not hurt the Head of the school more than by necessitating a series of expulsions, which would make the name of Rookwood unpleasantly notorious.

For his wretched victims the young rascal did not care a button. The egregious Smythe and his friends had been warned by Jimmy Silver, and they had sniffed at the warning. Adolphus & Co. were quite sure of their ability to take care of themselves.

Hence the drastic proceedings of Jimmy Silver when he discovered that the nuts of Rookwood were about to break bounds to meet Gunter.

That expedition had been thoroughly knocked on the head; but it was quite possible that Jimmy Silver would be caught napping when the next excursion was planned.

Jimmy Silver had come to a resolution, in which his chums fully concurred. Gunter had to be got rid of.

True, Jimmy Silver had no right to dictate to Gunter whether he should live at Coombe or not. But Jimmy Silver felt that on certain occasions high-handedness was justified, and he had made up his mind that Gunter had to go.

After lessons that day Jimmy was still looking very thoughtful, as he came out with Lovell and Raby and Newcome. It was up to Jimmy Silver, as leader of the Co., to think out a plan for dealing with Gunter, and Jimmy had thought it out.

It had given him a good deal of mental exercise, but he had come to a decision at last.

"Well?" said Lovell and Raby and Newcome, in chorus, as Jimmy Silver halted in the quad.

"Well," said Jimmy, "it's settled. We'll speak to those Modern bouncers. They can back us up."

"Oh, the Moderns are no good!" said Lovell, with a sniff. "Better keep it in our own hands."

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"We're going to let Gunter see that all Rookwood's against him," he explained. "Moderns and Classics shoulder to shoulder, you know. Besides, he may have a gang of his precious sporting friends with him, and Tommy Dodd is useful in a scrap. Come on!"

"Oh, all right!"

Jimmy Silver knocked at Tommy Dodd's study door and opened it. The three Tommies were chuckling in the study.

"My hat!" ejaculated Tommy Dodd, as his visitors appeared. "Those Classical duffers! Hand me the treacle!"

"Hold on!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"It's pax!"

"Oh!" Tommy Dodd put down the treacle-jar. "That'll save the treacle.

anyway. It's a waste of good treacle to mop it on Classical fatheads!"

"You silly chump!" said Jimmy Silver. "I've a jolly good mind to wreck the study. But I want to see you on business, you shrieking fathead! It's about Gunter!"

"Oh, Gunter!" said Tommy Dodd. "That sacked Classical! Not the only fellow on your side who ought to be sacked, if you ask me!"

"Well, I don't ask you!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "Look here! Gunter's hanging out in Coombe!"

"Yes; like his cheek. But some Classics have cheek enough for anything!" said Tommy Dodd disparagingly.

"Oh, let's get off!" grunted Lovell. "These Modern cads wouldn't be game enough, anyway!"

"Game for anything you're game for, anyway!" sniffed Tommy Dodd.

"What's on?"

"We're going for Gunter," said Jimmy Silver.

"Well, that was my idea," said Tommy Dodd. "I suggested—"

"Well, it's my idea, too," said Jimmy. "He's disgracing the school and his uncle, our respected Head, and he says plainly that's what he's here for. He will be run in by the police some day, with his blackguardly goings-on, and then think of the disgrace. I believe that's his little game, as a matter of fact. He'd do anything to get even with Rookwood for kicking him out. We're going to shift him out of Coombe!"

"How?" demanded the three Moderns, with one voice.

"Go for him, and rag him, and make hay of him till he clears off," said Jimmy Silver unhesitatingly.

"Oh, scissors!"

"If you're game you can help us," said Jimmy. "If you're not, you can go and eat coke!"

"We're game enough," said Tommy Dodd. "But if it came out that we'd been to the Bird-in-Hand for any reason, it would mean trouble."

"We've got to risk that," said Raby. "I suppose you Modern bouncers can risk it if we can?"

"I should jolly well say so!" said Tommy Dodd. "You won't find the top side of Rookwood backing out—"

"Top side! Why, you Modern ass—"

"You Classical duffer—"

"Order!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "You can jaw some other time. Is it a go? Are we going for Gunter?"

"It's a go!" said the three Tommies at once.

"Done, then!"

"Now we'll have tea," said Tommy Dodd. "Stay and feed with us, dear boys. Pax till after we've routed the enemy!"

"Right-ho!"

And the Classics and Moderns sat down to tea together quite amicably. Civil war was suspended till the common enemy had been disposed of.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**

**Rookwood on the Warpath!**

**S**EVEN juniors marched out of the gates of Rookwood after tea with very determined looks. The rivals of Rookwood were on the warpath—not against one another for once.

They were serious enough about it. Gunter, the sacked blackguard of the Fourth, was a denizen of the Bird-in-Hand, a low public-house on the outskirts of the village. That house was strictly out of bounds for all Rookwood fellows.

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A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"COKER'S SHORT REIGN!"

## 4 Splendid Model Pantomime in This Week's Christmas "Chuckles"!

Under any other circumstances Jimmy Silver & Co. would never have dreamed of entering such a place. They knew, too, that the penalty would be severe if the Head learned of it. Their excellent intentions would not save them from condign punishment.

But they were running the risk. For the sake of the school's good name, they were going to get rid of Gunter. There was only one way—the drastic method of ragging the young rascal till he cleared off. The Head might be angry if he learned of their proceedings, but there was no doubt that he would be glad to hear that his ungrateful and rascally nephew was gone. Jimmy Silver & Co. were, in fact, observing the injunction to do good by stealth.

Of the "scrap" that was probably before them they thought little. Gunter would put up a fight, and his associates would probably help him; but the heroes of the Fourth were prepared for any amount of scrapping.

"Better go round by way of the towing-path," Tommy Dodd observed, as the party drew near the village. "We don't want to be spotted going in. If Knowles or Bulkeley were about—"

"Good idea!" assented Jimmy Silver. The juniors cut down to the towing-path, which gave access to the long inn garden.

There was a gate in the Ledge, and the juniors paused there to survey the enemy's territory before invading it.

Jimmy Silver uttered a suppressed exclamation.

"There he is!"

"Gunter, by Jove!"

"The rotten cad!" growled Lovell, in disgust.

Gunter was there, in full view, and his aspect was not edifying. There was a little summer-house at the end of the garden, and the juniors could see into it. Three persons were seated at a small table—one of them Gunter, the other two men some years older. Gunter had a cigar between his yellow teeth, and a bunch of cards in his hand. Cards were on the table and money, and glasses furnished with something stronger than ginger-beer.

The juniors looked on the scene in wrath and disgust.

"Time we chipped in," murmured Jimmy Silver. "We've fairly got him trapped!"

"What-ho!"

"Follow on!" said Jimmy.

He put his hand on the gate and vaulted over, and ran towards the summer-house. His chums were after him in a twinkling.

Gunter sprang to his feet as he saw them.

Tadger Tagg and Joey Hook rose also, looking surprised.

"Friends of yours, Mister Gunter?" asked Hook.

"I guess not," chuckled Gunter. "I reckon these galoots have come hyar looking for trouble."

"We've come here looking for you, Gunter," said Jimmy Silver.

"We've got a bone to pick with you," said Tommy Dodd.

"If you ain't no business 'ere, young gents, you'll oblige by clearin' off," said Mr. Hook.

"But we have business here," said Jimmy. "Our business is with Gunter. Gunter, you've been long enough in Coombe. When are you going?"

"When I choose, I guess."

"That's where you make a mistake. You're going when we choose. We've come to tell you so."

"I guess you might have saved your THE POPULAR.—No. 152.

breath," said Gunter. "I'm staying on. I guess your headmaster will be sorry he sacked me before I'm through. Now you can vamoose the ranch, or I'll call the stable hands to shift you!"

"You're going!" said Jimmy Silver quietly. "You've disgraced Rookwood enough. Now you're clearing."

Gunter laughed contemptuously, and sat down again.

"Mind," said Jimmy Silver, "we mean business. I don't mind saying out plain that I don't believe you're really our headmaster's nephew at all. If you were, you'd have some grain of decency in you. I believe you're some rotten swindler. But, anyway, you're going!"

Gunter started.

"I guess you're talking out of your hat!" he said. "Don't you calculate that Dr. Chisholm knows his own nephew?"

"I know he'd never seen him," said Jimmy. "I know you came here from Texas as his nephew. But I know, too, that you had a letter from America in which you were called 'Sam.' Sam isn't the name of Dr. Chisholm's nephew. I know you were scared by that letter, and you let out that you were afraid somebody was coming to Rookwood, and you said the game would be up. Putting two and two together, I conclude that there's some swindle on, and that you're not what you make yourself out to be."

Gunter shrugged his shoulders.

"I reckon you'll have to prove all that," he remarked.

"Not at all! I expect it will come out soon enough," said Jimmy, "and anyway, I can't prove it!"

"Then I guess you'd better shut your yap-trap!" said Gunter, in the elegant phraseology he had certainly not learned at Rookwood. "You make me tired."

"We're here to clear you out," said Jimmy Silver determinedly. "You can pack your bag and come with us to the station."

"What!" ejaculated Gunter.

"We'll see you off by the next train."

"By gum, will you!"

"Otherwise you'll get ragged till you're glad to go!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gunter evidently greatly tickled. The young rascal had plenty of nerve, at least.

"I mean it!" said Jimmy. "Last night you tried to get some silly asses in Rookwood to break bounds. You didn't care if they got themselves sacked—or I rather suspect you'd have been pleased. We're putting a stopper on all that."

"We are!" said Lovell. "You've got to go!"

"On your feet or on your neck, just as you choose," explained Tommy Dodd.

Gunter roared with laughter.

"I say, young gents, you'd better get hout," said Mr. Hook. "You can't interfere with Mister Gunter like this 'ere!"

"You ring off!" said Jimmy Silver. "If you chip in here, Mr. Hook, you'll get hurt. Gunter, are you going?"

"I guess not!"

"Last time of asking," said Jimmy Silver. "Are you going?"

"Nope!"

"Collar him!"

There was a rush.

### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

#### A Battle Royal!

GUNTER leaped to his feet.

His hands closed on the neck of a heavy bottle, and he swung it into the air. His eyes gleamed like a cat's.

"Hands off!" he shouted. "Hands off, or—"

There was no doubt that the reckless young rascal would have struck. But Jimmy Silver was upon him with the spring of a tiger before he could use the dangerous weapon.

Jimmy grasped his arm, and forced it back, and Gunter struggled in vain to release it, to strike a savage blow.

The next moment Lovell's grasp was on the bottle, and it was wrenched from Gunter's hand.

"Let up!" shrieked Gunter. "Hook, Tagg, stand by me! Call the stablemen!"

Gunter was struggling furiously in the grasp of three or four of the Rookwooders.

Joey Hook and Tadger Tagg advanced very gingerly to his aid.

They were seized by the juniors, and hurled back unceremoniously. The Co. had no ceremony to waste on a pair of blackguards.

Tadger Tagg crashed into the shrubbery, and lay there gasping, and Joey Hook crashed after him, and rolled over him.

They were hors de combat at once.

But Gunter was a tougher customer. He fought like a wildcat in the grasp of the Rookwooders.

With hands and feet and nails and teeth the young rascal resisted, and there were loud howls from the juniors, who suffered considerable damage in that mode of fighting.

But Gunter was borne to the ground at last, and his hands were held, and Jimmy Silver planted a knee on his chest.

"Got him!" panted Jimmy.

"Let up!" yelled Gunter. "By hokey, if I had a shooter here—"

"Elp!" yelled Mr. Hook.

"Perlice!" stuttered Tadger Tagg.

There was a shout in the garden, and two or three rough fellows came running from the direction of the inn.

"Get him out of here!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "Duck-him in the river!"

"Good egg!"

Gunter, still resisting desperately, was dragged away, bumping on the ground. Raby kicked the gate open, and Gunter was rushed out on the towing-path.

Right down to the gleaming river he was rushed, and then he was swung, yelling, into the air.

"One, two, three!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Go!"

And Gunter went.

There was a terrible splash, and Gunter disappeared into the shallow water, two or three yards from the bank.

"Hurrah!" panted Tommy Dodd.

Gunter's head came up. He scrambled to his feet in the shallows, smothered with mud.

The water surged round his chest as he stood. There was as much mud as water close to the bank, and Gunter was covered with it. His features were almost hidden by it. The juniors burst into a roar of laughter at the sight of him.

Gunter, grinding his teeth, came scrambling towards the bank. He clutched at the rushes to drag himself out.

Jimmy Silver's boot interposed.

"Not yet!" said Jimmy coolly. "Have you made up your mind to clear off, Gunter?"

"No!" shrieked Gunter.

"Then you're not coming out!"

"I—I guess you—"

Gunter's voice was lost in his rage; he stuttered with fury.

Jimmy Silver thrust hard with his boot, and Gunter went floundering back into the mud. He came up again gasping.

"Look out!" rapped out Tommy Dodd. "Here come the enemy!"

NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE TRAITOR GUEST!"

A GRAND CHRISTMAS TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. BY OWEN CONQUEST.

Joey Hook and Tagg, and three rough-looking fellows from the Bird-in-Hand, were advancing upon the juniors from the inn garden. Jimmy Silver & Co. faced the foe at once. The two weedy, unfit sharpers were not dangerous, but the three roughs were another proposition.

But Jimmy Silver & Co. feared no foe. They were quite prepared for a battle.

"Keep your distance!" snapped Jimmy Silver.

"You let Mister Gunter alone, then!" howled Joey Hook.

"Mister Gunter's our property!" said Tommy Dodd. "Mister Gunter's staying in the mud for the present!"

And as Gunter was making another attempt to scramble out, Tommy Dodd promptly shoved him back with his boot, and Gunter floundered again in water and mud.

"Go for them!" raved Gunter from the water. "Pitch them in! I'll stand a quid to each of you chaps if you pitch them in!"

That was enough for the loafers of the Bird-in-Hand. They rushed to the attack.

"Line up!" shouted Lovell.

"Back up, Rookwood!" roared Jimmy Silver.

Mr. Hook and Mr. Tagg prudently kept in the background, urging the roughs on. They had apparently had enough. Three burly roughs and seven determined juniors mingled in a fierce fight.

It was a fight of men against boys; but the schoolboys at least had the odds on their side, and they were full of pluck.

It was a Homeric battle.

