

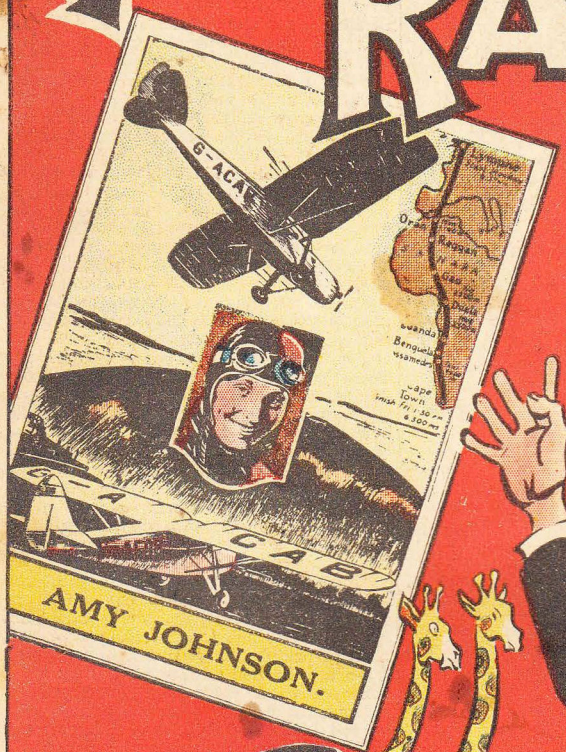
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FREE INSIDE—ANOTHER GRAND PHOTOGRAVURE PLATE!

