

**FOOTER-COACH AND CRACKSMAN!** It is a terrible blow for Rookwood when their new footer-coach, whom they have come to like, is proved to be **WANTED BY THE POLICE!**

# Arrested At Rookwood!



A Dramatic, Long Complete Story of Jimmy Silver & Co., the Chums of Rookwood School.

BY  
**OWEN CONQUEST.**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER.

### The Man From Scotland Yard!

THERE was a tap at the door of the Fourth Form room at Rookwood, and the round, chubby face of Tupper the page looked in. Morning lessons were in progress in the Fourth, so the juniors were pleased to see Tupper. His advent in the Form-room gave them a rest, if only a brief one.

Mr. Dalton, the master of the Fourth, did not look pleased. He did not like interruptions of lessons, not being at all in agreement with his Form on that point.

"Well?"

Mr. Dalton rapped out that word interrogatively. Arthur Edward Lovell, who was in difficulties with his construe, stopped in great relief; and Jimmy Silver, who was next to him, was able to give him a whispered tip while Mr. Dalton's head was turned.

"If you please, sir, the 'Ead wishes to see Master Silver in his study, sir!" said Tupper.

"Immediately?" asked Mr. Dalton.

"Yes, sir; immeget!"

"Very good!"

Mr. Dalton turned to his class again. Jimmy Silver ceased whispering to Lovell just in time.

"Silver, Dr. Chisholm wishes to see you in his study. You may leave the class."

"Yes, sir!" said Jimmy.

The captain of the Fourth left, his place at once. He was wondering a good deal why the Head wanted him during classes—it was an extremely unusual summons. When the Head wanted to see a Fourth-Former—which was very seldom—he generally contrived to do so at a time when classes would not be interfered with.

Some envious glances followed Jimmy as he left the Form-room. He had not done his construe yet, and probably he would not have to do it now! Lovell resumed with "Jamque rubescat radis mare," and wished that he, instead

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of Jimmy, had been called to the Head.

Tupper was in the passage, and Jimmy tapped the youth in buttons on the shoulder.

"What's up, Tupper, old beanlet?" asked Jimmy. "Is the Head in a wax?"

Tupper grinned.

"I don't think it's a row, Master Silver. The 'Ead's got a visitor with 'im!"

"Oh! One of my merry relations called to see me?" asked Jimmy.

"Nunno! Gentleman name of Troope."

"Never heard the name," said Jimmy.

"I took in his card to the 'Ead," said Tupper. "There was some letters on the card—'C.I.D.' Dunno what it means? Looks a tough sort of gent, he does; got a jaw like a steel trap. Arter he'd been some time with the 'Ead the 'Ead rings and says I'm to fetch you from the Form-room, Master Silver."

Jimmy Silver started.

He knew the letters "C.I.D." stood for Criminal Investigation Department. It was a gentleman from Scotland Yard who had called upon the Head of Rookwood—taking him away from his duties in the Sixth Form room—and who wished to see Master Silver of the Fourth.

"Thanks, Tuppy, old man! It's not a licking, at any rate, then," said Jimmy, and he hurried away to Dr. Chisholm's study.

His heart was beating a little faster. The open doorway of the School House gave him a view of the sunny quadrangle; and in the quad he caught sight of Eric Wilmot, the new football coach of Rookwood School.

The young footballer was sauntering under the beeches, with his hands in his pockets, and a thoughtful expression on his handsome face.

Jimmy paused a moment to look at him.

The sun glimmered on his handsome face, showing up the regular features and well-marked brows and dark eyelashes. His likeness to the escaping

cracksmán Jimmy had seen at Deepden during the vacation was more striking than ever at that moment.

Was it on account of that Deepden affair that Mr. Troope of Scotland Yard wished to see Jimmy Silver? There could be no doubt about it. So far, Jimmy had said nothing of his suspicions regarding Eric Wilmot, save to his chums Lovell and Raby and Newcome. His suspicions were as strong as ever; yet somehow, in spite of them, he rather liked the young footballer. As he went on towards the Head's study, he was wondering whether he ought to keep his secret still a secret. He could only decide to be guided by circumstances.

He tapped at the Head's door, and entered.

Dr. Chisholm signed to him to approach. A rather burly man, with a hard, composed face, was seated in the Head's study, and he turned a pair of very keen and penetrating eyes upon the junior.

