

ONE LONG LAUGH—THE ROOKWOOD STORY INSIDE!

# The POPULAR

EVERY TUESDAY.  
Week Ending  
May 1st,  
1926.  
New Series.  
No. 380.

2<sup>d</sup>

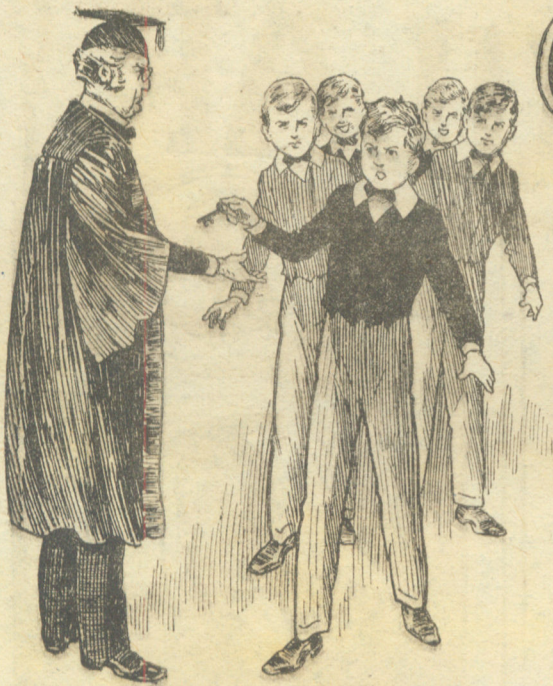


## GUNNER'S PRISONER!

"Ha, ha!" cried Gunner, turning the key in the box-room door. "Fairly caught, you silly ass! Now get out if you can!"  
(An amazing episode from the grand Rookwood story in this issue.)



**THE PLOT THAT WENT ASTRAY!** Gunner of the Fourth sets out to catch Jimmy Silver, but unfortunately for him his plan goes wrong—and then the fun begins!



# Gunner's Prisoner!

A Rollicking Long Complete Story of Jimmy Silver & Co., the Chums of Rookwood, featuring Peter Cuthbert Gunner, the amazing new boy of the Fourth.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Deep-laid Plot!

**OTHERWISE—**  
"But—"  
"Otherwise I shall kick you—"

"But—"  
"Hard!" said Gunner.  
Dickinson minor looked worried.

His study-mate, the new junior in the Classical Fourth at Rookwood, was quite a nice fellow in some ways. Being the heir of Gunner's World-Famous Hardware, Peter Cuthbert Gunner had plenty of cash, and he spent it right royally, which was an excellent thing for Dickinson minor, who found one of Gunner's ten-shilling notes much more useful at tea-time than one of his own three-penny pieces.

But there were drawbacks. Gunner expected to be monarch of all he surveyed in the study, and he expected Dickinson minor to be his humble and faithful subject. He was prepared to punch Dickinson's head if he rebelled; indeed, he had already punched it several times, and Gunner's punches were hefty ones.

As a rule, Dickinson minor gave Gunner his head, so to speak. But there were times when he "jibbed." It was one of those now.

"It's as easy," said Gunner, "as falling off a form. I know you're a silly owl, Dick—I've mentioned that lots of times. But this job is so easy that even you can do it."

"But—"  
"It isn't as if I were asking you to use your brains," said Gunner. "I wouldn't do that—I know you haven't any, old chap. It's lucky, when you come to think of it, that I've got brains enough for two. You've simply got to go to Jimmy Silver—"

"But—"  
THE POPULAR.—No. 380.

"And tell him that his new bat is in the top box-room. A fellow put it there for a lark."

"But—" objected Dickinson feebly.  
"I wouldn't ask you to tell a whopper," explained Gunner. "The bat's there. I've put it there. Just mention it to Silver, and, naturally, he'll go there for it. Must have missed it already, as it's close on time for the cricket match."

"But—" murmured Dickinson minor.

"The Classics are playing the Moderns this afternoon," said Gunner. "You know that! I've asked—or rather demanded—a place in the Classical team. Silver, taking a mean advantage of his position as junior captain, has refused it."

"But you can't play cricket, you know—"

"What?" roared Gunner.

Dickinson minor jumped.

"I—I mean, Jimmy thinks you can't!" he said hastily.

"That's a very different matter," said Gunner. "He thinks I can't because he doesn't know anything about the game. See?"

"I—I see!" gasped Dickinson minor.

"I'm left out," continued Gunner. "As a punishment, I'm going to see that Silver is left out, too. He goes to the top box-room for his new bat. I'm hidden in the cupboard on the landing.