The roughs were hitting their hardest, and the schoolboys were bowled over like skittles when the blows landed. But they were active; they were good boxers, and their blood was up. The roughs received at least as good as they gave. The wild scramble on the towing-path lasted several minutes, and Tommy Dodd and Cook and Raby lay gasping on the ground. But by that time one of their enemies had been knocked into the water, another was down, with Jimmy Silver kneeling on his chest, and the third was fleeing, with Lovell and Newcome after him, raging for gore.

Gunter came scrambling out, muddy, and breathing vengeance. But Tommy Doyle had an eye on him, and he met Gunter with a terrific drive on the chin that hurled him back into the river.

Tommy Dodd and Cook and Raby were up again almost at once, very far from beaten. One of their foes had fled, another was scrambling out of the river and taking to his heels, and the fellow under Jimmy Silver's knee was howling for mercy.

Rookwood had won!

Mr. Tagg and Mr. Hook took a hurried departure. They did not want to argue with the victors.

"Lemme up! Lemme gerraway!" gasped the unfortunate gentleman, whose nose Jimmy Silver was grinding into the towing-path.

He was allowed to "gerraway," and the panting juniors remained conquerors on the field of battle.

"Hurrah for us!" panted Tommy Dodd. "Oh, my nose!"

"Ow, my eye!" murmured Cook.

"Oh, a black eye's nothing!" said Jimmy Silver. "We've licked them!"

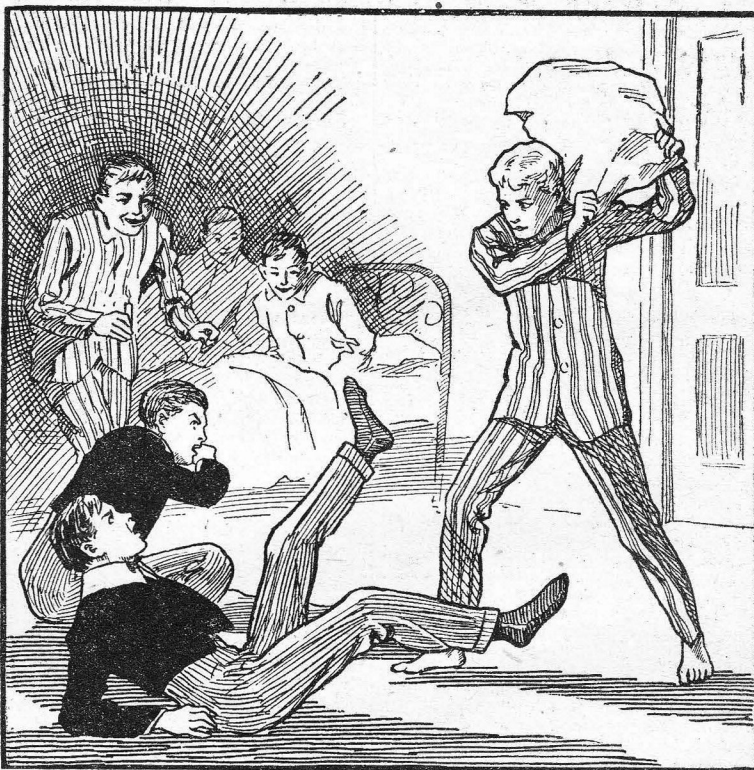
"Yow! You haven't got one! Wow!" "Look out! That cad's getting away!" shouted Raby.

Gunter had splashed along the bank to some distance, and was again seeking to crawl out of the water. The juniors made a rush to the spot.

Half a dozen hands closed on the

NEXT FRIDAY!

"COKER'S SHORT REIGN!"



A match was struck and a candle was lighted. In the glimmering light, the juniors stared in amazement at the two sprawling and gasping forms on the floor, and Jimmy Silver standing guard over the door with his pillow. "What the dickens!" exclaimed Raby. (See Chapter 1.)

muddy Gunter as he landed. He wriggled feebly; he was too spent to struggle.

"Not quite done with you yet!"

grinned Jimmy Silver.

"Let up! Let up!" panted Gunter.

"Are you going?"

"No!" yelled Gunter.

"In you go again, then!"

There was a buzz of a bicycle-bell on the towing-path. The juniors did not heed it. But the cyclist halted, and jumped down, and a sharp voice rapped out:

"Stop that at once!"

"Bulkeley!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

It was the captain of Rookwood. The juniors dropped Gunter as if he had become suddenly red-hot, and whirled round to face Bulkeley. Gunter squirmed and gasped in the rushes at their feet.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Not a Success!

BULKELEY looked at the juniors grimly.

The juniors looked at Bulkeley. There was a short silence, broken only by the spasmodic gasping of Gunter.

"You've been fighting—eh?" exclaimed Bulkeley at last.

The question was really superfluous. There was not one of the band of heroes who did not show very plainly that he had been fighting. Seldom had even the Fistical Four and the three Tommies shown so many signs of combat all at once.

"Sort of—of—of scrapping, Bulkeley!" stammered Jimmy Silver.

"Is that Gunter?"

"Yes."

"What are you doing with him?"

"Ducking him."

"What for?"

"To make him clear off."

"My hat!" said Bulkeley.

The Rookwood captain stared at Gunter as that muddy youth dragged himself to his feet. Gunter was red with rage under the mud. He shook his fist at the juniors, and then at Bulkeley, and staggered away towards the garden gate.

There was a movement to follow him, and Bulkeley interposed.

"Stop!" he rapped out.

"We—we haven't finished yet," said Tommy Dodd.

"Get back to Rookwood at once, all of you!"

"I—I say, Bulkeley—"

"Shut up, and get off!"

There was no disputing with the captain of the school. Jimmy Silver & Co. marched off, somewhat weary and worn, and very much disappointed. They had not nearly finished with Gunter yet.

Bulkeley followed them, wheeling his bike. He did not speak for some time, and the juniors wondered rather apprehensively what he was thinking about. He was head prefect of Rookwood, and he knew they had been to the Bird-in-Hand. True, he also knew their motive. They were thankful that it was not Knowles who had caught them. But what would Bulkeley do?

Not a word did Bulkeley speak till they were near the gates of Rookwood. Then he called to them:

"You young rascals!"

"Yes, Bulkeley?" said Jimmy Silver meekly.

"Let there be no more of this!"

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"Oh, Bulkeley!"  
 "You'd get flogged if the Head knew where you'd been. It's really my duty to report you. I'll give you a chance, if you'll promise me not to go near that place again, or to touch Gunter."

"But the fellow ought to be cleared off!" argued Jimmy Silver. "He's a disgrace to Rookwood, Bulkeley!"

"You can leave that to others older than yourself," said Bulkeley. "Now then, are you going to give me your word, or do you want me to march you in to the Head?"

"Oh, yes; certainly!"

"Now, go and get yourselves clean," said Bulkeley. "You look more like a gang of hoodlums than Rookwood fellows!"

Bulkeley wheeled his bike in, and Jimmy Silver & Co., after looking at one another uncertainly for a few moments, followed him. They could not feel that the expedition had been a striking success.

When the Fistical Four gathered in the end study to tea, however, they were feeling a little better. It was agreed that "going for Gunter" had been a ripping idea, though, it had not turned out a howling success. It was agreed, too, that old Bulkeley was a brick not to report them. Jimmy Silver sagely opined that Bulkeley sympathised with their little scheme, though, of course, as a prefect he couldn't say so.

The Fistical Four, upon the whole, were satisfied with themselves. But the question remained unanswered. How was Rookwood to get rid of Gunter? But, as it happened, that question was shortly to find an unexpected answer.

**THE SIXTH CHAPTER.  
 A Startling Discovery.**

**G**UNTER again, by Jove! It was the following Saturday afternoon. As it was a half-holiday, and the Fistical Four had nothing better to do, they were sauntering down to Coombe to sample the good things in the bunshop there. They were thinking of anything but Gunter as it happened. Jimmy Silver's "wheeze" of going for Gunter was a thing of the past. Then they came in sight of the junior from Texas.

Gunter was sitting on a stile by the

side of the lane, with his usual cigar in his discoloured teeth. He was talking to Smythe of the Shell. The great Adolphus was standing in an elegant attitude, and he had a cigarette in his fingers.

Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged a glance.

"We've promised Bulkeley not to touch Gunter," said Jimmy. "But we can touch Adolphus—hard!"

"You bet!" said his chums.

Adolphus Smythe looked round in alarm as the Fistical Four came up.

"By gad!" he said. "Fancy meetin' you!"

"Sorry to interrupt the little pow-wow," said Jimmy Silver politely. "Don't you remember, Smythe, you've got strict orders to keep away from that blackguard."

"Gerooogh! Leggo!" spluttered Smythe, struggling wildly as the Fistical Four grasped him, and rushed him away down the lane towards Coombe.

But the Fistical Four did not let go; they had no intention of letting go. All the kind attentions they were now debarred from bestowing upon Gunter they meant to bestow upon Adolphus. In that direction, at least, they could counteract Gunter's little game.

Wriggling and howling, the great Adolphus went down the lane, in the midst of the laughing juniors. Gunter, on the stile, roared with laughter. He showed no sign whatever of going to the aid of Adolphus. He seemed to be amused.

"You cheeky young cads!" stammered Adolphus. "Lemme go! I'll lick you, by gad! I'll thrash you, you know! Oh, my nose! Leggo my hair! Yow-wow!"

"Ha, ha! Come on, Adolphus!"

Adolphus had to come on.

"We'll take him into Coombe, and put his head in the horse-trough," grinned Lovell.

"Good egg! Come on, Adolphus, dear."

And to Coombe and the horse-trough the unfortunate Adolphus would infallibly have gone had there not come a sudden interruption. There was a wild clatter of horse's hoofs upon the hard road, and a trap came dashing round a bend of the lane ahead.

"Look out!" shouted Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four leaped out of the road in time, dragging Adolphus with them. The trap went whirling past.

"A runaway!" gasped Lovell. "That kid'll be killed!"

Quite forgetting Smythe of the Shell, the Fistical Four stared after the trap. Its only occupant was a lad of about fifteen, who was dragging at the reins in vain, his somewhat weak face pale with terror. The horse was dashing along at top speed, completely out of control.

The trap from Coombe had passed the juniors in a flash; they had had no time even to think of rendering aid.

And it was impossible to overtake it at the speed at which it was travelling. They could only gaze after it in horror. The vehicle rocked from side to side of the rough road, and it seemed a miracle that it kept to its wheels at all.

"My only hat!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "Look!"

The Classical Four halted, dumb-founded.

Gunter had looked up as the trap came thundering on towards the stile. He threw his cigar away and slipped to the ground.

As the trap thundered up, Gunter made a desperate spring at the horse's head. The juniors felt their hearts stand still as they saw it.

Had Gunter missed his grasp he would have crashed down into the road, fairly under the thundering hoofs; to be crushed out of life by the hoofs and the wheels. He seemed to be springing to his death.

But he did not miss his grasp. Rascal and blackguard as he was, Gunter was cool as an iceberg, steady as a rock. His grasp was on the bit, and the horse's head was dragged down.

Gunter hung on.

The wild pace slackened, and the trap slowed down.

Slower and slower, till the animal was dragged to a halt, and Gunter, covered with dust, bruised and shaken, but as cool as ever, stood upon his feet, holding the horse.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were running their hardest. They were filled with admiration for Gunter's pluck. They felt that that minute of courage and devotion had atoned for all the sins of the rascal of Rookwood.

They came up, panting.

"Waal, that was a close call, if you like, young 'un!" said Gunter, raising his eyes to the boy in the trap.

Then he gave a sudden spring.

"You!" he yelled.

He did not see the Fistical Four racing up. He was staring—or, rather, glaring—at the white face in the trap.

"You!" he repeated. "So you've come at last. And I've saved your life—like a fool! Liking a thumping fool, Bob!"

"Sam!"

"Saved your life!" repeated Gunter, with a hoarse laugh. "Oh, by hokey! If I'd let you break your neck, Bob, I could have played the game on to the end!"

"What the thunder do you mean?" shouted Jimmy Silver, seizing Gunter by the shoulder and shaking him. "Who's this chap?"

Gunter laughed.

"That chap? Can't you guess?"

"Is it—?" began Jimmy.

"The galoot who wrote to me that he'd lost his nerve, and couldn't keep up the game—the galoot who was coming to Rookwood to bowl me out, and show me up—Bob Gunter, the Head's nephew!"

"The Head's nephew? My hat!"

(Continued on page 18.)

A GRAND CHRISTMAS TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.  
 BY OWEN CONQUEST.

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NEXT FRIDAY!

**"THE TRAITOR GUEST!"**

::



A Magnificent Long Complete School Story, dealing with the Early Adventures of HARRY WHARTON & CO. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.  
Why Not Coker?

"WHY not?" Horace Coker, of the Fifth Form at Greyfriars, asked that question quite suddenly. Coker was in his study, with his chums Potter and Greene of the Fifth. They were having tea; at all events, Potter and Greene were having tea. Coker had been for some time plunged in deep meditation—a very unusual thing for Coker—and he was neglecting the spread; a still more unusual thing. He came out of his reverie with a jump, as it were, and propounded his question so suddenly that Potter and Greene jumped, too. "Why not?" "Eh?" said Potter. "What?" said Greene. Coker looked at him fixedly across the tea-table. "Why not?" he repeated. "Blest if I know!" said Potter, helping himself to shrimps. "I don't know what you're talking about! But why not? Certainly, if you like! Why don't you try the shrimps? I can tell you they're prime!" "Ripping!" said Greene. "Try 'em, Coker!" "Why not?" repeated Coker. "No reason why not, especially as they're your shrimps!" said Potter. "I wasn't talking about shrimps!" said Coker disdainfully. "I've been thinking—"

"You shouldn't start these things at tea-time!" said Potter, with a shake of the head. "You are letting your tea get cold!" "Blow the tea!" "Well, that would only make it colder!" said Potter innocently. Coker grunted. "Look here, you chaps! I've got an idea—a really, ripping, stunning idea—and you fellows have got to back me up! You know how matters stand now at Greyfriars—there isn't a captain of the school, and the election for a new skipper comes off to-morrow!" "Yes, we know that!" said Potter. "Pass the ham-sandwiches, Greene!" "Wingate's resigned from the captaincy, under pressure from the Head!" continued Coker. "I was rather sorry for Wingate, but as the Head found him fighting with a giddy prefect in the open quad, there was nothing else for it. He's resigned, and he's not standing for re-election."