"You sent for me, sir?" said Jimmy.

"Yes, Silver. This gentleman is Inspector Troope, of Scotland Yard. He wishes to speak to you in reference to some episode which apparently occurred during the summer vacation."

"Yes, sir!"

"This is Silver, Mr. Troope."

Inspector Troope fixed his eyes on the Rookwood junior.

"I understand that you were on a walking tour during the school vacation with some friends, Master Silver," he said. "One night you camped in a wood at Deepden Manor, in Berkshire."

"That is so," said Jimmy.

"There was a burglary at the manor house, and the cracksmán, in escaping, passed close to your camp, and you seized upon him. He escaped, but you were able to give his description to the local police."

"Yes, sir."

"You appear to have acted very courageously and creditably, Silver!" said Dr. Chisholm graciously.

"Thank you, sir!"

"The matter remained in the hands of the Reading police," resumed Mr. Troope. "But your description of the man, Master Silver, which was very intelligently given, tallies with that of a well-known criminal for whom the London police have been looking for a

long time. The matter is, therefore, of more importance than an ordinary attempted burglary in a little country place. It has come into my hands."

Evidently Mr. Troope of Scotland Yard was an important person!

"Now, it seems that you noted the man's face very carefully, from the description you gave," said Mr. Troope. "Do you think you would know him if you saw him again?"

"Certainly!"

"Would you, do you think, recognise a photograph of him?"

"I am sure of it."

The inspector allowed a look of satisfaction to appear upon his stolid face.

"Very good!" he said. "I have here a photograph of James Stacey, one of the most dangerous criminals in the country. He is the man whom your description appears to fit. If it turns out to be the same man, this may help us in laying him by the heels!"

Inspector Troope took out a pocket-book, opened it, and extracted a photograph from it. He passed it to Jimmy Silver.

Jimmy's hands trembled as he held it.

The photograph was that of a handsome young man of about thirty, with regular features, straight nose, well-cut lips. It was a photograph which any Rookwood fellow would have said was that of Eric Wilmot, the Rookwood football coach.

Jimmy Silver breathed hard.

It was proof—proof positive—that his suspicion of Eric Wilmot was well founded. He had not been deceived by a chance resemblance; this was the face itself—the face of the crackman of Deepden, and the face of Eric Wilmot.

Jimmy felt almost giddy for a moment.

The inspector was watching him curiously. He certainly could not guess the junior's thoughts, but he could see the signs of some strange emotion in Jimmy's face, and he wondered.

"Well," he said, breaking the silence, "is that the face of the man you found escaping after the burglary at Deepden, Master Silver?"

"That is the face," said Jimmy.

"You are sure of it?"

"Quite sure."

Jimmy had to answer; the inspector had a right to ask. But he could have added more, and he did not. Why he did not add that the face was also that of Eric Wilmot, he hardly knew. Somehow, the more proofs piled up against the young man, Jimmy Silver felt, strangely enough, a doubt growing up in his own mind.

"Very good!" said the inspector, with satisfaction. "Thank you very much, Master Silver!"

"One moment!" said the Head.

There was a startled look on Dr. Chisholm's face. He had seen the photograph as the inspector passed it to Jimmy.

Whether Jimmy Silver would have spoken out or not he never knew. But he knew that it was unnecessary now.

Dr. Chisholm stretched out his hand for the photograph, and the inspector, in some slight surprise, passed it to him.

The Head made Jimmy Silver a sign to leave the study.

Jimmy went gladly enough. The man, if he was a crackman, ought to be denounced and arrested; there was no doubt about that. But Jimmy had a strange repugnance to taking part in the denunciation.

"Bless my soul!" said Dr. Chisholm, as the door closed on Jimmy Silver.

He adjusted his glasses and stared hard at the photograph.

"Is it possible that you know the face, sir?" asked the Scotland Yard man, in surprise.

"Certainly, I think I do. It can be, of course, only a resemblance," said the Head, "but the resemblance is amazing. I should certainly have said that this was a photograph of Mr. Wilmot, the professional footballer whom I have lately engaged as a coach for the boys here."

Inspector Troope's eyes glinted.

"Is it possible?" he ejaculated. "May I ask what you know personally of this Mr. Wilmot, who so strangely resembles a criminal long wanted by the police, Dr. Chisholm?"