As soon as he's in the box-room, I whip out, and lock the door on the outside. I've put the key outside all ready. No other way of getting out of the top box-room; and as soon as I've locked him in we get off in the car for the afternoon. I've ordered a car from Rookham for to-day, and it will be waiting for us at the gates now. I'm taking you for a motor run, old chap, and a spanking dinner at Rookham."

Dickinson's face brightened.

"That's good!" he said. "You're a good fellow, Gunner. But—"

"We clear off the minute Silver's locked in," resumed Gunner. "He can blow off steam in the box-room while the other fellows are playing cricket, and while we're having our run. We get back in time for call-over and let him out."

"But—but our side may be licked if Silver doesn't play—"

"Rot! One rotten player more or less can make no difference," said Gunner airily. "Silver's only a dud, and they can play another dud instead."

"But—"  
Gunner rose to his feet.

"That's settled," he said. "Now I'll get upstairs and get ready. Give me five minutes, and then tell Silver about his bat being in the top box-room. Then you cut out of gates at once and wait for me in the car. Tell the chauffeur I'll be along in a tick. See?"

"Yes. But—"

"Don't you understand?" snapped Gunner.

"Yes. But—"

"If you understand, go ahead. I'm off."

Peter Cuthbert Gunner left the study. Dickinson minor almost groaned. He felt that he had to do it. Gunner was not a bully—far from that. But he had a very dominating personality, and he was a very high-handed youth. Life in Study No. 7 would have been simply intolerable if Dickinson minor failed to keep on the right side of Gunner. Besides, a motor-run and a dinner at Rookham tempted Dickinson. And he simply hated the idea of the alternative kicking. He told himself that it was only a jape, after all, and he brightened up as he remembered what a silly idiot Gunner was, anyhow. It was as likely as not that he would fail to entrap the wary captain of the Fourth—much more likely that Jimmy Silver would spot



him in time and give him a hiding for his cheek. That happy thought quite bucked Dickinson minor, and he was cheerful as he walked along to the end study.

There was a sound of voices in the end study—one of them wrathful. That was Jimmy Silver's. Apparently the captain of the Fourth had missed his handsome new bat.

"Where's that thumping bat? What silly ass has been sticking my bat out of sight? Seen it, Lovell?"

"Not since dinner," answered Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Then where the thump—"

"You shouldn't lose your bat, old man!" said Newcome.

"I haven't lost it!" roared Jimmy Silver. "It was here—"

"It isn't here now," said Raby.

"I can see that, fathead!"

"Well, you'd better find it!" advised Lovell. "We don't want to be late on the ground. The Moderns will be ready now."

"Where the thump—"

Dickinson minor looked into the end study.

"Looking for your bat, Silver?" he asked.

"Yes. Seen anything of it?"

"Chap told me that somebody had put it up in the top box-room for a lark."

"My only hat!"

Dickinson minor walked away after giving that information. Jimmy Silver breathed wrath and destruction.

"I'll give him larks!" spluttered Jimmy. "That idiot Gunner, I suppose—just his style of a lark." And Jimmy Silver started for the staircase that led to the top box-room.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Mr. Greely Investigates!

"A VERY serious matter!" said Mr. Greely.

Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth Form at Rookwood, spoke in his usual ponderous way.

Mr. Greely was a ponderous gentleman. He was large, and he was heavy, and he had a deep and powerful voice; and he had a manner that indicated to the full the importance of his position at Rookwood. It may even have indicated a little more importance than actually existed.

"Very serious indeed!" added Mr. Greely.

Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth, nodded. He was busy that afternoon, and not overjoyed by the Fifth Form master's visit to his study. He had a number of papers to get through before he could get out on his bicycle.

"Quite so," he said. "But—"

"There is no doubt about the discovery," said Mr. Greely. "One of the maids found a packet of cigarettes in the top box-room—apparently concealed on a shelf. This points to secret smoking in the box-room on the part of some person or persons unknown."

"Apparently."

"Certainly," said Mr. Greely. "I hope—indeed, I trust—that no member of my Form is guilty of this surreptitious and unhealthy practice. More probably a junior, Mr. Dalton."

"Indeed!"

"Some members of your Form, in all probability. Do you not think so?"

"Really, sir, I see no reason whatever to suppose so!" said Mr. Dalton, rather tartly.

Mr. Greely waved a ponderous hand.