"Ancient history," said Greene. "Pass the teapot, if you're done with it!" Coker passed the teapot absently, allowing a stream of tea to escape from the spout into Potter's plate. It was evident that Horace Coker was very much taken up with his new ripping and stunning idea, whatever it was, and had no attention to bestow upon trifles. But Potter had, and Potter gave a yell. "Look out, you ass! You're swamping my sandwiches!" "Sorry!" said Coker. "Never mind!" "Never mind!" said Potter sulphurously. "They're the last of the sandwiches, you fathead!" "Well, never mind!" "You—you ass!" "Loder, the prefect, has put up for captain," resumed Coker. "Most of the fellows expected that Wingate's chum, North of the Sixth, would put up—but he hasn't! So far, Loder is the only giddy candidate!" "Blow Loder!" said Potter, pitching his drenched sandwiches into the fire, and looking round the table for fresh provender. "Certainly, blow Loder!" said Coker. "I think you'll agree with me that Loder isn't the right chap to be skipper of a school like Greyfriars. He isn't exactly what you'd call one of the best!" "No fear!" said Greene. "He keeps the juniors in their places, and is very much down on the Remove; but I don't know any other qualities he's got." "He's not the chap we want as captain!" said Coker positively. "We're going to have him, whether we want him or not!" said Potter, starting on the jam-tarts. "Nobody else in the Sixth has a chance against him, excepting North; and North won't stand." "Nobody else in the Sixth!" repeated Coker. "Quite so. It looks like being a walk-over for Loder at present!" "It will be a walk-over!" "Perhaps not. Look here!" said Coker impressively. "The captain of Greyfriars has always been one of the Sixth, from time immemorial. But I don't see why there shouldn't be a change. Why shouldn't there be a candidate from the Fifth?" Greene stared, and Potter whistled. "The Fifth!" said Potter. "My hat! The captain has always been a Sixth-Former. That's like the giddy laws of the Medes and Persians!" "But it's only a custom, not a law!" argued Coker. "My idea is, that it's time there was a change. A Fifth-

Former could run the show quite as well, and, in fact, better. Why not?" "Why not?" chuckled Potter. "Only, it couldn't be did. The Sixth would be against it to a man!" "Let 'em!" said Coker. "Let 'em rip! Who cares for the Sixth?" "Eh?" "In the captain's election every vote counts. Well, the Sixth are the fewest in number of any Form in the school, naturally; and a fag's vote is as good as a prefect's vote. In an election of this kind, the Sixth ain't of so much importance as the Second Form." "Well, that's so, in a way, too!" "Let the Sixth go and chop chips!" said Coker. "If a Fifth Form candidate could get the votes he becomes skipper, and—and there you are!" "If!" murmured Greene. "You're thinking of Blundell, our Form captain, I suppose?" said Potter thoughtfully. "Well, I don't deny that Blundell might make a good captain of the school! He's some sort of an ass, but he's a good chap and a good footballer!" Coker snorted. "I wasn't thinking of Blundell!" "Who, then? Bland?" "Certainly not! He wouldn't be any good!" "Fitzgerald, then?" said Potter, who either could not or would not understand. "Well, Fitz is a good sort, but—"

"Blow Fitz! Why shouldn't a chap, out of this study stand?" demanded Coker warmly. "This study! Oh!" "Why not?" "I'm sure you're very kind, Coker!" said Potter agreeably. "But I don't know that I'm quite up to the job!" "You! I know you're not! I wasn't thinking of you!" "Oh, old Greene, then? What do you think, Greeney? Do you want to stand for captain?" "Who's talking about Greene?" roared Coker. "Why, you were!" said Potter innocently. Coker glared. "What's the matter with me?" he demanded. "You?" "Yes, me!" "Oh!" said Potter. "You're joking, of course?" "I'm not joking!" said Coker fiercely. "Why shouldn't I make as good

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"COKER'S SHORT REIGN!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

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as captain of the school as any other chap—eh?"

"Ahem!"

"Well, what do you think?" demanded Coker.

"Ahem! If you can get the votes, it's all right," said Greene. "But—but I rather think you won't get 'em, Cokey, old man!"

"I suppose you two fellows are going to vote for me?" demanded Coker.

Potter and Greene exchanged doubtful glances.

"I—I suppose so," said Potter slowly. "Ye-e-es," said Greene. "But two votes won't get you in, you know!"

Horace Coker grunted.

"If I'm elected, I shall stand a first-class feed to all my voters!" he said. "I'm going to write to my Aunt Judith for an extra big tip for the occasion. She would be very pleased to see me captain of the school. Of course, I'm quite up to the position. What is wanted is a good footballer, a good crikicker, a good all-round athlete, and a fellow with some tact and common-sense."

"Ah! But where are you going to find him?" said Potter, with a shake of the head.

"Here, you silly ass!" roared Coker.

"Oh!" said Potter. "I see! Right!"

"I'll go and see some of the fellows about it," said Coker, rising. "There's no time to be lost, as the election's tomorrow. I think we shall put a spoke in Loder's wheel that will surprise him!"

And Coker left the study.

#### THE SECOND CHAPTER.

##### Harry Wharton & Co. Take the Lead!

"ARE we all here?" Harry Wharton asked the question in the Junior Common-room.

Quite a crowd of the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars—had gathered there.

The Famous Five—Wharton and Bob Cherry, and Nugent and Johnny Bull, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh—were the leaders, as they generally were of anything that went on in the Remove Form.

But more than half the Form had gathered round them in the Common-room—Mark Linley and Tom Brown, the New Zealander, and Bulstrode and Russell, and Ogilvy and Penfold, and Banthorpe and Newland and Morgan, and several more fellows.

Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove, glanced over the crowd of juniors, whose deadly, earnest looks showed that something unusual was under way.

"All here, I think," said Bob Cherry cheerfully. "All that matter, anyway."

"Half the giddy Form, anyway," said Frank Nugent. "Enough of us to crowd out the senior room. Lead on, Macduff!"

"March!" said Johnny Bull. And the Nabob of Bhanipur, the dusky Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, remarked that the marchfulness would be terrific.

"Mind, you know what's on," said Harry Wharton impressively. "We're going to represent the Lower School, the Remove being the most important junior Form—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Faith, and it's right ye are, Wharton darling," said Micky Desmond. "Though ye won't get the Upper Fourth and the Shell to believe it."

"Well, come on," said Wharton. "North's in the prefects' room now, and we shall catch him. Follow your leader!"

"Loder may be there, too!" suggested Tom Brown.

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Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"That doesn't matter. He can't stop us; and he can have the benefit of hearing what the Remove thinks of him!"

"Good egg!"

"March!" said the captain of the Remove.

And the Removites marched. They made their way in compact order towards the prefects' room, an apartment reserved for the use of the Sixth. Hobson and Hoskins of the Shell met them in the passage and stared at them.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Hobson. "What's on?"

"Deputation of the Lower School to North," explained Harry Wharton. "You can come, too, if you like, to represent the Shell."

Hobson grinned.

"Going to the prefects' room?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Loder's there!"

"Blow Loder!"

"Well, we won't come, thanks!" grinned Hobson. "You'll go out on your necks, I expect. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Go and eat coke then!"

And the Removites marched on, pushing the Shell fellows out of the way. Hobson and Hoskins sat on the linoleum when they had passed, and gasped. The Removites marched steadily on to the prefects' room, and Wharton knocked at the door, and opened it.

The prefects' room was a large apartment, with windows looking out on the Close. There were half a dozen of the Sixth there. Wingate, the late captain of Greyfriars, was seated by a window, chatting with North. Loder, the prefect, was talking to Carne and Walker, his chums, and his chief backers in the contest for the captaincy of Greyfriars. Wingate and Loder were elaborately unconscious of each other's presence in the room. They were not upon speaking terms.

There was a cloud upon George Wingate's face; but Loder was looking very cheerful. The prefect was very nearly at the goal of his ambition. The contest between him and Wingate had been a bitter one. Loder had caused a split in the Sixth, and he had provoked Wingate to a personal encounter—which the Head had witnessed. For the captain of the school to be found fighting in the Close like a Third Form fag was quite beyond the "limit," and the Head had promptly suggested to Wingate the propriety of resigning. Wingate had resigned, and announced that he did not intend to stand for re-election.

So far, Gerald Loder was the only candidate for the captaincy, and it looked as if it would be a walk-over for the plotting prefect. Loder regarded it in that light; and he was already, as some of the fellows remarked with disgust, putting on as much side as if he were already captain.

Loder had played his cards well. He had made it appear that the fight was the fault of Wingate, and although the Head had degraded him from his post of prefect, he had reinstated him the following week.

Wingate, no longer the captain of the school, was not even a prefect now. But Wingate's popularity with the Lower School, was, at least, undiminished, and the juniors still persisted in treating him with the respect due to their captain.

It was upon the subject of the captaincy that Wingate and North were speaking when Harry Wharton & Co. presented themselves in the prefects' room. It was Wingate's wish that his old chum should stand for election; but North had steadily refused to do so. He would not take his chum's place; and, as he said bluntly, if the fellows did not like to keep a good skipper when they had one, they could go and eat coke. If they preferred Loder, let them have Loder, and be hanged! That was North's reply to all the fellows who suggested that he should stand.

"It's not too late yet, North, old man," Wingate was saying in a low voice. "A candidate can come forward right up to the time of the election. I wish you'd stand."

North shook his head.

"I'm not going to, Wingate. The fellows turned you out—half the Sixth and the Fifth backed up Loder in his rotten game—and the rest let 'em do it! If they want Loder, let them have him. They'll soon be sorry for their bargain!"

"That's what I'm thinking of," said Wingate, with a sigh. "What will become of the school eleven with Loder as skipper?"

"Well, they're choosing him themselves!"

"The team will go to rot," said Wingate. "We shan't have a win in footer matches for the rest of the season."

"That's their look-out! The long and the short of it is, old man, that I'm not going to take your place; and that's settled."

"Ahem!"

The two seniors looked round as they heard that respectful cough.

"Hallo!" said Wingate. "What do you kids want here?"

The Removites coughed a little. They did not exactly like being characterised as "kids," even by old Wingate.

"Ahem!" said Harry Wharton.

"H'm!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"Have you got a cold?" asked North.

"Nunno!"

"Then what are you coughing for?"

Harry Wharton turned pink.

"Ahem!"

"I think you must have a cold," said North seriously. "Better go to the matron, and ask her to give you something for it."

"Ahem!"

"Try gargling," suggested North.

Some of the Removites chuckled.

"Ahem!" said Harry Wharton. "The fact is—is—is—"

"Faith, and you'd better lave it to me, Wharton darling—"

"Shut up, Desmond!"

"Sure, and I think—"

"Order!" said Bob Cherry.

"I guess—" began Fisher T. Fish, the American junior.

"Shut up!" roared Bob Cherry. "This isn't a guessing competition. Pile in, Wharton!"

"Ahem!"

"Go ahead!"

North pointed to the door.

"Do you kids see that doorway?" he asked.

"Ye-e-es."

"Well, get the other side of it, and close the door after you!"

The juniors looked at one another with rather sickly smiles. The deputation was not prospering.

"Oh, pile in, for goodness' sake, Wharton!" said several voices.

Wharton plunged into the subject.

"Look here, North, we've a deputation

(Continued on page 13.)

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**GUEST!**

A GRAND CHRISTMAS TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.  
BY OWEN CONQUEST.



# BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!



## A GRAND FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

Edited by  
**WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER** of Greyfriars School.

Assisted by  
**HIS FOUR FAT SUBS—SAMMY BUNTER** of Greyfriars, **FATTY WYNN** and **BAGGY TRIMBLE** of St. Jim's, and **TUBBY MUFFIN** of Rookwood.

Contributions from the Three Famous Schools.

### A SONG OF SIXPENCE!

By **SAMMY BUNTER.**

Dear, readers, I'm in a dilemmer. Yes, I'm in a dilemmer—a horrible dilemmer.

I want to do a whole crowd of Christmas shopping, but I haven't the wherewithal.

I want to buy a pipe for the pater, a sowing-machine for the mater, a basket of tuck for brother Billy, a simmiler sort of thing for sister Bessie, a hat with funny feathers in it for Aunt Prue, and a set of golf-clubs for Uncle Bill.

I want to buy all these things, and my total resources amount to sixpence!

I went over to Courtfield, intending to do all my shopping, but I've come back empty-handed.

The tobacconist showed me a selection of pipes, but they were all too dear, with the exception of a thing they call a corn cob. This was marked "Great Sacrifice. Going at Three-halfpence." But I couldn't imagine my pater reclining in his sumtuous apartments with a pipe like that in his mouth! So I went sorrowfully down the street in search of a sowing-machine (nothing to do with the harvest, I can assure you!).

It was a hopeless quest. I tried to get a sowing-machine on the cheap, but try as I would, I couldn't succeed in beating the shopman down to sixpence!

I then called at Chunkley's Stores for a big tuck-basket.

"First of all, Master Bunter," says the manager, "let me see the culler of your coyne!"

I perduced my sixpence, and was promptly ordered out of the place.

My next place of call was the milliner's.

"I want a hat, please," I said, "with funny feathers stuck in it, and poking out at all angles!"

The lady behind the counter smiled sweetly.

"This," she said, picking up a thing that looked like a trust foul, "is the latest Paris creation."

"And the price?" I mermered.

"Three ginies!"

"I can give you sixpence now, and then a penny a week until the whole thing is paid off," I said.

But her ladyship wasn't having any.

So I'm still left with the sum of sixpence, and not a stroke of Christmas shopping done.

And, by the way, the sixpence is a bad one!

**IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!**

— By —  
**BILLY BUNTER.**

My Dear Readers,—

Christmas joys don't commence on Christmas Day. They commence weeks before—when you start your shopping, to be precise.

I expect a lot of people will beg leave to differ. "Christmas shopping," they will say, "isn't a joy. It's a penance. How can you call it a joy to chase around buying woollen mittens for your aged grandmother, or fountain-pens for your frumpy old aunts? Joy, indeed! It's the biggest ordeal of the year!"

But I still stick to my opinion that Christmas shopping is a joy.

We are told that the only real happiness in life lies in doing other people good turns. It is better to give than to receive.

Well, it all depends on what is given and received. If Peter Todd gave me a thick ear, or a black eye, it would certainly give him happiness. But I can't imagine him buying me a bike, or anything like that, and handing it over with a happy smile. Can you?

This Special Shopping Number is my own bright brain-wave. You can get a lot of humour out of shopping—and sometimes tragedy as well. At any rate, my contributors have managed to turn out some really ripping stuff for this issue.