"Little, but I received the best recommendations with him," said the Head. "He formerly played as a professional for a club called Loamshire United, and is a very agreeable young man of a steady character. He has been here a fortnight, and has given every satisfaction, and is well liked."

"The boy Silver undoubtedly noticed the resemblance," said the inspector dryly. "Such resemblances occur, but they are rare. I think it will be my duty to interview this Mr. Wilmot, sir."

"There is no objection to that, of course," said the Head. "Even if it is only barely possible that I may have been deceived in him, I should be glad to have the matter set at rest. Of course, you will understand that the less said upon such a subject the better. Perhaps you will stay to lunch with me, Inspector Troope, and this afternoon you will be able to see Mr. Wilmot on the football ground and satisfy yourself. If it is merely a chance resemblance, as I hope and believe, there need be no unpleasant talk; if otherwise, of course you will do your duty."

"A very excellent arrangement!" said Mr. Troope.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER.

### Jimmy Silver is Perplexed!

JIMMY SILVER returned to his place in the Fourth Form room. Some of the juniors glanced at him curiously and inquiringly, and his chums, at least, noted that Jimmy looked worried. Jimmy was, in point of fact, very much worried, and he gave very random attention to his lessons for the rest of the morning. For once Jimmy Silver's "construe" was on a par with Tubby Muffin's.

## Result of

### "GOOGLIES" COMPETITION No. 8.

THE FIRST PRIZE OF £2 2s. for the best "last line" sent in has been awarded to:

H. YOUNG, 16, Heathville Road, Crouch Hill, London, N. 19.

for the following:

"Mr. Jupp, of Northamptonshire fame,

Can play a remarkable game.

When the wicket is 'sticky,'

His bowling is tricky,

'With a "Crash on Delivery" aim.'

THE SIX PRIZES OF 10s. 6d. EACH have been awarded to the following:

E. Brain, 47, Dove Street, Kingsdown, Bristol.

J. Cairns, Tavistock, Baylands, Bangor

co. Down.

V. H. Jeffries, 100, Deburgh Road,

Wimbledon, S.W. 19.

H. R. Jennings, 24, Canonbury Road,

Ramsgate.

M. Manville, 8, Neil Street, Everton,

Liverpool.

S. R. Vaughan, Whitehall, Old Church Road,

Chingford.

He could not help it.

The thought of the young footballer was in his mind and of the grim-faced, square-jawed inspector from Scotland Yard. He knew what the Head's recognition of the photograph must lead to; indeed, he almost expected to hear some sound showing that an arrest was taking place within the precincts of Rookwood School itself. Somehow it troubled him to think of Eric Wilmot being marched away, like Eugene Aram, with gyves upon his wrists. Yet if he was guilty he deserved it, and more; and all the evidence was that he was a guilty man. Jimmy hardly knew how a doubt had crept into his mind.

After morning lessons Jimmy was pounced upon in the corridor by Lovell and Raby and Newcome. His chums wanted to know!

The captain of the Fourth did not answer them till they were out in the quadrangle, out of hearing of the other fellows. Then he explained what had taken place in the Head's study.

"That's a clincher!" observed Raby. "No need for you to speak out now, Jimmy."

"I'm glad of it," said Jimmy Silver.

"Looks as if you were right all along," said Newcome thoughtfully. "Blessed if I'd ever have thought so."

Lovell gave a grunt.

"It looks bad," he said. "But—Dash it all, I believe Wilmot is a decent man! He looks one. I shall be awfully sorry to find out that he's a rotter, anyhow."

"What do you think yourself, Jimmy?" asked Raby.

Jimmy Silver wrinkled his brows.

"I'm blessed if I know!" he said. "I hadn't a doubt on the subject at first, but now—"

"Now it's proved," said Raby.

"I know. But—"

Jimmy Silver did not finish. He shook his head, and was silent. Tubby Muffin rolled up to the Fistical Four in the quad, and the discussion ceased at once.

"Seen that chap?" asked Tubby.

"Eh—what chap?"

"Chap with a face like a rat-trap," said Reginald Muffin. "He's over yonder. I've asked Tupper, and he says the man is staying to lunch with the Head. Says he's a giddy inspector—heard the Head call him Inspector Troope. I say, I wonder what he's hanging about Rookwood for?"

The Fistical Four did not enlighten Tubby Muffin. They glanced at the burly Scotland Yard inspector, who was sauntering under the beeches.

"Wilmot knows him," said Tubby.