"I have stated my opinion of the probability," he said. "It seems to me a

matter to be investigated with sedulous care. As the cigarettes probably belonged to some boy in the Fourth Form—pray do not interrupt me, Mr. Dalton—I have dropped in to ask you whether you would care to join me in the investigation. No doubt further evidences of these surreptitious proceedings will be discovered on the spot. If you care to accompany me, Mr. Dalton, pray do so. Otherwise, I shall proceed to the box-room and investigate the matter individually."

"I am sure the matter will be safe in your hands, Mr. Greely."

"Very well, sir!" said Mr. Greely, with dignity. "You may leave the investigation entirely to me, sir! I assure you that nothing will escape my eye."

And Mr. Greely retired, much to the Fourth Form master's relief. Mr. Dalton finished his last paper and went out for his bicycle—quite content to leave the exploration of the top box-room in the capable and ponderous hands of Mr. Horace Greely.

A rather narrow stair led from the dormitory corridor to the top box-room. Mr. Greely had a considerable weight to carry, and he was a little breathless when he reached that stair. He went up rather slowly, and arrived at the little landing outside the box-room.

There was a window on one side of that landing, and a tall cupboard on the other. The door of the cupboard was closed, and naturally it did not occur to Mr. Greely for one moment that anybody was hidden in that cupboard.

But somebody was.

Ensclosed in that cupboard, Gunner of the Fourth was waiting to hear Jimmy Silver's footsteps pass into the box-room.

Gunner had not been waiting long when footsteps came along.

He chuckled silently as he heard them.

His victim, all unsuspecting, was going to his doom—that was how Gunner saw the situation. That anybody else was paying an unexpected visit to so unfrequented a spot on a half-holiday did not enter Gunner's mind at all. With the cupboard door shut to conceal him, he could see nothing; but he could hear!

And he listened gleefully to the footsteps that passed the cupboard and went on into the box-room.

Mr. Greely, as unsuspecting of Gunner as Gunner was of him, strode into the box-room to carry out his investigations. He left the door half open behind him.

Gunner, scarcely breathing, looked out of the landing cupboard.

The coast was clear.

On tip-toe, Gunner stole towards the box-room door, reached for the handle, and jerked it suddenly shut.

Click!

The key was already in the outside of the lock. Gunner had seen to that. To turn the key and jerk it out of the lock and drop it into his pocket occupied a second.

With a grinning face he bent to the keyhole and shouted:

"Ha, ha! Fairly caught, you silly ass! Now get out if you can!"

With that Parthian shot, Gunner turned away and raced down the stairs. His work was done—well done; indeed, better done than Gunner supposed. He had caught a much bigger fish than he had expected, if he had only known it.

Gunner was anxious not to meet any of Jimmy Silver's friends before he could get clear. With the box-room key in his pocket, he scudded down the

stairs and whipped out into the quadrangle. He scudded across the quad, and darted breathlessly out at the gates.

"Here you are!" sang out Dickinson minor from his seat in the car.

"Right ho!"

The chauffeur touched his cap, and Gunner clambered into the car.

"Off you go!" exclaimed Gunner. "Put it on, on the Rookham road."

"Yes, sir."

The car started.

Peter Cuthbert Gunner sank back in his seat, grinning serenely. Dickinson minor regarded him rather anxiously.

"All serene?" he asked.

"Of course!" said Gunner patronisingly. "When I figure it out to do a thing, I do it—don't I?"

"You—you've bagged Jimmy Silver?" gasped Dickinson.

Gunner chuckled.

"He walked right into the trap! I locked the door on him and cut." He tapped his pocket. "I've got the key here! Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, there'll be a row if Jimmy's kept out of the cricket."

"He'll be kept out right enough," said Gunner complacently. "No getting out of that room till the door's unlocked—and we sha'n't be back with the key till call-over. Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I say, Jimmy Silver will give you an awful licking!" murmured Dickinson minor.

"If Jimmy Silver can lick me, he's welcome to do it!" answered Gunner disdainfully.

Dickinson minor stared.

"But he's licked you once," he said.

"That was an accident."

"Oh!"

"Don't talk rot!" suggested Gunner. "I've told you very often, Dicky, that you talk rot, and you talk too much. Haven't I?"

And Dickinson minor said no more. But he congratulated himself that he would not be in Peter Cuthbert Gunner's shoes when that cheery youth returned to Rookwood at calling-over.

## THE THIRD CHAPTER.

### Gunner's Catch!

JIMMY SILVER came up the box-room stairs, two at a time, about five minutes after Gunner had departed.

The box-room door was shut, but the room was obviously tenanted. To Jimmy's surprise, there was a sound of a heavy fist banging on the inside of the door.