And now I want to talk to you about something which will give you far more happiness than Christmas shopping. I refer to the Special Christmas Number of my famous "Weekly." It will positively appear next week! And it will be the best and brightest and brainiest Christmas Number ever published. Miss it, and you will spend the whole of 1922 weeping and gnashing your teeth! Get it, and your cup of joy will be full to overflowing.

We have worked on that Christmas Number until we have given ourselves splitting headaches. We have even neglected our food in order to prepare for our readers the finest and jolliest feast of fiction that has ever been served up.

Next week the scene outside the newsagents' shops will resemble Rugby football scrums. Young men and maidens, old men and children, and people of every rank and station, will be clamouring for the Christmas Number of the "Popular." And the kernel of this delightful nut—if we may call the "Popular" by such a name—will be the Special Christmas Number of "Billy Bunter's Weekly."

Your affectionate pal,

### Bunter's Shopping Expedition!

By **Dick Penfold.**

To Chunkley's Stores in Courtfield Town  
(A shopping place of great renown)  
The porpoise Bunter went one day,  
And said, in his familiar way:

\* \* \*

"I want to do some Christmas shopping;  
Those cakes of yours look simply top-  
ping!  
I'll take a currant one, old bean—  
My Christmas gift to Hazeldene!

\* \* \*

"Of sweets I'll have a pocketful,  
To give to my pal Johnny Bull.  
Some ripe bananas, too, old thing;  
They're greatly liked by Hurree Singh!

\* \* \*

"I also want a shilling hoop,  
To give to Skinner, Stott, or Snoop.  
That Teddy Bear looks jolly clever,  
I'll hand it with my love to Trevor!

\* \* \*

"That brilliantine, of pleasing odour,  
Will glisten on the locks of Loder.  
That clockwork Charlie Chaplin joker  
Will make a ripping gift for Coker!"

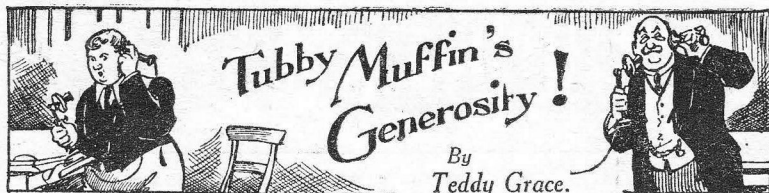
\* \* \*

"I thank you, sir," said the assistant;  
His glance was rather cold and distant.  
"Before I pack and give you these,  
Pay at the desk, sir, if you please!"

\* \* \*

Then Billy Bunter turned quite pale,  
His faltering voice grew faint and frail.  
"Ahem! I don't think I can pay.  
My postal-order's on the way!"

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"MAY I use the telephone, Bulkeley?" It was Tubby Muffin who asked the question.

The stalwart skipper of Rookwood looked hard at the fat junior.

"Why do you want to use the telephone?" he demanded.

"I've got an urgent message to give to the general stores at Latcham."

"Oh, all right!"

Tubby Muffin rolled away to the prefects' room. It was deserted.

The fat Fourth-Former crossed to the telephone, placed the receiver to his ear, and spoke into the transmitter.

"I want Latcham double five, please!" he said.

There was a long interval. Then a voice hailed Tubby Muffin over the wires.

"Hallo! Who is that?"

"Muffin!"

"Not to-day, thank you!"

"Eh—what?" gasped Tubby.

"We don't want any muffins for tea to-day!"

"You—you—" spluttered Tubby Muffin, purple in the face with wrath. "Is that the general stores, Latcham?"

"Certainly not! I am the Vicar of Coombe!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Tubby Muffin dropped the receiver as if it had suddenly become red-hot.

"What chumps those telephone operators are!" he growled. "They're always giving a fellow the wrong number!"

After a brief pause he again took up the receiver.

"Hallo, operator! It's Latcham double five I want! You gave me the Vicar of Coombe, and that's Latcham double nine!"

"Sorry, sir! Hold on a minute!"

Tubby Muffin held on a good many minutes before he got satisfaction, and then the voice of the stores manager greeted him.

"Got you at last!" said Tubby. "It's Muffin speaking, of Rookwood!"

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"I want you to send some things up to the school. Pay careful attention to what I say! If any blunders are made it'll be fatal! Are you listening?"

"Of course, Master Muffin!"

"Well, first of all, I want you to send one of your tuck-hampers along. Address it to Jimmy Silver, and add the names of Lovell, Raby, and Newcome. The hamper's to be equally divided between the Fistical Four, as they call themselves—see?"

"One minute while I jot down the names!" said the manager. "Yes, I've got that. What else, Master Muffin?"

"I want a really good pair of roller-skates to be sent along. Address them to V. Mornington, Esquire, will you?"

"Certainly!"

"Have you any first-class penknives? You know the sort I mean. It's a penknife, a gimlet, a screwdriver, a chisel, a hammer, and a pair of compasses combined."

"Yes; we have a very good one at twenty shillings, Master Muffin."

"Right! You can send one of those along, too. Address it to Kit Erroll, will you?"

"Yes. Anything else, Master Muffin?"

"Let me think!" said Tubby. "Do you stock mouth-organs?"

"Yes. We have some superior German mouth-organs at one-and-six, and some inferior English ones at seven-and-six."

"Well, send one to Cyril Peele, Esquire, will you—one of the Hun-made ones?"

The manager booked the order.

"Nothing more, Master Muffin?"

"No; that's the lot."

"That will be three pounds five," said the manager, after a rapid calculation.

"I'll bring the money along to-morrow."

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said Tubby Muffin. "Send the things up to Rookwood right away, will you?"

The manager undertook to do so, and Tubby Muffin rang off.

About an hour later several juniors on the Classical Side at Rookwood received a joyful surprise.

An enormous tuck-hamper arrived, addressed to Jimmy Silver & Co.

At the same time, a pair of roller-skates arrived for Mornington.

Kit Erroll was delighted to receive a really handsome penknife, and Cyril Peele feverishly untied a small parcel, to find a mouth-organ within.

"Where the merry dickens have these things come from, begad?" exclaimed Mornington.

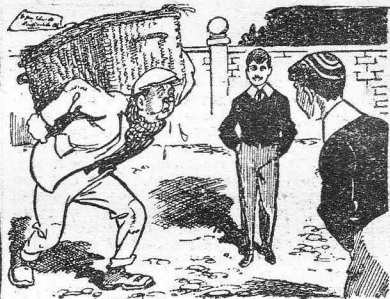
"Give it up," said Jimmy Silver, stroking his chin in wonderment.

"I say, you fellows," chimed in Tubby Muffin, "they're Christmas presents from me, you know! I want you to accept them, with my best wishes for a merry Christmas and a jolly New Year!"

Jimmy Silver and the others nearly fell down.

Such generosity on the part of Tubby Muffin was truly amazing.

Tubby was usually so eaten up with his



A man came staggering into the Close with an enormous tuck-hamper. It was addressed to Jimmy Silver & Co.

own desires that he had no thought for others. And now, behold, he was distributing handsome Christmas presents amongst his schoolfellows!

"Tubby," said Jimmy Silver, slapping the fat junior on the back, "we're downright grateful! We didn't expect this of you, and it's all the more welcome because of it being unexpected."

"That's all right!" said Tubby, with a smirk. "I'm an awfully generous sort of chap, you know! I never neglect my pals when Christmas looms on the horizon!"

"Well, this is a surprise-packet, and no mistake!" said Kit Erroll. "You've gone up with a bound in our estimation, Tubby!"

But within forty-eight hours Tubby had gone down again with a nasty bump.

The manager of the Latcham Store demanded payment for goods supplied, and payment was not forthcoming.

Tubby Muffin said he would settle up next term, but that proposition didn't seem to appeal to the stores manager.

In the end, Jimmy Silver & Co. had to pay for their own Christmas presents!

They did so in order to save Tubby Muffin from getting into a row with the authorities, for the Head would hardly have approved of Tubby's quaint method of displaying his generosity.

Of course, Tubby Muffin did not escape scot-free. He was soundly bumped for his "colossal cheek," as Jimmy Silver called it. And since then he has been careful to order no more Christmas gifts by telephone:

## MY CHRISTMAS PRESENTS!

By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

I mean to be really generous this Christmaside.

I always am generous, of course. The Trimbles have always been renowned for their lavishness.

It was Sir Guy Fitzbooters Trimble, O.B.E., who, at the Battle of Hastings, when he lay mortally wounded, gave his last bottle of ginger-pop to a wounded Norman, with the remark, "Thy need is greater than mine." Some historians give the credit for this heroic deed to Sir Philip Sidney; but they are all wrong, as historians usually are.

Strictly speaking, none of the fellows at St. Jim's have the right to expect Christmas presents from me. They have been perfectly beastly to me—the majority of them. They have called me a greedy glutton and a prize porpoise, and they have bumped me times out of number.

But I always return good for evil. That's a way I have with me. It is one of the most charming features of a charming personality.

The fellows who have wronged me most will get better Christmas presents than those who have wronged me least.

I think Lowther is the chief offender. Very well, then. I shall present Lowther with goods to the value of two guineas from the Wayland Stores.

Blake and Herries and Digby have been perfect beasts to me. I shall reward them with goods to the value of one guinea from the same stores.

Tom Merry has refused to give me a place in the School House footer team. To show that I bear him no malice, I shall present him with a perfectly price-less football.

Cardew is always cracking silly jokes at my expense. I'll buy him a bound volume of the "Boys' Friend."

Racke has been rude to me on numerous occasions. I shall therefore present him with a box of cigars, or anything else that he may fancy.

Taggles, the porter, has often reported me for being late for locking-up. I shall buy Taggles a churchwarden pipe, just to show that there's no ill feeling.

Mrs. Taggles, the tuckshop dame, has often refused to serve me. I'll buy her a beautiful basket of snowdrops, to stick in her shop. Snowdrops aren't quite so nice as pear-drops or acid-drops, but I think the good dame will appreciate them.

I sha'n't forget the New House fellows.

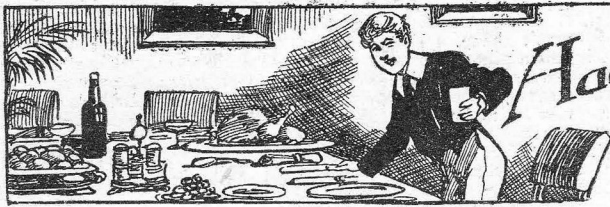
Fatty Wynn, my rival sub-editor, hates me like poison. I will repay his hate with charity. I'll get him a tip-top tuck-hamper. And Figgins and Kerr shall also have one between them.

I think I had better make out a list of all the things I am going to get. It will be a jolly lengthy list. It will take up about a ream of impot paper.

But stay! I have just made a horrible discovery. It knocks my Christmas shopping stunt completely on the head.

I am stony broke!

I can only hope that the fellows whose names I have mentioned in this article will take the will for the deed, and imagine that I've presented them with all the nice things referred to.



# Hacker's Christmas Crackers!

By Dick Russell.

**D**ICK PENFOLD, the poet-laureate of the Greyfriars Remove, was strolling in the Close, seeking inspiration for his next poem, when a rasping voice hailed him.

"Penfold! Come up to my study a moment, will you? I wish to speak to you."

Dick looked up. He saw a face at the window of Mr. Hacker's study. And it was the face of Mr. Hacker himself.

Although the master of the Shell spoke in a rasping voice, it was a little less rasping than usual. And the glance he bestowed upon Dick Penfold was almost genial.

"Confound the old buffer!" muttered Dick. "No sooner have I got the first verse of my poem mapped out in my mind, than old Hacker interrupts me! What's he want, I wonder?"

Penfold soon discovered what was wanted. And the discovery did not please him.

"Come in, my boy!" said Mr. Hacker. "I summoned you because I want you to do something for me."

Penfold looked up questionably.

"I am giving a dinner-party this evening in this study," said Mr. Hacker. "As you know, it is usual for masters to give such parties at the end of term. Mr. Quelch is coming, and Mr. Prout—in fact, everybody."

"Dick Penfold stared. He wondered what Mr. Hacker's dinner-party had to do with him. Surely the master of the Shell wasn't thinking of inviting a junior to the feast?"

"I shall need some provisions," said Mr. Hacker—and then light dawned upon Dick Penfold. "I have made out a list of what I require, and I will trouble you to take it over to Chunkley's Stores, in Courtfield. Don't be long. I— Bless my soul! Why are you scowling in that manner, boy?"

"You seem to have forgotten something, sir."

"Forgotten something! What do you mean?"

"I'm in the Remove, sir."

"Well?"

"And the Remove are exempt from fagging."

A gleam came into Mr. Hacker's eyes.

"When I ask a boy to do me a service, Penfold," he said, "I do not expect him to refuse."

"There are heaps of fags about, sir—"

"But I prefer a boy whom I can trust—a boy who can be relied upon to convey the parcel of provisions to Greyfriars without loitering to eat them on the way."

"This subtle compliment was not wasted on Dick Penfold."

"Very well, sir," he said. "I'll go."

And he took the shopping list which Mr. Hacker handed him, and left the study.

On the way to Courtfield, however, all his animosity to Mr. Hacker returned.

Why should the master of the Shell treat him like a common or garden fag? Why should he convert himself into an errand-boy for the convenience of a man like Hacker?

Great poets of the past didn't run errands. He couldn't remember having read of Shakespeare being sent to the butcher's in Stratford-on-Avon for a pound of sausages. Nor had he heard of Wordsworth being despatched to the chemist's for some soothing-syrup.

Why should he—Dick Penfold—be at the beck and call of a Form-master who had no jurisdiction over him? The thought rankled.

"Blow Hacker and all his works!" growled Dick Penfold, as he tramped along.

And then he smiled. A bright idea had occurred to him—quite the best inspiration he had had for a long time.

He handed in the list at Chunkley's, and the provisions were packed into a good-sized parcel.

"Will there be anything more, sir?" asked the assistant.

"Yes. I'll take that box of crackers," said Penfold, pointing to a small box on one of the shelves.

"Might as well contribute a little amusement to Hacker's dinner-party," he muttered under his breath.

He hurried back to Greyfriars with the provisions, and found Mr. Hacker awaiting him.

"You are back already?" said the master of the Shell. "Excellent! Now, I am just going to have a round of golf with Mr. Prout. Whilst I am absent perhaps you would be good enough to prepare the dinner?"