"How do you know that, fatty?" grunted Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Well, he was standing round when I was asking Tupper, and then the inspector Johnny came along," explained Muffin. "Wilmot just blinked at him, and then turned round and walked away as quick as anything. He knows him, and don't like him, you bet." And Tubby Muffin wagged his head sagely.

"I say—"

"Oh, buzz off!" said Arthur Edward Lovell gruffly.

And the Fistical Four walked away.

That Inspector Troope was "hanging on" at Rookwood the juniors soon had proof, for after dinner they sighted him strolling in the quadrangle again.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon. There was a senior football match due on Big Side, and Jimmy Silver & Co. intended to honour it with their presence. Lovell and Raby and Newcome went down to the football ground, and Jimmy Silver, who had lines to do for Monsieur

Monceau, proceeded to the end study to grind them out.

Jimmy had just finished his fiftieth line from the "Henriade" when there was a tap at the door of the end study.

"Come in, fathhead!" sang out Jimmy Silver.

The door opened, and it was Eric Wilmot who appeared in view. Jimmy Silver jumped up, colouring a little.

"Oh, I—I didn't know—" he stammered.

"Can I come in?" the young footballer asked quietly.

"Trot in, sir!"

Mr. Wilmot entered the study. There was unusual colour in his handsome face, and his manner was a little uncertain. Jimmy wondered whether this unexpected visit had any connection with Inspector Troop's presence at Rookwood.

"I—I wanted just a word with you, Master Silver," said Wilmot, his colour deepening.

"Anything you like, sir!" said Jimmy.

"Last Wednesday," said Eric Wilmot, speaking with an evident effort, "you—you happened to see me in the wood near Coombe, where I met a—a man. He threatened me, and I knocked him down."

"I remember, Mr. Wilmot."

"Probably you heard me speaking to him—"

"I couldn't help it, sir," said Jimmy. "I heard him threaten you, and I heard you address him by the name of Dandy Jim."

"I told you," resumed Wilmot, "that I had no right to ask you to keep the occurrence a secret, but that I should be obliged if you said nothing about it. May I—may I ask whether you have mentioned it?"

"Only to my friends, sir," said Jimmy—"Lovell and Raby and Newcome. Newcome was present, sir, and Lovell and Raby knew about the man, so—"

"Yes, yes; but to no one else?"

"No, sir; and my friends haven't spoken of it, either."

"Thank you very much, Silver!"

With that Eric Wilmot nodded to the junior and left the end study. Jimmy Silver looked after him curiously and compassionately. He knew that the Scotland Yard inspector's presence in the school had startled the young man, and evidently alarmed him. Evidently he had surmised that Jimmy had spoken of that strange affair in Coombe Wood, and that that had something to do with the inspector's visit to the school. Yet if he was a guilty man, and with the bloodhound of the law so close at hand, why did not the footballer make an attempt to escape from Rookwood while there was yet time?

It was a puzzle, and Jimmy Silver could only give it up. He finished his lines, and took them to Monsieur Monceau, and then made his way to Big Side to rejoin his chums, wondering what was to happen at the old school that afternoon. For that something was certain to happen, he had no doubt whatever.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER.

#### Wilmot is Wanted!

**G**EORGE BULKELEY of the Sixth Form were a worried look. Neville and Scott of the Sixth, who were in the captain's study, looked worried, too. An open telegram lay on the study table.

"It's rotten!" said Bulkeley. "I shall have to cut the match. In fact, I shall have to get a move on to catch my train."

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"And Greyfriars will be here in an hour!" said Neville dismally.

"The match is a goner!" said Scott.

Bulkeley wrinkled his brows, and glanced at the telegram again.

"My pater specially wants me this afternoon," he said. "He wouldn't wire if it wasn't important. I'm afraid there's no help for it, you fellows; I shall have to go. It's wretchedly unlucky that Knowles should be laid up now; he would have captained the team, of course."

"Not that we want to be captained by a Modern," said Neville.

"Well, Knowles is vice-captain, and would naturally take my place," said Bulkeley. "But he's in sanny with a cold, and so that's out of the question, Frampton and Catesby are both off colour, too; it really looks as if Wingate's team will walk all over us this time. I—I wonder—"

He paused.

"Well," said Neville, "no good wondering. It's all over bar shouting, anyhow."

"I was thinking of Wilmot," said Bulkeley.