"Why—what—" ejaculated Jimmy. "Open this door, you young scoundrel!" came a deep, beefy, booming voice from the box-room.

Jimmy Silver gave a jump. He recognised the fruity tones of the Fifth Form master.

"Is—is—is that Mr. Greely?" he stammered.

"You know that it is I!" roared Mr. Greely. "How dare you lock me in this room!"

"Great pip!"

"Unlock the door at once!"

"Are—are—are you locked in, sir?" babbled Jimmy Silver.

"You locked me in, you young rascal!"

"I—I—I didn't, sir!" gasped Jimmy. "I've only just come up the stairs, sir. I never thought for a moment—"

"Then it was some other young rascal! Now I think of it, it was not



your voice. It was Gunner's voice. Is Gunner there?"

"No, sir."

"Well, unlock the door at once, Silver, and I will seek the young rascal myself."

"Certainly, sir."

Jimmy Silver approached the door, and made the interesting discovery that there was no key in the lock.

"The key isn't here, sir!" he called out.

"What! Has that young reprobate taken away the key, after locking me in and addressing disrespectful epithets to me through the keyhole?" spluttered the Fifth Form master.

"It's not here, sir," said Jimmy.

"Bless my soul! Find Gunner at once, Silver. Tell him that he shall be flogged, and bring the key back!"

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy.

The captain of the Fourth descended the stairs, grinning. What had possessed Gunner to play such a trick upon a Form master, Jimmy could not guess. It was likely to be a serious matter for the practical joker.

Form masters could not be trapped like rabbits with impunity. It was funny enough from the junior's point of view, but there was a serious side to the matter, too, for Jimmy's bat was in the box-room, and he wanted it for the cricket match now due.

It is sad to relate that Jimmy Silver thought more of his new bat than of the Fifth Form master's predicament. But he did.

"Got it?" called out Arthur Edward Lovell, as Jimmy Silver rejoined his chums in the lower passage.

"No."

"Wasn't it there?" asked Raby. "That cheeky young ass Dickinson pulling your leg?"

"I haven't looked yet," grinned Jimmy Silver. "Greely's in the box-room. Gunner's locked him in."

"What?" yelled the Co.

"Can't get in without the key. Got to find Gunner and rifle him," said the captain of the Fourth. "Lend a hand."

"Look here; there's no time now!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell. "The Moderns will be waiting for us."

"Greely will explode if he's not let out pretty quick," answered Jimmy.

"The Moderns can wait a few minutes. Let's find Gunner. The sooner Greely's let out the better it will be for that potty duffer. He must be off his chump to play a jape like that on a Form-master."

"What has he got up against Greely, anyhow?" asked Raby. "We never have anything to do with Greely."

"Blessed if I know. There never is any accounting for what Gunner does. Let's find him quick."

The Fistical Four started looking for Gunner, but that youth was not to be found quickly—or at all. By that time his car was a good three miles away from Rookwood School, and going strong.

Most of the Classical junior cricketers were already on Little Side, waiting for their skipper, Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Fourth, were waiting, too.

But there was no help for it. Apart from the question of the new bat, Mr. Greely had to be released if possible.

High and low the exasperated four hunted for Gunner. But Gunner seemed, as Arthur Edward Lovell expressed it, to have done a complete fade-through. He was not to be found within the walls of Rookwood.

"Gone out, perhaps?" suggested Newcome at last. "Let's ask Mack."

THE POPULAR.—No. 380.

Old Mack, the porter, was able to give information when questioned. He had seen the hired car from Rookham start, with Gunner and Dickinson minor in it.

The Fistical Four blinked at one another.

"Gone out for the afternoon—with the key—after locking a Form-master in a box-room!" said Lovell. "A doctor ought to see that chap."

Mornington came racing up from the direction of the cricket-ground.

"You fellows ever coming?" he demanded hotly. "Are we goin' to kick our heels waitin' for you till dark?"

"Can't be helped," said Jimmy Silver. "We've been looking for an escaped lunatic. Sha'n't be long now. I must tell Greely."

Jimmy Silver ran back to the School House, and ran up the stairs to the top box-room. Within that somewhat dusky and dusty apartment, he could hear the heavy strides of the Fifth Form master as he paced furiously to and fro.

Locked in as he was, Mr. Greely had ample time to carry out the investigations he had come to the box-room to make. But he was not thinking of the investigations now.