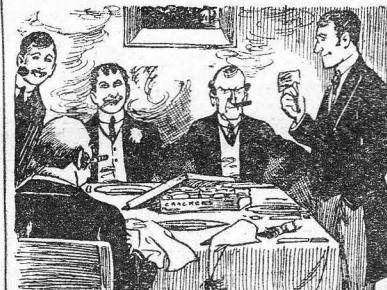
"I can't cook, sir," said Penfold.

"There is no cooking to be done. Everything will be eaten cold. I merely want you to unpack the provisions, lay the table, and so forth. You will see to everything for me, Penfold? Thank you!"

And Mr. Hacker bustled away, without waiting for Dick Penfold's reply.

With a grim face, the junior proceeded to do Mr. Hacker's bidding.

When he had laid the table and set out the food, he picked up the box of crackers, and conveyed them to his own study. Then he cut a sheet of paper into strips, and on each strip he wrote a verse of poetry.



"What is written on the slip?" inquired Mr. Lascelles. "A love sonnet, I suppose. Read it out to us!"

The little slips of paper were then deftly inserted into the crackers.

Chuckling softly to himself, Dick Penfold returned to Mr. Hacker's study, and placed the box of crackers in a conspicuous position on the mantelpiece. Then he withdrew.

Meanwhile, Mr. Hacker went merrily ahead with his game of golf.

The game was brought to an end by the arrival of dusk, and also by the fact that Mr. Prout had managed to lose every single golf-ball that they had started out with.

"We'll be getting in, Prout," said Mr. Hacker. "Dinner should be ready by now. I asked Penfold to prepare it."

"Splendid!" said Mr. Prout. "I feel quite famished after my exertions."

The two masters returned to the school.

On entering Mr. Hacker's study they found that the other guests had already arrived.

Mr. Quelch was there, and Mr. Capper and Mr. Twigg. Also Larry Lascelles, the popular mathematics master.

Dick Penfold had done his work thoroughly, and the food looked very appetising. The masters fell to with a will.

When the meal was over, Mr. Hacker handed round a box of cigars.

It was at this moment that Mr. Prout's eye fell upon the crackers which had been placed on the mantelpiece.

"Ha, ha!" said the master of the Fifth, with a genial smile. "Christmas crackers! How delightful!"

Mr. Hacker stared at the crackers in surprise.

"I did not order these!" he exclaimed. "How did they get there, I wonder?"

"Somebody appears to have made you a present, Hacker," said Mr. Quelch. "Allow me to pull one of the crackers with you."

Mr. Hacker took one from the box, and extended it to Mr. Quelch.

The two masters indulged in a sort of tug-of-war across the table.

There was a bang and a flash, and the bigger portion of the cracker came away in Mr. Quelch's hand.

Smiling, the master of the Remove produced a clown's hat and a slip of paper.

"What is written on the slip?" inquired Mr. Lascelles. "A love sonnet, I suppose. Read it to us, Mr. Quelch."

Mr. Quelch obliged. But it was not a love sonnet that he read. It was the following verse:

"Pray listen to these words of wit:  
The clown's hat in this cracker  
Would make a really perfect fit  
For that born idiot, Hacker!"

A ripple of merriment ran round the room. Mr. Hacker did not laugh. His frown was equivalent to that of Jove of old.

"Impertinence!" he hissed. "Gross impertinence! Who is responsible for this outrage, I wonder?"

Meanwhile, Mr. Twigg had pulled a cracker with Mr. Prout. The latter gentleman secured the centre part of the cracker, and he, too, found a slip within. He recited aloud the following verse:

"Mary had a little lamb,  
Its fleece was white as winter snow;  
But not so white at Hacker's face  
When he smokes a Flor de Cabbaggio!"

Now, it so happened that Mr. Hacker was in the act of smoking a particularly cheap and pungent cigar. The verse, therefore, was most appropriate, and the masters roared.

The remainder of the crackers were pulled, and each was found to contain a slip of paper, on which was inscribed a verse of poetry ridiculing Mr. Hacker.

"Stop! This is outrageous!" cried Mr. Hacker, beside himself with rage. "I must find out who is responsible for this!"

And without another word to his laughing colleagues, he rushed from the study in search of Penfold. The Remove poet was the only person, thought Hacker, who could have done it, for he had bought the dinner for Hacker, and laid the table. But the Shell master was destined to be disappointed.

He dashed into the Common-room, almost bowled over a group of chatting juniors, and collided with the long table. Fortunately, the table withstood this sudden attack. It was made of thick wood, and the master received more damage than he gave.

This did not make him any the less furious. In fact, it added considerably to his rage.

He glared round at the astonished Removites.

"Have you seen Penfold?" he shouted.

There was a chorus of "No, sir!" from the fellows, and with a grunt Mr. Hacker left the room. He returned to the study where he had left his guests.

"Perhaps it was not Penfold!" suggested Mr. Quelch, when the irate Form-master had confided his suspicions to the company.

"Someone else may have paid you a visit after Penfold had left your study, and planted those crackers on the mantelpiece!"

"Perhaps you are right!" agreed Mr. Hacker; and it was extremely fortunate for the poet-laureate of the Remove that he did agree, and did not pursue investigations on the subject after the party!

THE END.

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## Life's Little Worries!

By Fatty Wynn.

Man is born unto trouble.

I don't claim that as a strikingly original statement. At the same time, it is a fact.

Life is crammed with worry and trouble. And one of the worst worries is Christmas shopping.

Most of us leave our Christmas shopping till the last day of the term. Then we pop over to Wayland, only to see the ominous placard "SOLD OUT!" in all the shop-windows.

Christmas shopping, you see, really starts in June, or thereabouts. To secure a good Christmas bargain, you must line up in the midsummer queue. No use waiting till December. If you do, you'll go empty away.

But there is a big drawback to doing

one's Christmas shopping about six months in advance.

Perishable goods won't keep. For example, if I buy Figgins a plum-cake in June, it will be as hard as a bullet by Christmas; and even a savage blow from Taggles' chopper won't make the slightest impression upon it.

Then, again, if I buy Kerr a dozen new-laid eggs in the middle of the summer, they will no longer be new-laid when Christmas comes round. In fact, they resemble Macaulay's famous "Lays of Ancient Rome."

So that puts the kybosh on early Christmas shopping, so far as perishable goods are concerned.

By leaving your shopping till the last minute, you fare no better. Even supposing there is no "SOLD OUT!" notice in the shop-window, you can never get what you want.

Shopkeepers seem to have been planted on this planet for the sole purpose of annoying people.

You walk into a shop and ask for a pair of gloves.

"We haven't any gloves, sir," says the shopman, "but we've a good line in foot-warmers, and our snowshoes are the last word!"

You bounce off into another shop and ask for a necktie. In this case, you find there are heaps of neckties in stock, but never the one you want. For years,

perhaps, you have been looking for a necktie in the St. Jim's colours. You can go on looking. It's a hopeless quest. Eton, Harrow, Charterhouse, Wellington, Greyfriars, Rookwood—you will find the colours of all these famous schools. But St. Jim's—nothing doing!

You have promised to buy your Aunt Selina a canary. You go to the bird fanciers—I believe that's what they call 'em—and the man coolly informs you that he sold his last canary five minutes prior to your entry.

"We have some excellent specimens of chickens, ducks, drakes, dromedaries, and tame crocodiles," he will say, "but at the moment we are out of canaries."

And so the dismal game goes on.

Talk not to me of the joys of Christmas shopping! There aren't any.

The only bright thing about Christmas shopping is when it is done by other people. If they care to chase round and buy you presents, all well and good.

But if the boot happens to be on the other foot, and it's you who has to buy the presents, woe betide you!

I know of no game more wearisome and more tantalising than Christmas shopping. It's enough to crush the spirit of the strongest.

And now, you must excuse me, dear readers. I've got to go and do my Christmas shopping!

## Christmas Novelties!

The Latham General Stores will be pleased to supply young gentlemen from Rookwood with any of the following:

**MESSRS. WIZZ, BHANG, & CO.'S HIGH EXPLOSIVE CHRISTMAS CRACKERS!**

Every cracker guaranteed full of life and vim. No duds. The crackers contain a wide range of Christmas novelties, such as fools' caps, squeakers, whistles, rattles, tie-pins, etc., etc. Each cracker also contains a verse of exquisite poetry. Price: 3s. 6d. per box.

**MESSRS. MELLOW, DEE, & CO.'S MAGNIFICENT MUSICAL MOUTH-ORGANS!**

Although these popular musical instruments bear the stamp "Made in Germany," they were really manufactured in Whitechapel, so intending purchasers need have no qualms. No boy should be without one of these wonderful mouth-organs. Play one under your Form-master's window. He will love it!

Price: 1s. 6d. large size; 1s. small size.

**CHINESE LANTERNS!**

Made by Chin Wag & Co., of China. Buy a dozen to illuminate your midnight feasts! Choice variety of colours. Guaranteed not to set the Thames on fire—or, rather, the bedclothes.

Price: 6s. per dozen.

**WONDERFUL LUMINOUS MASKS, TO SCARE YOUR SCHOOLFELLOWS IN THE NIGHT!**

Hideous and grotesque faces, smeared with luminous paint. Guaranteed to

put the wind up the troops! Call at our stores and make a selection.

**TUCK HAMPERS!**

Crammed from top to bottom with pies, puddings, plums, pears, peaches, pomegranates, potted meat, pork sausages, and other choice fruits! No schoolboy can resist one of these wonderful hampers. The finest Christmas bargain ever offered!

Price: £1 each.

**VAST COLLECTION OF FOOTBALLS, DOMINOES, DRAUGHTS, TIN WHISTLES, AND OTHER CARD GAMES!**

Going at a great sacrifice. If you are a keen sportsman, you cannot fail to be impressed by this genuine, generous, never-to-be-repeated offer. Call and inspect our stocks at the first opportunity!

**THESE ARE ONLY A FEW OF THE COLOSSAL BARGAINS NOW BEING OFFERED BY THE LATHAM GENERAL STORES!**

## Some Shopping Suggestions!

By Monty Lowther.

When choosing Christmas presents always see that you select the right present for the right person, not the wrong present for the right person, or the right present for the wrong person, or the wrong present for the wrong person!

idiot presented Kildare of the Sixth with a complete set of coloured marbles. The donor of this present evidently overlooked the fact that Kildare was no longer a small fag in knickerbockers. Result—the captain of St. Jim's returned the present, together with an impot of a hundred lines!

An equally cheerful idiot sent a copy of "Bradshaw's Railway Guide" to a cousin who was bedridden and unable to travel. The result may be better imagined than described. One might just as well make a present of a bath-chair or a pair of crutches to an individual who was sound in wind and limb.

Aubrey Racke of the Shell received a football. Another glaring example of mistaken kindness! Racke, from what I know of him, would as soon work a treadmill as kick a football. He hates and loathes the game. Now, had anybody sent him a roulette-table, or a choice pack of playing-cards, it would be a different matter.

When doing your Christmas shopping, therefore, you must exercise "tact and judgment," as Gussy would say. You have a maiden aunt? Send her a dainty little tea-service. You have a sporting uncle? Send him a fishing-rod or a patent rat-catcher. Maybe you have a charming girl cousin? Send her a bottle of scent, or the material for knitting a jumper.

Manners could do with a camera. Tom Merry would like a pair of football boots. Your humble servant would find a pair of roller-skates to his liking. After these broad hints, there ought to be something doing!

Don't forget the words of Montague the Wise. When you do your Christmas shopping, take a list with you—drawn up in advance—of all the friends and relatives to whom you intend making presents. At the side of each name write the nature of the present. But for the love of Mike, don't make a hash of it!

Many homes have been broken up, and many lives ruined, through inability to observe this golden rule. Some cheerful

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**Rivals for the Captaincy!**

(Continued from page 8.)

representing the Lower School of Greyfriars, and we've come to ask you to put up for election."

And the deputation, with one voice, chimed in:

"Hear, hear!"

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**

**North Declines!**

**L**ODER'S brow darkened as he heard, and he made a step towards the junior deputation. But the Removites were not looking at Loder. Their eyes were fixed anxiously upon North. They waited for his answer.

"Of course, it's rotten old Wingate not being captain," Harry Wharton went on, as North did not speak. "But if we can't have him, we want the second best; and that's you, North!"

"Hear, hear!"

"The hear-hearfulness is terrific!"

"Thank you very much," said North, with a grin. "I am very much flattered by your good opinion."

"Not at all," said Wharton. "We want you to stand for skipper. You can depend on nearly every chap in the Lower School to vote for you. We don't want Loder."

"Never!" chorused the deputation.

"We want a decent chap," said Bob Cherry, apparently unconscious of the fact that Loder was near at hand, and could hear every word. "Loder won't fill the bill!"

"No! No!"

"Not Loder at any price!"

"We want you, North!"

"Sorry!" said North politely. "It's very flattering to be sought after like this, but I'm not to be had."

"Well, you see—"

"This isn't the time for false modesty, you know," urged Frank Nugent. "Greyfriars is going to the dogs. It'll be gone soon. Now's the time for a good man and true to come forward and prevent the captaincy from falling into the hands of a rank outsider!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Nugent!" roared Loder.

Frank Nugent looked round, and apparently saw the angry prefect for the first time.

"Hallo, Loder!" he said affably.

"Did you speak to me?"

"Yes, I did!" said Loder savagely.

"I'll break your cheeky neck—"

"Why, what have I done?" asked Frank innocently.

"You know what you called me, you impudent young sweep!"

"Oh, I didn't know you'd recognise the description so easily, you know," said Frank. "I didn't mention names."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Even the seniors grinned. Loder was red with anger. He clenched his fists as he came towards the deputation.

"Get out of here!" he said angrily.

"But we're talking to North—"

"Juniors are not admitted to the prefects' room. Get out!"

"Right-ho! But wait till we've finished—"

"Clear off, I tell you!"

"Let them alone for a minute," broke in Wingate. "They're not doing any harm. Now, you kids, get done, and buzz off."

Loder glared at the late captain of Greyfriars.

"You mind your own business, Win-

gate!" he snapped. "You're not a prefect. I am a prefect, and I'm giving orders here, not you!"

Wingate set his teeth.

"You've no right in this room yourself, for that matter," pursued Loder. "This is the prefects' room, and outsiders are not admitted as a rule!"

Wingate rose to his feet.