"The giddy coach?"

Bulkeley nodded thoughtfully.

"It's a bit unusual, I know," he said. "But as the team will be in such jolly low water, why shouldn't Wilmot play for us? Wingate of Greyfriars is a real sportsman, and I'm sure he wouldn't raise any objection."

Neville and Scott brightened up.

"By gad! What a stunt!" exclaimed Neville. "Wilmot is a real good man, and if he would play—"

"He would play if we asked him," said Scott. "But, after all, I don't see why not. He was going to referee the match, but Mr. Bohun would do that willingly."

"I think I'll speak to him," said Bulkeley. "I know he would like to play in a match. We let Greyfriars play a master once, when they were short of a man—you remember they played their maths master, a hefty chap named Lascelles. One good turn deserves another. Wingate will not think of raising any objection, I'm sure. Anyhow, you fellows can put it to him when the Greyfriars crowd come along. I'll speak to Wilmot; it's the only chance to pull the fixture out of the fire."

"Good!" said the two Sixth-Formers together.

And Bulkeley left the study to look for Mr. Wilmot, the Rookwood football coach. Eric Wilmot was lodged in the School House, in a room which looked upon the old balcony on the south side of the building. Bulkeley caught sight of him on the balcony from the quad, and came towards the narrow stone steps that led up. Wilmot did not see him for the moment. He was leaning with folded arms on the iron rail of the balcony, his gaze on the distance, and an expression of deep thought upon his handsome face.

But he glanced round as Bulkeley came up the stone steps. He greeted the captain of Rookwood with a smile. The football coach pulled very well with Bulkeley, and, indeed, with nearly all Rookwood.

"You were going to referee for us this afternoon, Mr. Wilmot," began the Rookwood captain. "Will you play for us instead?"

"You want me to play?"

"I'm called away," explained Bulkeley. "One of our best men is laid up, and some others are off their form. If you'd play, it would give the team a leg-up, and very likely save the match. I only mean, of course, if you'd care to do it."

Eric Wilmot smiled.

"I'd be very glad," he said frankly. "In fact, there's nothing that I'd like better."

"Good!" said Bulkeley. "Then it's settled. I'm asking Neville of the Sixth to captain the team, but he'll give you any place that you choose to ask for, Mr. Wilmot."

"On the contrary, I shall leave it to Neville to place me," said Eric Wilmot. "Count on me, by all means."

"Many thanks."

And Bulkeley nodded to the young footballer, and left him, very much relieved in his mind.

Ten minutes later the captain of Rookwood was on his way to the railway-station, bag in hand, homeward bound. And when the Rookwood first eleven came down to Big Side, Eric Wilmot came with them, looking very handsome and fit in Rookwood colours.

"Hallo, there's Wilmot among the players!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell in surprise. "He's not in that rig to referee, I suppose?"

"Playing for Rookwood!" said Raby with a whistle.

"And that blessed steel-trap-faced bouncer hanging about all the time!" murmured Newcome.

The chums of the Fourth glanced round, half expecting to see Inspector Troop of Scotland Yard near at hand. But the detective was not at present to be seen.

"Here come Greyfriars!" shouted Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth.

"Keep back, you cheeky Moderns!" shouted Lovell, as there was a shoving in the junior crowd for good places.

"Close up, there!" howled Tommy Dodd.

"We're keeping room for Jimmy Silver."

"Blow Jimmy Silver!" retorted Tommy Dodd. "Only a dashed Classical, anyway."

"You cheeky Modern ass—"

"You silly Classical chump—"

"Now then, order there, you fags!" shouted Carthew of the Sixth, a linesman.

"Yah!"

"Order, you Modern cads!"

"Stop shoving!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell in great wrath. "Who's



that shoving me? I'll—I'll— Oh, is that you, Jimmy?"

Arthur Edward turned his wrathful face, to see Jimmy Silver at his elbow.

"Little me," agreed Jimmy Silver. "I've had to shove to get here. Now then, leave off pushing, you fellows!"

"Well, I like that!" howled Putty of the Fourth indignantly.

"Well, if you like it, what are you grousing at?" asked Jimmy Silver amicably. "Hallo, what is Wilmot doing among the players in that rig?"

"Looks as if he's playing for Rookwood."

"My hat!"