Cigarette-smoking was a serious matter, but not nearly so serious as locking a Form master in a box-room, especially when that Form master was Horace Greely. Mr. Greely could scarcely credit that such an act of unparalleled audacity had really taken place.

It was amazing, incredible, unheard of, and many more things like that. But there it was. He paced up and down the box-room, muttering ejaculations, fairly snorting in his wrath and indignation.

He swung impatiently to the door as he heard the sound of footsteps on the landing at last.

"Silver, is that you?"

"Yes, sir. I—"

"Why did you not return before?" exclaimed Mr. Greely. "Why have you kept me waiting so long here?"

"I—I was looking for Gunner, sir. I—"

"Pish! You should have found him sooner. However, now you have found him—"

"I—I haven't found him, sir."

"What?"

"He—he's gone out for the afternoon it seems, sir," faltered Jimmy Silver.

"What? What? And taken the key with him?" roared Mr. Greely.

"I—I suppose so, sir."

"Upon my word! Is it possible that that wretched boy, that—that young hooligan, has locked me in this—this dusty room and left me—" Mr. Greely choked. "Do you know of any other key that fits the lock, Silver?"

"No, sir. It's a rather old-fashioned key."

"I must be released!" thundered Mr. Greely. "I must be released immediately, without delay! Upon my word! The insolence—the unheard-of audacity! Silver, go and inform the Head at once of my—my predicament!"

"Very well, sir. But if you don't mind my asking—"

"What? What?"

"Can you see a cricket-bat in the room, sir?"

"A cricket-bat?" repeated Mr. Greely. "Yes, there is a cricket-bat standing in the corner. What does it matter?"

"It's my new bat, sir," said Jimmy. "I want it for the game this afternoon, sir. Would you mind tying a string to it—"

"What?"

"And letting it down from the window, sir?"

"Wh-a-t? Silver, if there were not a locked door between us, I would box your ears! How dare you talk to me about a cricket-bat at such a moment as this!" thundered Mr. Greely.

"Oh, sir, but I want—"

"Go to the Head at once, you incredibly stupid boy, and report to him what has happened! Go this instant!"

"Oh, very well, sir."

Jimmy Silver departed. He stopped on the way to pick up his old bat in the end study. Then he called into Dr. Chisholm's quarters to give the startling information that a Form master was locked in the top box-room; and then he hurried down to Little Side, and cheerfully dismissed the whole matter from his mind.

How Mr. Greely was going to escape from his amazing predicament was a deep question. But a more important question occupied Jimmy's mind—the question of beating the Moderns at cricket. It was only in intervals of the game that Jimmy Silver remembered Mr. Greely, and wondered cheerily how he was getting on.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

##### Mr. Greely's Happy Afternoon!

"B LESS my soul!" ejaculated Dr. Chisholm.

Bang!

Mr. Greely had found a use for Jimmy Silver's new bat. He was crashing it on the lock of the box-room door, in the hope of smashing it—the lock, not the bat. Unfortunately, it was the bat that he succeeded in smashing. What remained of the bat was still beating a terrific tattoo on the stout, unmovable lock, when Dr. Chisholm arrived on the landing—very much perturbed, and a little out of breath.

"Mr. Greely—"

The tattoo ceased.

"Is that you, sir?" In spite of his justifiable wrath and excitement, Mr. Greely contrived to subdue his voice to something like calmness in addressing the august Head of Rookwood.

"Yes, Mr. Greely. Silver reports to me—"

"I sent him to tell you, sir. I came up to this room, sir"—Mr. Greely's voice rose, in spite of himself—"to investigate—a packet of cigarettes having been found here by one of the maids. To my amazement, sir, the door was suddenly slammed and locked on the outside, and Gunner, sir—the new boy in the Fourth Form, sir—a boy whom I suspect, sir, of not being quite right in the head—this boy, sir—this—this wretch—this depraved young rascal, sir, shouted an opprobrious epithet through the keyhole, sir, and fled; leaving me, sir, locked in this room!"

"Is it possible," exclaimed the Head, "he dared to address you disrespectfully?"

"He did, sir. He applied an epithet to me through the keyhole, sir."

"What was the epithet, Mr. Greely?" exclaimed the Head, in great wrath.

Mr. Greely coughed. Even to the sympathetic headmaster he did not care to say that he had been called a silly ass by a junior schoolboy.

"He—he mentioned the name, sir, of a—a quadruped, qualifying it with a disrespectful adjective," stammered Mr. Greely.

"Upon my word! But is it really the case that you cannot get out of the room, Mr. Greely?"