Loder gave a chuckle. He had never expected George Wingate to take it as quietly as that. North turned upon him with his eyes blazing.

"You cad!" he exclaimed. "You unspeakable cad!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" said Loder.

"If I'd been Wingate I'd have wiped up the floor with you!" shouted North. "Ordering Wingate out of the prefects' room—my hat!"

"Well, he's not a prefect," said Carne.

"You're as big a cad as Loder!"

Carne bit his lip.

"If you're looking for a journey out on your neck—" he began.

North pushed back his cuffs.

"I'm ready for it," he said.

But the bullies of the Sixth hung back. They did not want trouble with North, and the deputation of juniors had made a sudden movement, with the evident intention of joining in, if the popular prefect were attacked by unfair odds.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Carne, after a pause. "There's been enough rowing and ragging in the Sixth lately."

"There'll be some more if you chaps don't mind your P's and Q's," said North. "Blessed if I haven't more than half a mind to put up for captain after all, if only to keep you rotten outsiders in order!"

Loder knitted his brows. If North stood for the election, Loder knew that he would have a fight to win. North would be a dangerous opponent. The juniors would flock to vote for him, partly on his own merits, partly because he was a chum of old Wingate's, but chiefly for the purpose of keeping him—Loder—out of the captaincy. For all the Lower School knew that it would be a bad day for them when the worst bully of Greyfriars became captain of the school.

North saw the look upon Loder's face, and his lip curled.

"Blessed if I haven't a mind to do it!" he repeated.

And from a crowd of Removites came a chorus:

"Do!"

"Stick to it, North!" said Harry Wharton. "We want you. The whole giddy school wants you for skipper, if they can't have Wingate."

"Play up, North!"

"Stand for the skipper!"

"We'll elect you!"

"We'll vote for you to the last man!"

"Faith, and you'll simply romp home intoirely, North, old man!"

But North shook his head.

"No, kids," he said. "I can't do it. I've sworn a swear that I won't take old Wingate's place, and I'm sticking to that."

And Gerald Loder drew in a deep breath of relief.

"But you must!" said Bob Cherry. "You simply must, North. There's no other candidate to stand up against Loder."

"Can't be helped."

"The blessed coll will go to the dogs, begad, if Loder gets in!" said Lord Mauleverer, the dandy of the Remove. "It's up to you, North, my dear fellow."

And the deputation chimed in:

"It's up to you, North!"

North shook his head again.

"What I've said, I've said," he remarked.

"But what about the school?" urged Wharton.

"The school chose to turn Wingate out," said North steadily. "Yes, I know he resigned—but it was after a crowd of the fellows turned against him. And I'm not going to take his place!"

"But—but, I say, North—"

"North, old man—"

"Look here, North darling—"

"Begad, you know—"

"My worthy and esteemed and ludicrous North—"

"Play up, you know—"

"You've got your answer, you cheeky brats!" growled Loder. "Now clear out of the prefects' room! I'm fed up with you!"

"Well, I'm fed up with you, for that matter!" said Bob Cherry. "Fed up to the chin, Loder! But I'm standing you!"

Loder made a threatening gesture; and the juniors lined up round Bob Cherry. They looked dangerous; and Loder, prefect as he was, stood back. The deputation from the Remove were in a mood to wipe up the floor of the prefects' room with him, and he could see it. And any punishment inflicted afterwards upon the fags would undo any damage that he sustained.

North moved towards the door to follow Wingate. The Removites clustered round him in expostulation.

"North, old man, say yes!"

"We want you!"

"Play up for the school, you know!"

"It's settled!" said North shortly.

"Buzz off!"

And North strode away.

The Removites looked at one another in dismay.

"He means it!" said Bob Cheery, dismally. "He won't stand for skipper. It's rotten!"

"The rottenfulness is terrific!"

"Nothing but Loder!" growled Harry Wharton. "Not even a rival candidate! All we can do is to keep from voting, and let Loder get in. Oh, rats!"

"And many of 'em!" groaned Nugent. "Well, you're finished here," said Loder, with a sneer. "You can clear off!"

"Oh, go and chop chips!" said Russell.

"Give Loder a groan before we go!"

said Johnny Bull.

"Good egg!"

And the juniors gave a deep, deep groan. Then they walked away, leaving the prefect with his face dark with rage.

**THE FOURTH CHAPTER.**

**Coker's Latest!**

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Oh scat!" said Harry Wharton angrily.

The Famous Five had gathered in Study No. 1 in the Remove passage, to discuss the parlous state of affairs, and tea and toast at the same time.

It was agreed upon all hands that affairs at Greyfriars were in a serious condition.

If Gerald Loder, the cad of the Sixth, the worst bully at Greyfriars, and the leader of the fast set in the school, won the election as captain, the whole school would go to the giddy bow-wows, as Bob Cheery expressed it.

But Bunter did not "scat."

He rolled into the study, with all the importance of a bearer of great tidings.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Get out!" roared Bob Cherry.

"We're discussing the state of affairs,"

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and we don't want to be jawed at by a silly ass!"

"Yes, but I say——"  
"We don't want to cash a postal-order in advance, and we don't believe that you're going to receive one by the next post!" bawled Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull——"  
"We're not standing a feed; and if we were, we shouldn't want you to come to it!" said Harry Wharton.

"Oh, really, Wharton——"  
"Buzz off!"

"There's nothing to eat!" yelled Nugent. "Clear out! We're busy!"

"But I say, you fellows——"  
"But I've got——"

"Buzz!"  
"News——"

"Slide!"  
"I've heard it from a Fifth Form fellow——"

"Scoot!"  
"They say he's going to put up a notice——"

"Eh?"  
"A notice on the board in the Hall!"

"What?"  
"About it, and——"

"Who is?" demanded Wharton.  
"Coker, of course. And——"

"Blow Coker!"  
"Yes, but I tell you——"

Bob Cherry picked up a cricket-stump. Billy Bunter made a strategic movement round the table. His fat face was quite crimson with excitement, and the great desire to tell his startling news, whatever it was; but the chums of the Remove were not in a mood to listen to the "gas" of the Owl.

"It was a case, as it frequently was, of 'too much Bunter.'"

Dick Rake of the Remove dashed down the Remove passage, and dashed into the study with such suddenness that he rushed into Bunter without seeing him, and the fat junior went whirling.

Bump!  
"Ow!" roared Bunter.  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Rake staggered back, breathless.  
"Oh, you ass!"  
"Grooh!"

"What did you get in the way for, you fathead?"  
"Ow! I'm hurt!"

"I—I say, you chaps!" gasped Rake, turning to the chums of the Remove.  
"Have you heard?"

"We heard you biff Bunter over, if that's what you mean," said Harry Wharton.  
"I mean about Coker!"

"Coker! What has Coker been doing?"  
"It isn't what he's been doing, but what he's going to do!" chuckled Rake.

"Proving himself the champion ass of Greyfriars, as usual, of course!"  
"That's no news!"

"But—but it's jolly interesting, all the same. He——"  
"I say, you fellows, that was what I was going to tell you," said Billy Bunter, in an injured tone, as he struggled to his feet. "I say, Blake——"

"Shut up!" said Rake. "You're interrupting me!"  
"Oh, really——"

"North's refused to stand, even after the deputation from the Remove," went on Rake. "What was wanted was another candidate——"

Wharton shook his head.  
"None of the Sixth will stand," he said.

"Yes, but there's another candidate now!" yelled Rake excitedly.  
The Removites jumped.

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NEXT  
FRIDAY!

"THE TRAITOR GUEST!"

"Another candidate——"  
"Yes!"

"But—but the Sixth——"  
"He's not in the Sixth——"

"Not in the Sixth?" said Harry Wharton, in amazement.  
"Who's the other candidate—a Fifth-Form chap?"

"Yes, rather!" chuckled Rake.  
"Name!" chorused the juniors.

"Coker!"  
"There was a yell.  
"Coker!"

"Yes!" roared Rake. "Coker! Coker the Great! Horace the One and Only! The biggest ass at Greyfriars! The champion duffer of the Fifth! The worst footballer that ever was, and the rottenest cricketer that ever will be! Coker! Ha, ha, ha!"

"My hat!"  
"Great Scott!"

"Holy smoke!"  
"The holy smokefulness is terrific!"

"It—can't be true!" gasped Harry Wharton. "Why, the giddy bootboy would make a better captain than Coker! It can't be—it's imposs."

"It's true!"  
"Captain of Greyfriars—Coker! Captain of Colney Hatch!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Wharton looked round at his chums.

"I suppose it's agreed here that Coker is the biggest ass in Greyfriars?" he remarked.

"Yes, rather!"  
"And the howlingest duffer!"

"Hear, hear!"  
"And the outside limit in everything!"

"What-ho!"  
"But there's one thing to be said for him—he's not Loder!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"And if we've got the choice between a howling duffer and a rotten cad for captain of the school, I'll vote for the duffer!"

"Same here!"  
"Good!"

"The goodness is terrific!"  
"Then," said Harry Wharton, "if Coker's really got the astounding cheek to put up for captain, and a better man doesn't come forward, this Co. backs up Coker."

And the Co. replied with one voice:  
"We do—we do!"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.  
Rally!

QUITE a crowd had gathered round the notice-board in the Hall.

The news of "Coker's latest," as the fellows termed it, had spread like wildfire through Greyfriars.

The Sixth heard it with amazement and scorn.  
That a Fifth-Former should venture to put up for the captaincy when a Sixth-Former was ready to take on the job seemed to them to be altogether outside the fitness of things; and, indeed, something in the nature of the end of all things.

The Sixth declined to believe the rumour at first.  
The Fifth were staggered.

The Lower School chuckled.  
But when it was known that Horace Coker of the Fifth had put up a notice on the board in his own sprawling and almost illegible hand the whole school crowded to read it, and to find confirmation of the astounding rumour.

Round the notice-board the crowd was very thick as the Famous Five came down to join it, and to elbow their way towards the notice.

Temple of the Upper Fourth was read:  
A GRAND CHRISTMAS TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.  
By OWEN CONQUEST.

ing it out, with many chuckles, for the benefit of those who were not near enough to see.

There was a chorus of interruptions as he read.  
"Then it's true!"

"Coker—captain! Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Coker! Oh, my only sainted Sam!"

"Begad, it's the giddy limit, my dear fellows!"  
"Faith, and it takes the cake!"

"The cheek of it!"  
"The nerve!"

"Good old Coker—always playing the giddy goat!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. pushed their way towards the notice-board. There was a howl of expostulation from fellows they displaced.

"Here! Whom are you shoving?" demanded Hobson of the Shell warmly.

"You!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully, and there was a chuckle as Hobson disappeared among the forest of legs.

"Here's the giddy notice!" said Vernon-Smith of the Remove. "It's in Coker's fist and Coker's spelling."  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was the notice sure enough. There was no doubt about it. Coker's "fist" would have been known anywhere, and Coker's spelling would have been known anywhere else, as Bolsover major humorously remarked. The notice ran:

"NOTICE!  
"RALLY! RALLY! RALLY!"

"The undersigned Horace Coker has the honor of standing fourth as candidate for the Post of Captain of Greyfriars, in the place of the late lamented Wingate.

"There being only one other candidate, who is no good, the above-mentioned Horace Coker hopes that the electors of Greyfriars will rally round and return him with a bumping majority.

"Vote for Coker and Reform!"  
"Vote for Coker and Playing the Game!"

"Vote for Coker!"  
"(Signed) HORACE J. COKER."

"P.S.—Rally! Rally! Rally!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Cherry.

"It's quite right about the other candidates being no good. But Coker's understated the case. He should have mentioned that neither candidate is any good."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"The 'late lamented Wingate,' said Nugent, with a chuckle. "Poor old Wingate! I didn't know he had pegged out."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Well, it's up to us to rally!" grinned Ogilvy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"I'm jolly well not going to vote for Coker!" growled Vernon-Smith, the Bounder of Greyfriars. "We don't want a Fifth-Form fathead for our skipper!"

"Faith! And what's that?" exclaimed Fitzgerald of the Fifth wrathfully.  
"Ahem! I didn't see you there, Fitzgerald!"

"Sure I think you didn't," said Fitzgerald, grinning. "Kids, the best thing you can do is to rally round Coker. Of course, Coker's an ass——"

"Hear, hear!"  
"But an ass is better than a cad, any day."

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Who says Coker?" shouted Fitzgerald.

There was a roar from the juniors:

"Coker!"

Loder of the Sixth came striding down the passage. He had heard the news, too, and his face was dark and scowling. He drove his way through the crowd, heedless of the loud remonstrances of the juniors, and reached the board, and stared angrily at the notice in the original handwriting and orthography of Horace J. Coker.

"What's this silly rot?" he demanded.

"That isn't silly rot!" said Fitzgerald. "That's the notice of the second candidate."

Loder growled.

"Nobody outside the Sixth is allowed to stand for captain," he said.

"That's not the law!" roared a dozen junior voices. "Coker can stand if he likes, and we're going to support him!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Coker!"

It was marvellous to see how Horace Coker had leaped into popularity all of a sudden. As an alternative to the obnoxious Loder, he was precious in the eyes of the Lower School. His candidature was indeed "une chose pour rire," as Nugent remarked in his best Lower Fourth French; but if Coker got in Loder would have to stay out, and that was what the juniors wanted. If it was to be a choice of evils they chose the lesser evil, and the lesser evil undoubtedly was Horace J. Coker.

Loder put his hand up to the board and dragged at the notice to tear it down. There was a roar of protest.

"Let it alone!"

"Hands off!"

"Stop him!"

"Faith! And ye've no right to do that!" said Fitzgerald. "Hould on!"

"Let that paper alone!" shouted Potter and Greene of the Fifth together. Potter and Greene had laughed as much as anybody at first at the idea of Horace Coker becoming captain of Greyfriars. But they had laughed and come round, like the rest. It was flattering to them to have a fellow in their Form captain of Greyfriars, if it came to pass, and as Coker's special chums they would be irradiated by the reflection of his glory.

And they did not like Loder. If the long reign of the Sixth was over, the end of it would be welcome to most of the Fifth. After all, why shouldn't a Fifth-Former be captain of Greyfriars? Echo, as Potter said, answered why? Though, according to the ordinary laws of acoustics, it should have answered "Greyfriars."

And Potter and Greene, and several more Fifth-Formers, joined in the loud protest at Loder's high-handed proceeding. It looked as if there would be a rush as Loder tore the notice down.

Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, and Mr. Prout, of the Fifth Form, came along the passage together as the din was at its height.