Neville of the Sixth was seen in talk with Wingate, the captain of the visiting team, and Wingate was seen to nod with a pleasant smile. When the toss was made for ends, and the two teams lined up, Eric Wilmot lined up with Rookwood as inside-right in Neville's team. And then Mr. Bohun blew the whistle, and the ball rolled.

"Good for Rookwood!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "We've got a good man in young Wilmot—what?"

"A jolly good footballer, anyhow," said Raby.

"A good man all round," said Lovell obstinately. "A thoroughly decent chap, I tell you, and I'd say the same to that chap with a face like a hatchet, if he asked me."

"Ahem!"

It was a cough at Lovell's elbow, and he looked round quickly. The burly gentleman from Scotland Yard was standing towering over the crowd of juniors, close at hand. Arthur Edward Lovell had the grace to blush.

Jimmy Silver glanced at Detective-Inspector Troope, and his face clouded a little.

It was not likely that the gentleman from Scotland Yard had stayed on at Rookwood that day simply to witness a football match. He had an object in being present. And Jimmy Silver did not need telling what that object was. Inspector Troope was there to observe Eric Wilmot—to observe him narrowly and closely—and to make up his mind whether the young man was what he pretended to be, or whether he was the cracksman James Stacey. And Jimmy Silver could only wonder how it would end.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

In the Name of the Law!

"P"LAY up, Rookwood!"

"On the ball!"

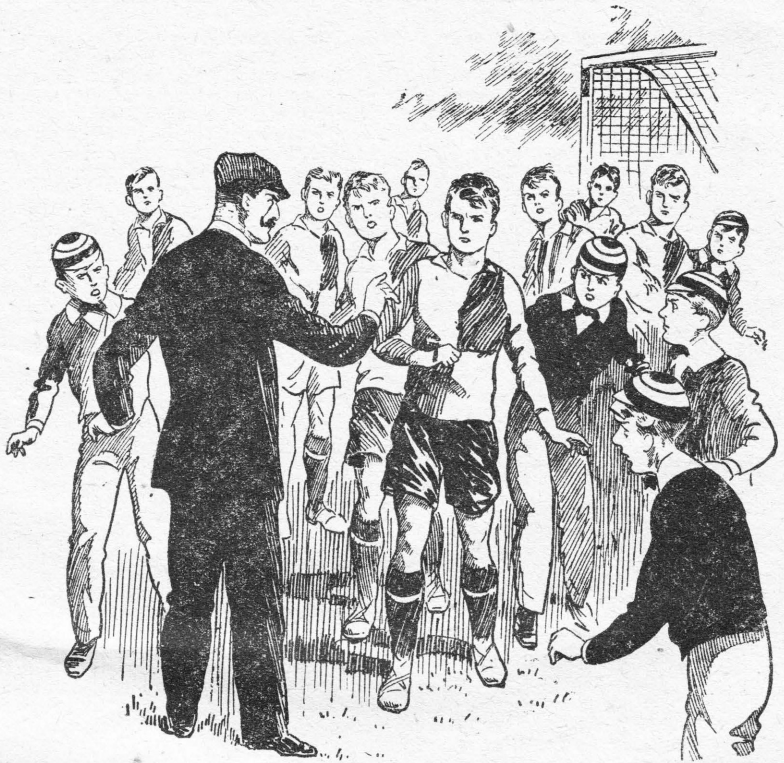
From the kick-off the match was hard and fast. It was a good eleven that had come over from Greyfriars, the best men of the Greyfriars Sixth and Fifth Forms. Rookwood First were not at full strength, and there was no doubt that but for their new recruit they would not have been able to hold the visitors. But from the beginning it was clear that Eric Wilmot was a tower of strength in the front line.

The Greyfriars forwards made a hot attack on the home goal, but the ball was cleared to midfield, and then the new inside-right had his chance. He captured the ball and carried it up the field, well backed up by the Rookwood forwards. He centred to Neville—just in time, and Neville drove the leather in. North, in goal, drove it out again, but before the backs had a chance of clearing Eric Wilmot was on the leather.

"Goal!" roared Lovell in great delight.

Goal it was!

Eric Wilmot had put the leather in



**IN THE NAME OF THE LAW!** The inspector strode on to the field, and stopped in front of Wilmot. The young man's flushed face paled, but his look was steady; his glance did not falter as it rested on the man from Scotland Yard. Inspector Troope raised his hand. "Eric Wilmot, alias Dandy Jim, you are my prisoner!" he said. (See Chapter 4.)

with a shot that beat the Greyfriars custodian to the wide.