"I have broken a bat belonging, I think, to Silver, in attempting to force the lock, sir. I am not a bird, to escape by the window."

"Quite so, quite so! But the boy, no doubt, has the key——"

"It appears that he has gone out for the afternoon, with the key in his pocket!" hooted Mr. Greely.

"I can scarcely believe it, Mr. Greely! Pray be patient, and I will give orders for Gunner to be found at once, and will also inquire of the house-dame whether there is another key to this lock. Pray be patient, Mr. Greely! Gunner, of course, will be flogged for this outrage." A snort was heard from the box-room, and the Head coughed. "Pray be patient, my dear Greely! As patient as—as possible!"

The Head rustled away down the stairs.

Perhaps Mr. Greely was as patient as possible, but perhaps it was not possible for the unfortunate gentleman to be very patient. It was undoubtedly a trying situation. Mr. Horace Greely did not look patient as he tramped up and down the box-room, breathing wrath and vengeance. He kicked several boxes out of the way—not that they were in his way, but he found solace in it. He resumed his attack on the lock with the remnant of Jimmy Silver's new bat; but the lock was a very old one, manufactured in the days when locks were locks, and it showed hardly a scratch when Mr. Greely was left with nothing but a cane handle in his hand. He hurled that remnant across the room with a crash, and resumed his pacing—or, rather, stamping. It was probably half an hour—though it seemed to Mr. Greely hours and hours—before he heard a footstep on the landing again.

"Are you there, sir?"

It was the voice of Hansom of the Fifth.

"I am here, Hansom! A ridiculous question to ask. Have you brought the key?" snorted Mr. Greely.

"No, sir. Dr. Chisholm says you kindly be as patient as possible, sir, with his sympathy, until Gunner returns. The Head thinks he may not be long, sir. And there's nothing to be done till he comes in, as the door's too thick to be broken in, sir."

Mr. Greely exploded.

"Fish! Tush! Nonsense!" he roared. "The door must be broken in! Am I to remain a prisoner till it suits the convenience of an insane Lower boy to release me?"

"Am I to tell the Head what you say, sir?" asked Hansom demurely.

"No!" roared Mr. Greely. "You are to take five hundred lines, Hansom!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Hansom of the Fifth fairly fled down the stairs. He was afraid that, if he remained another minute or two, Mr. Greely might make it a thousand. Mr. Greely hammered on the door.

"Hansom! Boy! Hansom! Answer me!"

But Hansom was gone.

Mr. Greely whirled about the box-room in his rage. He thumped the door, and he kicked the boxes. He made remarks—not in a subdued voice. But he checked his flow of eloquence as a giggling voice was heard on the landing without.

"He's going it, ain't he? Awfully waxy. What? He, he, he!" It was the fat voice of Tubby Muffin of the Fourth.

Chortles, not loud, but deep, followed. Mr. Greely realised that the news had spread, and that Lower School



**MR. GREELY TRIES FORCE!** The imprisoned master of the Fifth smashed Jimmy Silver's new bat against the lock of the box-room door, and the bat broke in two with the force of the blow. Dr. Chisholm arrived, a little breathless, on the landing outside. "Bless my soul!" he ejaculated. (See Chapter 4.)

boys were gathering on the landing and the stairs, to listen to him, and to enjoy the situation. Those thoughtless and misguided youths evidently thought there was something comic in his imprisonment in a dusty box-room, not realising at all what a matter of awful seriousness it really was.

"Fancy old Greely—boxed like a badger!" That was Jones minor's voice. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ramping about like a wild lion!" said Tubby Muffin.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I hear you, Muffin. I hear you, Jones!" roared Mr. Greely. "I shall report this insolence to your Form-master."

"Oh dear! I—I didn't say anything, sir!" exclaimed Tubby Muffin, in alarm. "I didn't utter a word, sir. I only said it was a shame to lock you up like a lion, sir——"

"Pah! Go away, at once!" roared Mr. Greely.

There was retreating footsteps. But at intervals, through the painful hours that followed, Mr. Greely detected a sound of whispering voices and subdued chuckles without. He suspected that there was a regular procession up and down the box-room stairs, to listen to him, and to stare at the door that held him a prisoner. With every minute that passed, Mr. Greely grew more and more volcanic, until really he seemed in danger of exploding like a bomb.

When Jimmy Silver & Co., cheery and ruddy from the cricket, came back to the School House in the golden sunset, they found a grinning crowd of juniors downstairs.

"Old Greely!" panted Tubby Muffin. "Did you know——"

"Isn't he out yet!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"He, he, he! No fear!"