"Goodness gracious!" exclaimed Mr. Quelch. "What is all this dreadful noise about? My boys, you must be quieter."

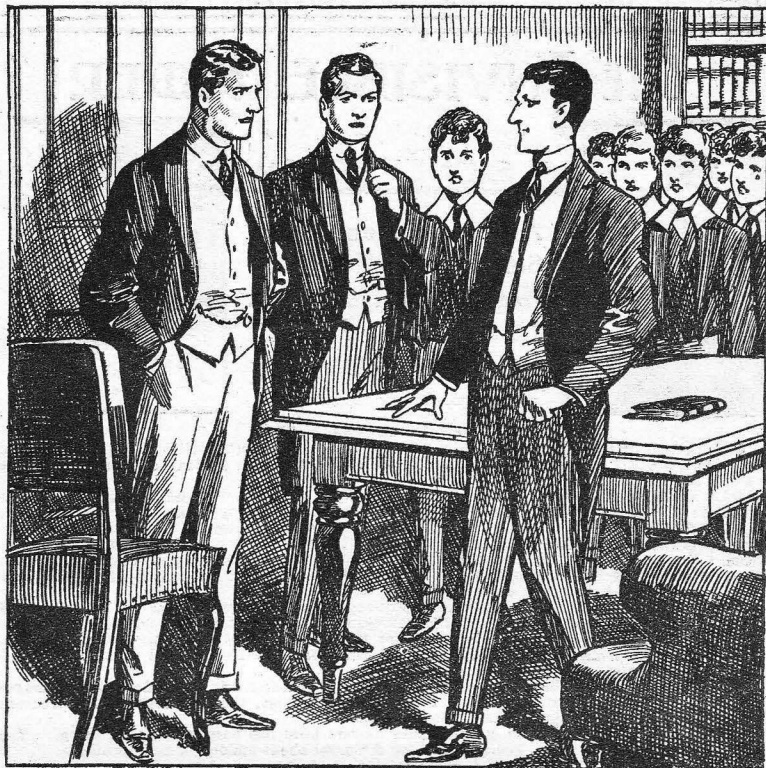
"He's tearing the notice down—Coker's notice!" shouted Potter.

"We appeal to you, sir," said Greene. "Ain't a Fifth-Former a right to shove a notice on the board if he wants to?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Prout.

"Most decidedly," said Mr. Quelch.

"Put it back, Loder!"



Loder glared at the late captain of Greyfriars. "You've no right in this room!" he said. "You're not a prefect, and this is the prefect's room. Outsiders are not wanted!" Wingate rose to his feet and faced the bully of the Sixth. (See Chapter 3.)

"Make him put it back!"

"Ahem! Do I understand, Loder, that you have removed a notice from the board, placed there by a member of my Form?" said Mr. Prout solemnly.

Loder was pale with rage.

"It's a rotten jape, sir," he said.

"Coker's pretending that he's going to stand for captain of Greyfriars at the election to-morrow."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Quelch.

"It's not a jape!" roared Fitzgerald.

"It's not a jape intirely! Coker's the rival candidate, sir, and he's going to give Loder the kybosh at the election!"

And the juniors roared:

"Good old Coker!"

"Of course, sir, a Fifth-Former is not allowed to stand," said Loder.

Mr. Prout coughed.

"Indeed, Loder, I do not know of any law of the school to that effect," he said drily. "I believe, on the other hand, that any senior boy is allowed to offer himself as a candidate."

"It always belongs to the Sixth, sir."

"That has certainly been the custom," said Mr. Prout. "But there is nothing in the laws of the school to prevent a Fifth-Former from offering himself for the suffrages of his schoolfellows. Coker is acting quite within his rights; and I must really request you, Loder, to replace his paper on the board. You have no right whatever to remove it."

"Put it back, Loder!"

"Yah!"

Loder, quite white with fury, pinned the paper on the board again, and strode away through the crowd, silent and furious.

"Thank you, sir," said Potter. "We knew we could depend on you to see fair play, sir."

"Certainly, Potter! I hope you will always be able to depend upon me for that," said Mr. Prout graciously.

And the two masters walked away. "It is a little—er—unusual, is it not?" murmured Mr. Quelch.

Mr. Prout nodded.

"Quite so, Mr. Quelch! But really, knowing the two boys as I do, I am inclined to think that Coker, although not the brightest boy at Greyfriars, would make a better captain for the school than Gerald Loder."

"And I am inclined to agree with you," said Mr. Quelch heartily.

And Loder, to his rage and dismay, found that that was the impression of most of the fellows—and the fellows had votes in the election! Loder, in his study, thought over the matter with grinding teeth. Wingate had lost the captaincy; North would not stand; but it was not to be a walk-over for the cad of the Sixth, after all. The unexpected had happened. There was another candidate, about the last fellow at Greyfriars whom anybody would have thought of as a candidate—a fellow whose candidature came near turning the whole election into a joke—but—unkindest cut of all—it looked as if he would get in; indeed, as if he would romp home with a bumping majority! And Loder, in a state of fury, prepared for the electioneering, the canvassing for votes, the persuading and bribing and cajoling, which until then he had considered would not be necessary.

THE END.

(There will be another long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co. and the chums of Greyfriars in next week's POPULAR.)

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A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"COKER'S SHORT REIGN!"

DON'T LET YOUR CHUMS MISS THIS WONDERFUL SERIAL!

# THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!

BY SIDNEY DREW

A Magnificent New  
Serial of Adventure,  
introducing FERRERS  
LORD and PRINCE  
CHING LUNG.



## CHARACTERS IN THE STORY.

**FERRERS LORD**, the famous millionaire adventurer, and owner of the Lord of the Deep.  
**PRINCE CHING LUNG**, a very old friend of Lord's, who has accompanied the millionaire on many adventures.

**GAN WAGA**, an Eskimo, who belongs to the crew of the yacht, and who is ever on the look-out to play japes on his shipmates. Greatly attached to Ching Lung.

**RUPERT THURSTON**, a young Englishman, and friend of Lord's.

**HAL HONOUR**, known as the man of silence, engineer of Ferrers Lord's wonderful submarine. Honour has invented a marvellous paint which causes things to become invisible when painted with it. He has also built a new kind of aeroplane which he calls a helicopter; and which is covered with this new paint, but which is destroyed by

**KARL VON KREIGLER**, a mysterious professor, who has great power in Germany, and who holds the secret of Germany's great treasure-chest. Ferrers Lord has ferreted out one or two of the professor's secrets, and Von Kreigler realises that Lord is a very dangerous man. After this attack, Ferrers Lord despatches Rupert Thurston, with Honour and Ching Lung, with a message to Kreigler.

They are detained, but escape, after many exciting adventures. In the underground passages of the Schloss Schwartzburg, where they have been imprisoned, they discover a great treasure which Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies.

Thurston & Co. return to the yacht, where Ferrers Lord has been waiting for them. The yacht returns to England again, and Ferrers Lord & Co. set about building a new aeroplane.

Von Kreigler held a council at the general's house, and arranges a ball to hide his movements. But Ferrers Lord discovers the plot, and pays the Supreme Council a surprise visit. Although the house is full of troops and guests, Ferrers Lord kidnaps both the professor and the general, and takes them on board the helicopter which is waiting outside the grounds. They get away unseen. Inside the aeroplane Goltzheimer says: "I wish I had killed those English pigs!"

(Now read on.)

VON KREIGLER blinked at him, and curled his lip with contempt. "I am glad, as any man would be glad, except a maniac!" he answered. "Had they been dead, do not deceive yourself, we should have gone to the gallows."

"How can that be?" growled Goltzheimer. "If they had not escaped, Ferrers Lord would not have known the secret."

The professor shook his head. To explain to the general was a task he did not feel inclined to undertake just then. He relapsed into moody silence. The faint humming sound continued, but there was scarcely any vibration.

"Ten thousand thunders!" said Goltzheimer at last. "Are they men, or are they ghosts to drop out of the clouds like this? How was it done?"

"Do not deceive yourself, general. Again and again I have told you that Ferrers Lord is no ordinary man. He is a master of invention, and he employs the best brains in the world. The idea came to him for a wonderful camouflage. His man Honour is also a master of inventions. He told his engineer what he wanted, and the thing was done. Silence and invisibility. Not exactly either of them, perhaps, but something like it."

"The swine-dogs!" snarled Goltzheimer. "If I had had this invention in the war, I'd have driven the English into the North Sea."

A man in uniform entered the cabin, and asked politely if their Excellencies wished for any refreshments.

"Beer," said the general. It was brought in a large silver tankard, and Goltzheimer dipped his red moustache into the froth and drank greedily till the tankard was empty.

"After all, what can these pig-hounds do to us?" he said, for the draught seemed to have cheered him. "Is this man a law unto himself, this Ferrers Lord?"

"I know well enough that he will do what he wishes to do, and ask advice or permission from no other living soul!" answered Von Kreigler. "Do not deceive yourself, if he

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has made up his mind, he will carry out his plans."

Goltzheimer rose, and pulled aside a silk curtain. There was glass behind it, but he could see nothing. All was intensely dark outside. The steward came back to remove the tankard, and they heard him lock the door behind him as he went out. Five minutes later he came again with a pair of leather slippers for the general. Goltzheimer's spurred jackboots had been left behind. He cursed in German, but he put on the slippers.

"Tell the pig to bring more beer, Excellency!" growled Goltzheimer, who had only a limited knowledge of the English tongue.

His wants were promptly supplied. This time a tall silver jug filled to the brim accompanied the tankard. There was an expression of contempt in the professor's pale eyes as he watched Goltzheimer fill the tankard, drain it to the very dregs, and again refill it.

"A beer-barrel!" he thought. "A human vat, a guzzler! And I have to deal with cattle like this. He will not care. An exile on a desert island for life will not alarm him if there is beer."

Goltzheimer lighted a cigar, smoked, and imbibed vast quantities of ale. He did not get drunk. His cheeks turned a little redder, but he was so seasoned that the liquor had practically no effect on him beyond that. The helicopter was travelling at headlong speed through the night just above the top of the clouds. Ching Lung stood behind Hal Honour. The engineer could not be called very good company, for he never spoke a word and scarcely stirred, except when his pipe needed replenishing. A hand fell on Ching Lung's shoulder, and turning, he saw Ferrers Lord.

"What do you think of our coup, Ching?" asked the millionaire.

"Quite dramatic," said the prince. "Rupert is thinking of making a film of it. He is wondering how to photograph an invisible helicopter." He laughed. "I think the coup was fine, but were our prisoners worth it? Goltzheimer, I believe, is again demanding more beer—this mighty Prussian hero!"

"Oh, Goltzheimer!" said the millionaire,

shrugging his shoulders. "Goltzheimer is of very little account. And yet the fellow had a certain amount of skill. He was not the least successful of the Hun generals. He had not strategy, but he did well in the fighting when they thought nothing of the butcher's bill. One thing he has, and that is brute courage. He may not have displayed much of it, but our raid was, to say the least, sensational."

"Yes, it knocked the wind out of the precious gang," said the prince, with a chuckle. "May I ask what you have decided to do with these gentlemen, Chief?"

"I was thinking of giving them a long holiday at Chevilla, where they will be kept out of mischief."

"What! Do you intend to maroon them on that old rock? No doubt they deserve it, but it's a tough sort of punishment."

Ching Lung had seen the lonely island in the far South, a place of booming seas and chilly wet mists. It was rarely visited, except by a few Japanese sealers, and they came very seldom now, for most of the seals had been destroyed.

"Perhaps if you have a private brewery there, Goltzheimer might be comforted," went on the prince. "But Chevilla is about the limit, Chief."

"It is not too bad for attempted murder," said Ferrers Lord. "Though they failed, they are both murderers at heart. They deserve Chevilla."

"I suppose they do, but I don't think I'd rub it in like that, Chief," said Ching Lung. "To put our gentle friend, the professor, alone with that hog for years would be awful. He'd jump into the sea. They didn't succeed, so what does it matter? We're all safe and sound, and you have won your game."

Ferrers Lord smiled as if something the prince had said gave him reason to be amused.

"I fancy the general would be equally bored," he said. "Von Kreigler is not young, and perhaps Chevilla would be too severe, for it has an abominable climate! Your ideas about forgiving and forgetting are highly commendable, no doubt. Why don't you suggest that I pension them both handsomely out of the treasures of Schloss Schwartzburg?"

"It would be a cheap way of getting rid of them, Chief. At any rate, it wouldn't cost you anything except the expense of digging."

"I would make the treasure-chests pay for that," said Ferrers Lord. "It is often very difficult to be just without being harsh. With these fellows any kind of harshness would not be too great, for they both deserve a rope. And yet the winner ought to be merciful."

He went to the wireless. The helicopter dropped through the thick clouds and raced ahead. At last a bright ray of light pierced the gloom of the night.

"All records beaten," said Hal Honour, speaking for the first time.

He peered through the glass screen, watching the vertical beam of light, and stopped the propellers. The helicopter seemed to balance herself on the bright silvery ray that thrust itself upwards from the heart of the cavern. She began to sink slowly, and came to rest with the arc-light flaming above her.

"Well flown and well steered, Hal!" cried Ching Lung. "How you got her in beats me. I was expecting a bump. You can be quite smart on some occasions."

A burst of cheering heralded the safe return of the helicopter to her cavern home. Goltzheimer again pulled the curtain aside, and put his flushed face close to the glass. He saw the submarine and the boat that was being pulled from her. Gan Waga was quicker than the boat. He swam with wonderful over-arm strokes, and was hauled up the ladder by Ching Lung.

"Ten million English swines! Where are we?" growled the general. "What underground pit is this? Ach, where have the swine-curs dragged us to now?"

"Do not deceive yourself, my friend, but to no pleasant place, I am sure!" said Von Kreigler. "I am not anticipating any pleasure from Ferrers Lord."

"Ach, you are deplorable!" said the general. "You talk nothing but misery. Is he a ghoul, then, or a torturer, this mad English millionaire?"

The door opened. Rupert Thurston bowed to the prisoners.

"Will you follow me, gentlemen?" he said. "A boat is waiting for you."

"And to take us where, Mr. Thurston?"

NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE TRAITOR GUEST!"

A GRAND CHRISTMAS TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.  
By OWEN CONQUEST.



"To your quarters for the night," answered Rupert Thurston. "I believe you are to spend the night on board the submarine. I fancy you will find our hospitality superior to the hospitality you gave us at Schloss Schwartzburg."