The Rookwood crowd roared applause. "Goal! Goal! Bravo!"

Eric Wilmot was smiling cheerily as he walked back to the centre of the field, and the teams lined up. He looked very handsome and almost boyish in his football rig among the Sixth-Formers of Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver glanced at Mr. Troope, wondering what effect the roar of applause would have on that hard-featured gentleman—if any. He noted a perplexed look on the detective's face.

Inspector Troope met his glance, and moved a little nearer to Jimmy, whom he remembered as the junior he had seen in the Head's study that morning.

"Enjoying the game, sir?" said Jimmy demurely.

"Oh, yes, quite," said Mr. Troope, though it was clear that his thoughts were not very much upon football. "Who is the gentleman who is acting as referee, Master Silver?"

"That's Mr. Bohun, the master of the Second Form here, sir."

"Oh! I understood that a Mr. Wilmot, the football coach here, was acting as referee."

"He's in the team, sir," said Tommy Dodd, volunteering the information while Jimmy hesitated to reply.

"Oh!" said Mr. Troope.

"Inside-right, sir," added Tommy.

"Thank you!"

Mr. Troope's perplexed glance had been following the referee. Certainly the Second Form master bore no resemblance whatever to the man of whom he was in search. He now began to scan the players themselves.

Jimmy's glance was on his hard face, and he noted the glint that came into

the inspector's eyes. Mr. Troope had his eyes upon Eric Wilmot now, and from that moment his attention never left the young footballer.

Most other eyes on Big Side at Rookwood were following Eric Wilmot, too, though with a different kind of interest. The football coach was playing a great game.

Close on half-time the ball went in again, and this time from Neville's foot. On the first half, when the whistle blew, Rookwood were two up.

Greyfriars "bucked up" in the second half, and a goal came to Wingate, and another to Potter, of the Greyfriars Fifth. The score stood equal when there were still ten minutes to go.

"Two to two, and ten minutes more!" said Arthur Edward Lovell with a glance at his watch. "We'll win yet, Jimmy!"

"It would have been a goner without Wilmot," remarked Raby.

"But with him it's all right," said Lovell confidently. "What do you think, Jimmy?"

Jimmy Silver nodded absently.

He was not thinking so much about the footer now as about the hapless footballer upon whom so terrible a blow was to fall as soon as the game was over.

If Eric Wilmot was guilty—if he was the man of Deepden—the cracksman whom Jimmy had seen escaping from a scene of crime—he deserved his fate. Jimmy had no sympathy to waste upon a criminal. But was it possible that that athletic player, who had played a clean, straight game, a game he evidently loved, was a thing so base as a thief and criminal? It must be so, and yet—

Yet Jimmy's heart was heavy. He

had kept the secret so long as it was in his power, but the matter was out of his hands now. The iron meshes of the law were ready to close upon the doomed man, playing there, in the sight of the cheering crowd, in ignorance of what was about to happen. If the sight of the Scotland Yard man had alarmed Wilmot, he showed no trace of it now; it was manifest that he was thinking only of the game he was playing.

"Getting close now," said Tommy Dodd. "Looks like a draw."

"There they go!" roared Lovell. "Play up, Rookwood! On the ball! Oh, bravo, Wilmot! Good man, good man!"

There was a roar of cheering. The Rookwood forwards had got away in great style, almost at the finish, and the Greyfriars defence broke under the attack. North, in goal, fisted out the ball, but it came back like a pip from an orange from a ready foot.

"Goal!"

"Rookwood wins!"

"Bravo, Wilmot!"

"Oh, good man—good man!"

The Rookwood crowd roared and yelled. It was a goal, the odd goal for Rookwood, and it had been taken by Eric Wilmot. Neville rushed up to the young footballer and clapped him on the back.

There was no time for Greyfriars to equalise. The teams came off with the score at three to two.

Inspector Troope moved forward with a grim face, and Jimmy Silver & Co. watched him. Arthur Edward set his teeth.

"Is he going to—" Lovell breathed incredulously.

"Yes!" muttered Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, the rotter!"

"He's doing his duty," said Jimmy.

"Rot! He's making a silly mistake! I hope the Sixth will scrag him!" hissed

Arthur Edward Lovell. "I know I'll jolly well lend a hand, if they do!"