"Great Scott!"

"Hasn't Gunner come in with the

key?" exclaimed Lovell. "Well, of all the potty jabberwocks——"

"I wouldn't care to be Gunner when Greely gets loose!" remarked Mornington, with a chuckle.

"He must be fairly off his rocker!" said Jimmy Silver aghast. "Can't imagine what he's done it for! I wish he'd come in, the awful ass!"

There was a shout from Muffin.

"Here he comes!"

And there was a rush to meet Gunner.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

### A Little Surprise for Gunner!

**P**ETER CUTHBERT GUNNER walked airily across the quad.

He wore a cheery and satisfied look. He had had quite a

pleasant afternoon out. So had Dickinson minor; but the latter was thinking of the trouble to come. Gunner did not seem to be bothering about trouble.

By some of his own wonderful mental processes he justified his conduct to himself; and the opinion of others did not matter—to Gunner. He was prepared now to release Jimmy Silver from the box-room, and face the music—if any.

"Here he comes!" shouted a dozen voices.

Gunner smiled. Evidently his exploit had attracted general notice—and Gunner did not object to the limelight. He swanked rather than walked in at the big doorway.

"Here I am!" he said cheerily. "I——" Why, what—how—which——

He fairly spluttered at the sight of Jimmy Silver in the crowd of juniors.

"You! How did you get out?"

Jimmy stared at him.

"What's that?" he asked.

(Continued on page 28.)



**"GUNNER'S PRISONER!"**

(Continued from page 5.)

"You've played in the match after all?" roared Gunner.

"Played in the match? Of course."  
"I thought I'd fixed you all right for the afternoon!" howled Gunner wrathfully. "How the thump you got out of the box-room beats me!"

Jimmy Silver jumped.  
"The box-room?" he repeated.  
"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

They all understood now. It was one of Gunner's many little mistakes—the latest and greatest.

"Oh dear!" moaned Arthur Edward Lovell, wiping his eyes. "That born idiot will be the death of me yet! You cross duffer, it wasn't Jimmy you locked in! Ha, ha, ha! You caught a whale instead of a sprat!"

"What! Who was it, then?" stammered Gunner.

There was no need for the juniors to answer. Across the hall came the stately figure of the Head, and the juniors fell back before him. Gunner blinked at the Head.

"So you have returned, Gunner!" said the Head, in an awful voice.

"Ye-es, sir!"  
"Have you the key of the box-room?"  
"Ye-es, sir—in my pocket, sir!"  
"Then hand it to me at once."  
Gunner handed over the key, still

blinking. Dr. Chisholm handed the key to Jimmy Silver.

"Silver, go up to the box-room at once and release Mr. Greely!"

"Yes, sir!"  
Gunner staggered.

"Mr. Greely!" he said faintly.  
"Request Mr. Greely, Silver, to come to my study as soon as possible, to witness the condign punishment of the boy who locked him in the box-room."

"Locked him in the box-room?" mumbled Gunner mechanically. "Oh crumbs!"

"You, Gunner, will follow me!" said the Head grimly.

"Oh dear! Yes, sir!"

Peter Cuthbert Gunner followed the Head, limping. At one fell swoop all the swank had departed out of Peter Cuthbert, and his knees fairly knocked together as he went.

Scores of eyes watched Mr. Greely as he descended the stairs and headed for Dr. Chisholm's study. Some of the juniors thought he looked like a wild Hun; some like a famished cannibal. At quite a distance from the Head's study sounds of deep and woeful anguish could be heard immediately afterwards. Later, deep groans were heard proceeding from Study No. 7 in the Fourth, while in every other study

there was laughter loud and long over Gunner's prisoner!

THE END.

(Next week's grand story of *Bookwood School* is entitled: "Gunner's Great Find!")

**PERMANENTLY ENLARGED!**

The new NELSON LEE is bigger and better than ever. You'll find an extra long, complete school story, "Sports Mad at St. Frank's," and a topping complete detective yarn called "The Clue of the Crimson Dust" inside this week's issue.



**NELSON LEE LIBRARY**

2d.  
On Sale Wednesday, April 28th.

**JOIN THE ROYAL NAVY AND SEE THE WORLD.**

Boys are wanted for the Seaman Class (from which selections are made for the Wireless Telegraphy and Signalling Branches). Age 15½ to 16½ years.