"And it is right to expect it, for, do not deceive yourself, to the Schloss you came uninvited, and with an impudent message," said the professor. "We are here by force. To me it seems a monstrous outrage. Whatever we did, Mr. Thurston, we had a great secret to hide. What is our position here? We are not prisoners of war, for our nations are not at war. What are we, then? Prisoners, true, but what description of prisoners?"

"I am sorry, but you must put such questions to Mr. Ferrers Lord," said Thurston. "I scarcely understand the position, and I have no authority to speak. I am confident of one thing, and that is you will run no risks from machine-guns, water, or fire. Come, please. Follow me, gentlemen!"

The prisoners were rowed to the submarine, and Rupert Thurston escorted them below. All the time the general was screwing his thick neck from side to side, and taking in all that was to be seen. He saw very little, for the arc-lights were extinguished one by one, leaving the cavern intensely dark.

"Better than the cells of Schloss Schwartzburg, I think," said Rupert, throwing open the door of the saloon. "Good-night, gentlemen!"

He bowed and went out. Goltzheimer glared at the closed door. Strange, gurgling sounds crept in. The submarine was submerging. There was a glazed window opposite. As the submarine reached the bottom a grotesque, helmeted figure loomed up outside the glass, and goggled eyes peered in at them.

"Ten thousand fends, they have put us at the bottom of the sea, and even there we are guarded!" roared Goltzheimer. "Look at the swine-cur out yonder!"

Another figure appeared. The figure came down headlong. Slowly it turned over and assumed an erect attitude. It was Gan Waga, who had come down to have a look at the prisoners. The Eskimo pressed his snub-nose against the glass, gave a long stare, and grinned widely. Then he shot upwards again and vanished.

"Ach, I do not understand!" said Von Kreigler. "I am an old man, not active, and a man of peace. These precautions I do not understand. What do they fear?"

Goltzheimer tried the door, but it was locked and bolted. Suddenly he found that the submarine was in motion. He could hear the throb of her engines.

"Thunder and lightning, we are putting out to sea!" he said. "What mischief is this? Who is this cursed Englander who owns armed submarines and flying craft as if he were a Royal monarch? Ten thousand imps! I must find out. Is there a bell there?"

He rang the bell furiously. Suddenly a mirror on the opposite wall slipped aside, and Ferrers Lord stepped into the saloon. He was in evening-dress.

"I am sorry," said the millionaire. "I did not know you were here. Mr. Thurston must have misunderstood me, for this is my private saloon. However, as you are here, you are quite welcome to remain. I see that you are at the bell, general. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Ach, yes; there is much you can do, Herr Englander!" said the general. "Perhaps you will tell us first where you are taking us?"

"Quite easily. I am taking you for a cruise in my yacht," said Ferrers Lord. "This is the easiest way to reach her, that is all!"

"And how long a cruise will it be, Excellency? We are in your hands," said Von Kreigler.

"Very much in my hands," said Ferrers Lord. "Schloss Schwartzburg is still rather too hot to excavate just yet."

And then you will glut yourself with stolen money?" snarled the general, tugging at his moustache.

"Ach, gently, gently!" pleaded Von Kreigler. "The general speaks without thinking, Excellency. He does not mean what he says."

"As my prisoner, General Goltzheimer is privileged to say many things that might cost him dearly if he were free," said the millionaire. "He is right when he calls the money stolen money. No, general, I shall not fill my pockets, but I shall make Germany pay her debts out of your robbers' cave if there is sufficient!"

"Robbery at the point of the sword!" said the Prussian general.

"I fancy some of your methods in Belgium were described in the same way," said Ferrers Lord. "We heard of looted mansions, and of valuable articles being sent to Germany by train-loads. Well, you were at war, and in times of strife such things will happen. Were you trying to save your country, it would be different; but I know only too well that the treasure of the Schloss were gathered for private greed. Not one farthing of it would have helped Germany. It was an amazing enterprise. You do well to say that Germany is beggared and bankrupt. So she is, but I happen, though I assure you I am not fond of Huns and Prussians, to stand back behind

the scenes as her unknown friend. I am merely robbing the robbers. With the enormous weight of debt taken from her, she may prosper again. There will be no militarism, gentlemen, no sword-rattling and mad dreams of Germany over all. Prussianism is dead. Your country will be at liberty to live at peace with her neighbours. She will no more plunge Europe into a sea of blood and disaster. The end of that has come."

Von Kreigler glanced uneasily at the general, and lifted a warning hand. The veins in Goltzheimer's forehead were beginning to swell. He was getting angry.

"Prussianism dead. Ach, you talk fool's nonsense!" he growled. "Germany will rise again. You brought the world against us to beat us. You had money, and it was the swarms of hired assassins bought with your money that destroyed us for the time. Where is your money now? It is England that is bankrupt!"

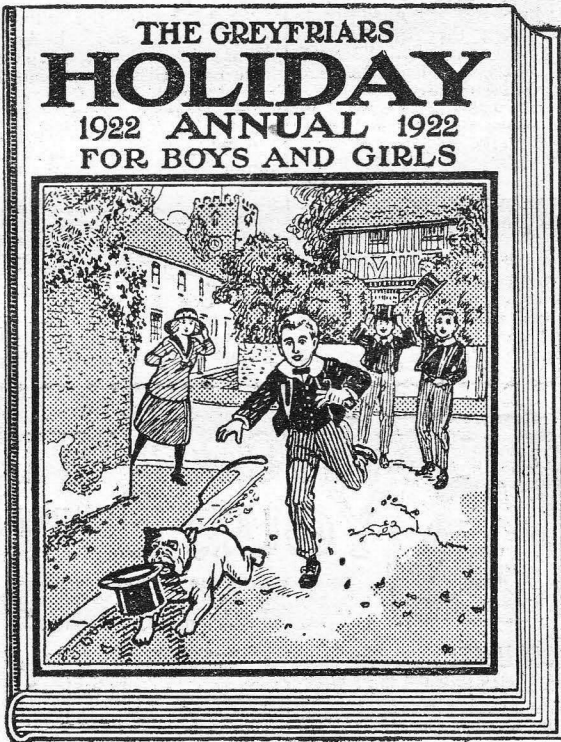
Ferrers Lord lighted a cigarette and smiled. "That is a point hardly worth arguing, general," he said, "but in any case there will be a little to come to us out of the treasure-cave of the Schloss."

"Swine-hound thief!" roared Goltzheimer. "You bully and pirate! I spit at you!"

The millionaire's grey eyes hardened, and Von Kreigler lifted both his podgy hands imploringly.

(There will be another long, thrilling instalment of our grand adventure serial next week.)

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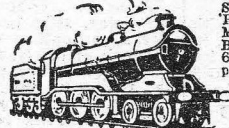
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**GOING FOR GUNTER!**

(Continued from page 6.)

"It's true!" faltered the lad in the trap. "I am Robert Gunter—I am the nephew of Dr. Chisholm. I'm going to Rookwood now to tell the truth!"

"And who are you, then?" shouted Lovell.

The pseudo Gunter grinned. "I guess I'm Sam Barker, and I was raised on Old Man Gunter's ranch," he said. "And I guess the game's up!"

**THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.  
The Truth at Last!**

**J**IMMY SILVER whistled. He had vaguely suspected something of the sort; but it was startling to have his suspicions confirmed in this way. He had been right; the rascal of Rookwood was not the Head's nephew at all, and he had only been playing a part at the old school. Now that the truth was known, a score of circumstances could be recalled which made the juniors wonder that the imposture had never been detected.

"I guess you can get on to Rookwood, Bob," said the outcast. "Give my love to uncle—ha, ha!—and say good-bye to him for me. Hyer, take the ribbons! My hat!" he added scornfully. "I guess you haven't the nerve to drive the hoss now. I calculate I'll drive you."

He jumped into the trap, gathered up the reins, and drove away. The Fistical Four looked at one another.

"Well, that chap takes the cake!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Come on; we're going to see the end of this!"

The Fistical Four hurried after the trap.

The real Gunter sat in it, silent and pale, while the false Gunter drove on with reckless speed, and dashed up to the school gates with a flourish. He did not stop there. Without a pause he turned the horse in at the gates, and

went careering up the drive to the School House. There was a yell from the fellows in the quadrangle as they recognised the driver of the trap.

"Gunter!"  
The junior from Texas cracked his whip and laughed, and drove recklessly on. The trap dashed up, and stopped outside the School House, the horse in a foam. A crowd gathered round at once, joined by Jimmy Silver & Co., breathless after their race.

"Where's the Head?" shouted Gunter. "Hallo, Bulkeley! How are you getting on? Hallo, Knowles! Still the same foxy-faced galoot—eh? Where's the Head? Tell him I've brought him his nephew!"

"What!" shouted Bulkeley. "Ha, ha! Bring the old boy out!" shouted Gunter.

Dr. Chisholm had already appeared on the steps of the School House. His severe old face was pale with anger.

"You have dared to return here!" he exclaimed.

The Texas junior nodded coolly. "I guess so. I've brought you your nephew—the genuine one this time."

"What!" ejaculated the Head. "I guess you'd never seen him alive but for me!" chuckled Gunter. "The horse bolted—Bob never did have any nerve—and I stopped him. Haven't I saved your life, Bob, you spoony skunk?"

"Yes," panted the unfortunate Bob. "It's true, sir!" broke in Jimmy Silver. "We saw it, sir. Gunter might have been killed—it was an awfully narrow shave—Barker, I mean—"

"In Heaven's name, what does all this mean?" exclaimed the Head blankly. "This galoot is your nephew!" said the junior from Texas, flicking his companion with the whip. The wretched Bob flinched, and Gunter chuckled again.

"Tell him you're his nephew, Bob. Blessed if he quite believes it now."

"I'm your nephew, sir, if you are Dr. Chisholm!" faltered Bob. "I'm your sister's son Robert, sir."

"Then—then this boy—"

"I guess it was my idea from start to finish," said the so-called Gunter disdain-

fully. "I don't mind telling the yarn. I was raised on old man Gunter's ranch, and I was Bob's best pal, wasn't I, Bob?"

"Yes!" faltered Bob. "And when old man Gunter decided to send the kid to England, Bob didn't want to come."

"I bullyragged you, didn't I? You never did have any nerve. And I took your place and your name, and took the steamer instead of you, and gave your father's letter to the captain, and came here, and left you in Galveston, where you could have had a topping time if you'd had the grit. But you had to weaken, you worm, and write to me that you were coming, and take the next steamer, hadn't you?"

"Bless my soul!" gasped the Head. "Boy—Robert—if you are my nephew, get down and come into the House. After this reprehensible trick, I shall certainly not allow you to stay at Rookwood, and you will be sent home immediately. Go in at once, sir!"

The Head's nephew disappeared into the House. Dr. Chisholm fixed a stern gaze upon the impostor who had so cunningly played his part.

"As for you, whoever you are—"

"Sam Barker, I guess!" chuckled the outcast. "And I reckon I'm going back to Texas. I'm fed up with this country."

"It is the best thing you can do," said the Head sternly. "But for the fact that you appear to have acted very courageously in rescuing my nephew from peril, I would place you in the hands of the police to suffer for your imposture. For that reason, and that reason alone, I will allow you to depart in peace. Go!"

"I guess I'm going. Good-bye, cocky!" The Head, purple with wrath, turned hastily into the House. Gunter—or Barker—swung round the trap, and drove down to the gates, amid a buzzing crowd of excited Rookwood fellows.

The trap dashed away. The juniors gazed after it till it vanished round the bend in the road.

THE END.

(Particulars of next week's story in the Editor's Chat below.)

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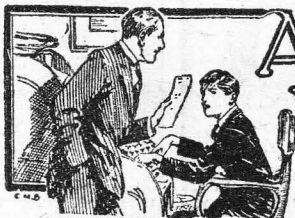
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**Your Editor.**

A GRAND CHRISTMAS TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.  
By OWEN CONQUEST.



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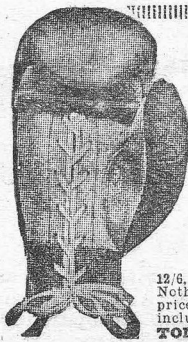
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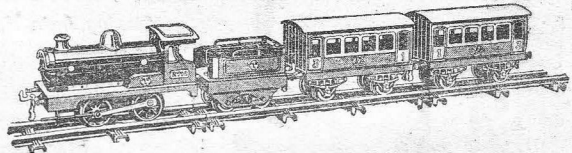
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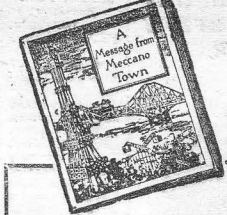
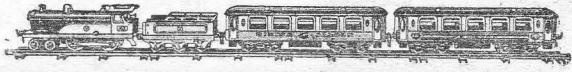
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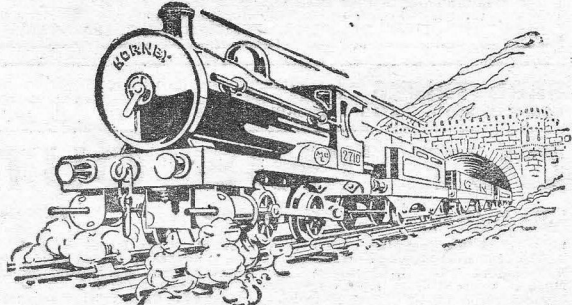
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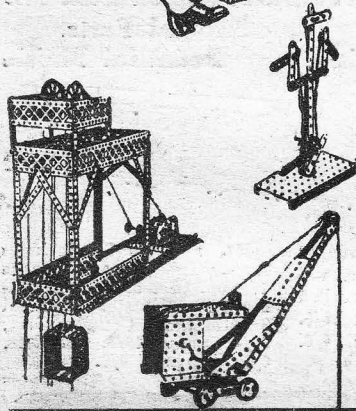
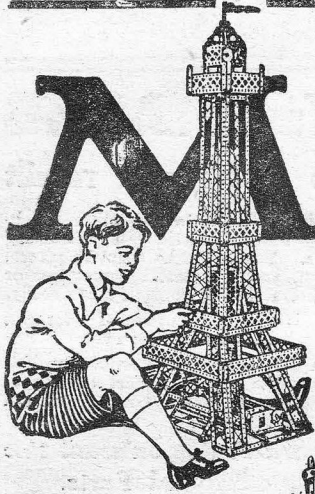
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