Jimmy Silver was silent, his face tense, his eyes fixed on the inspector's burly form. The man from Scotland Yard stepped in the way of the players as they were coming off the field. They stared at him in surprise.

"What—" began Neville.

There was a buzz of amazement in the crowd. All eyes were on the burly inspector now.

He stopped in front of Eric Wilmot, who halted. The young man's flushed face paled, but his look was steady; his glance did not falter as it rested on the man from Scotland Yard. Inspector Troope raised his hand.

"Eric Wilmot, alias James Stacey, alias Dandy Jim, you are my prisoner!" he said in a clear, distinct voice that was heard far and wide.

"What!" came in a yell from the footballers.

"Are you mad?" shouted Neville.

The inspector did not heed. His eyes were fixed on the pale, handsome face before him.

Eric Wilmot found his voice.

"On what charge?" he asked steadily.

"Burglary," said the inspector tersely.

"I am innocent!"

"You will have every opportunity of proving it," said the inspector with a shrug of his broad shoulders. "I warn you that anything you say may be taken down to be used in evidence against you."

And, in the midst of a growing roar of amazement and rage from the Rookwood crowd, Inspector Troope led his prisoner away.

THE END.

(The story is working up to a tremendous climax—you will read more of the surprising incidents surrounding the Rookwood footer-coach next week in "The Secret of the Roman Camp!")

## A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

### THOSE ANNUALS.

THE "Holiday Annual" and "Every Boys' Hobby Annual" have been on sale now over a month, and there's no doubt about their popularity. Of course, many thousands await the coming of the old "Holiday Annual" each year; it proved its success a long time ago, and will always remain as the finest story-book. The new annual, which is really the most remarkable hobby book ever produced, came as a pleasant surprise to the supporters of the Companion Papers.

The "Hobby Annual" will take its place by the side of the "Holiday Annual," and together these two wonderful books will gain a world-wide fame and a stability which will never be shaken.

### STORIES YOU'LL ENJOY!

Each week I tell you chaps, in this column, that the next programme of tales will be better than the last. This is not without good reason, is it? I very rarely get a complaint about the programmes; if I do, it is only from one chap here or there who wants to read more of Billy Bunter or Robin Hood, or wants more pages. I don't mind receiving those letters, for then I can see where I am, so to speak. This week I am going to say, without a flicker of an eyebrow, that next week's programme is better than the last.

Included in the list of features are the three complete school tales. The first one is a long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, entitled:

#### "HOSKINS' WEDDING MARCH!"

By Frank Richards,

and I very nearly split my sides with laughing when I read it.

There is more about the strange footer coach, Mr. Wilmot, in the thrilling long complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, which comes next. The title to look out for is:

#### "THE SECRET OF THE ROMAN CAMP!"

By Owen Conquest.

In the splendid long complete story of Tom Merry & Co., the chums of St. Jim's, you will read how the Terrible Three answer a call of distress from an old school-fellow. Don't miss:

#### "DOWN ON HIS LUCK!"

By Martin Clifford.

Another popular feature in the old paper is the romance of Robin Hood and his bold outlaws of Sherwood. Next week's tale is as thrilling as ever, and is entitled:

#### "CAST ADRIFT!"

Before our grand footer serial commenced in these pages I spoke of it as the finest tale of the day, and that Arthur S. Hardy had surpassed himself. From the opinions of my readers I gather that I am quite right in saying this—that it is the best story of the day. Next week's long instalment will thrill you. Look out for:

#### "PLAY UP, THE BLUE CRUSADERS!"

By A. S. Hardy.

No. 6 on the list is the complete Nature story, and I might well add that these little tales have grown extremely popular. Next week's is, as its predecessors—ripping! The title is:

#### "THE SPOTTED DEATH!"

By F. St. Mars.

Last but not least is the useful weekly feature, "Hobbies and Pastimes," a collection of useful and interesting articles written by experts.

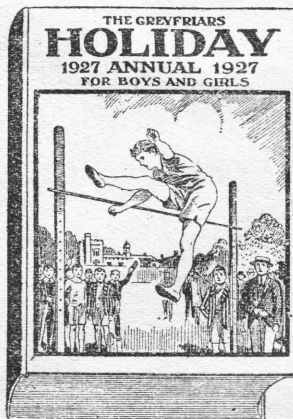
Your Editor.

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