Men also are required for

- SEAMEN (Special Service) - - - Age 18 to 25
- STOKERS - - - - - Age 18 to 25
- ROYAL MARINE FORCES - - - Age 17 to 23

**GOOD PAY. - - - ALL FOUND. EXCELLENT CHANCES FOR PROMOTION.**

Apply by letter to the Recruiting Staff Officer, R.N. and R.M.:  
5, Suffolk Street, Birmingham; 121, Victoria Street, Bristol;  
50, Canine Place, Liverpool; 55, Whitehall, London, S.W.1;  
289, Deansgate, Manchester; 116, Rye Hill, Newcastle-on-Tyne; or  
6, Washington Terrace, Queen's Park, Southampton.



ONLY **1/-** NOW

**SPECIAL OFFER OF Masters' guaranteed Double Wear Famous "Rycrom" Boots (tan or black), extra thick soles, built for hard wear. "Rycrom" is waterproof and gives double wear, saves you half your boot money. Price 25/- Easy Terms—1/- now, 2/- in ten days, and 4/- monthly, and you have the boots to wear while paying your monthly instalments. Send 1/- now (P.O. or stamp) and say size & colour required. Satisfaction or deposit returned.**

**MASTERS**  
6, HOPE STORES, RYE.

Suits on easy terms from 65/- Patterns Free.  
Irish and Colonial Orders Cash Only.  
**MASTERS, Ltd., 6, Hope Stores, RYE**

**DEATH'S HEAD PACKET FREE!!**

Included in this month's FREE OFFER is the peculiar SERBIAN 1904 "DEATH'S MASK" STAMP which is famous throughout the philatelic world. The packet also contains a BEAUTIFUL MOZAMBIQUE CO. (obsolete), JAMAICA PICTORIAL (Troops Embarking), PRESIDENT HARDING MEMORIAL STAMP, a set of 3 HAYTI, and a host of other attractive varieties. Send postcard asking for approvals.  
**VICTOR BANCROFT, MATLOCK.**

**STOP STAMMERING!** Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—**FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.**

**'MONARCH' (Regd.) DE-LUXE LARGE CAMERAS**

Take Perfect LARGE PHOTOS size 3½ x 2½ in

Optically Ground Lens, Viewfinder, Complete Accessories, Best quality Plate, Developing and Printing OUTFIT. Send P.O. 2/-

Thousands of Testimonials.  
1926 Catalogue, 1,000 Big Bargains, Post Free! Post 3d.  
**THE LEEDS BARGAIN CO. (U.K.), 51, Kendal Lane, Leeds.**

SALE PRICE **1/9**

**MY GREAT OFFER**

I supply the finest Coventry built cycles ON 14 DAYS' APPROVAL, PACKED FREE AND CARRIAGE PAID, on receipt of a small deposit. Lowest cash prices, or easy payment terms. Write for Free Bargain Lists NOW.

**O'Brien** THE WORLD'S LARGEST CYCLE DEALER  
518 18 COVENTRY.

**COLLECTOR'S OUTFIT FREE!!**

A fine parcel, including Pocket Case, Watermark Finder, 62 Different Stamps (50 Unused), Stamp Guide, British Colonials, Stamp Mounts, etc. Postcard only, requesting Address.

**LISBURN & TOWNSEND, LONDON ROAD, LIVERPOOL.**

**HEIGHT INCREASED 5/-** Complete Course in ONE MONTH. Without appliances—drugs—or dieting.

**THE FAMOUS CLIVE SYSTEM NEVER FAILS.** Complete Course 5/- P.O. post free, or further parcels, stamp.

**P. A. CLIVE, Harrook House, The Close, COLWYN BAY.**

**MAGIC TRICKS,** etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's Instrument, Invisible. Imitate Birds. Price 6d. each, 4 for 1/-.—**T. W. Harrison, 239, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.**

**300 STAMPS FOR 6d.,** including Airpost, Triangular, Queensland, Rhodesia, etc.—**W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYE, Stourbridge.**

**BLUSHING SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS, SHYNESS, TIMIDITY,**

Simple 7-day Permanent Home Cure for either sex. No Auto suggestion, drill, etc. Write at once, mention "P.R.," and get full particulars quite FREE privately.  
**U.J.D., 12, All Saints Road, ST. ANNES-ON-SEA.**

**SECRET SERVICE pocket DISGUISE OUTFIT** NEVER SOLD BEFORE. 3/- each, post free.  
**Dept. XX, MILTON, 128, BEULAH HILL, LONDON, S.E.19.**

**£2,000 WORTH CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL.**—Samples catalogue free; 12 by 10 Enlargement, any photo, 8d.—**HACKETT'S WORKS, July Road, LIVERPOOL.**