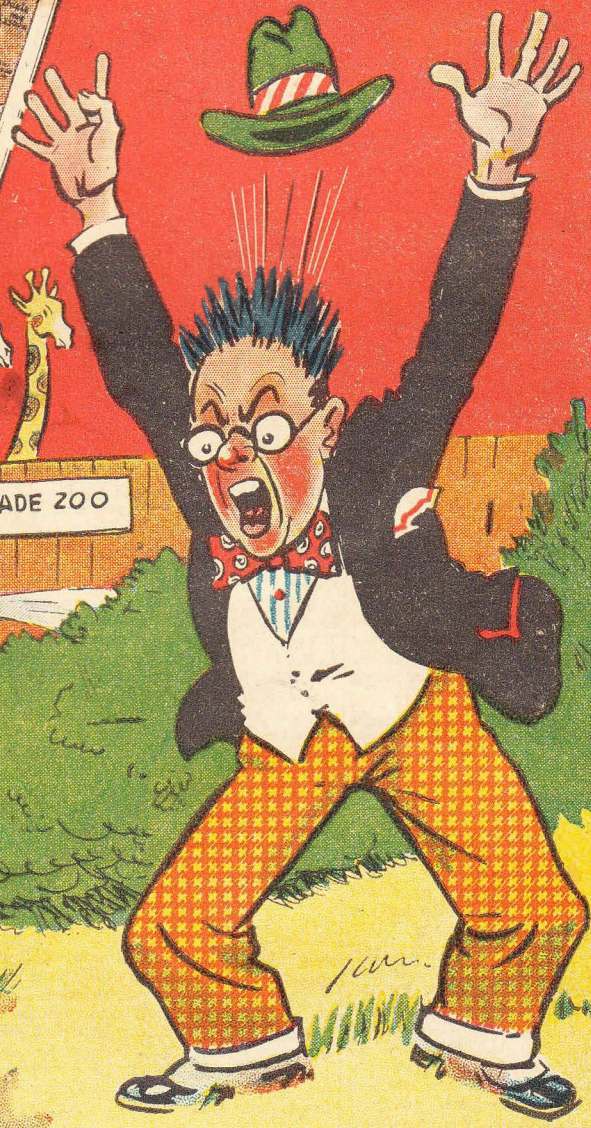
# The RANGER

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WHIPSNADE ZOO

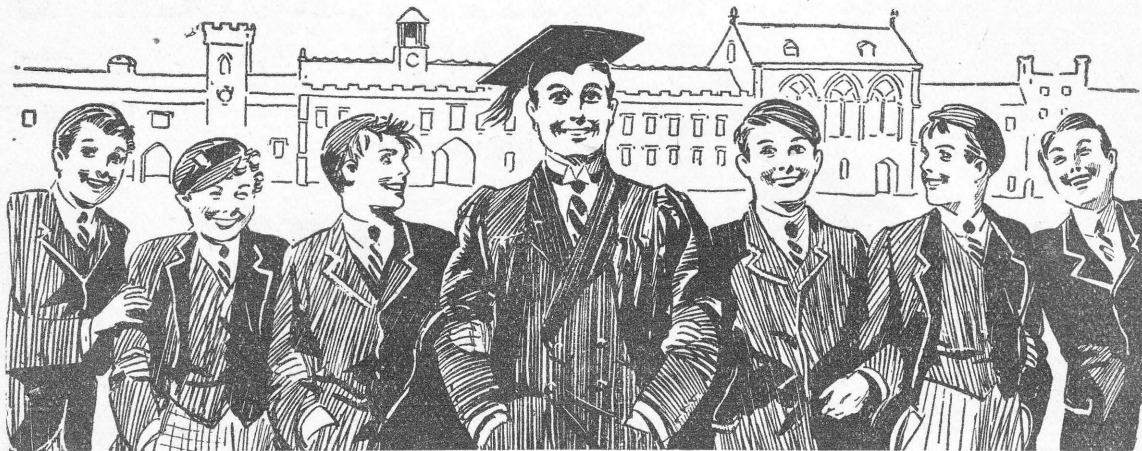


## GREAT SNAKES!

THIS AMAZING SCHOOL YARN IS A WOW! NON-STOP LAUGHS!

# The Fourth Form at GRIMSLADE!

By Famous FRANK RICHARDS.



**THERE ARE A LOT OF KICKS COMING TO THE WILY FRITZ VON SPLITZ. BUT FRITZ DOESN'T WORRY—HE BORROWS A SUIT OF ARMOUR FOR THE OCCASION!**

## Plenty of Paint.

“ALL clear!” whispered Ginger Rawlinson of Redmayes’ House at Grimslade.

And Jim Dainty, of White’s House, started as he heard that whisper. All, as it happened, was not so clear as Ginger supposed!

White’s House was almost deserted that afternoon. A First Eleven cricket match was in progress on Big Side, and fellows of both Houses were crowding the ground. Jim Dainty’s friends were all there, and Jim would have been there himself but for bad luck.

Billy White, his Housemaster, had caught him holding Fritz Splitz’s head under the tap.

Jim did not want to explain to Billy White that this was a warning to Fritz not to borrow stamps from his desk, and Fritz certainly did not want to explain that. So Jim had been given “House bounds” for the afternoon.

House bounds on a summer’s afternoon was rotten!

Jim wandered disconsolately over the House; he got distant views of the cricket from various windows, and he heard the shouting and cheering from Big Side.

Feeling fed-up, he wandered into Hall at last, read the various House notices on the board there, looked over the trophies on the sideboard won by the House in various athletic events, stared at the armoured figure of Sir Roger de Grimslade standing at the upper end of Hall, and, finally, with a dissatisfied grunt, threw himself on the settee under the dusky stained windows.

And only a few minutes later there were cautious footsteps in the doorway, and that cautious whisper reached his ears.

Jim started and grinned. Nothing could have happened better; a “House row” was exactly what he wanted to relieve the monotony. Ginger & Co. could not have arrived at a more opportune moment!

Three stealthy figures crept into the Hall of White’s House. Jim, without moving or making a sound, watched Ginger’s red head come into view. Streaky Bacon and Sandy Bean followed him in. They did not observe the junior stretched on the dusky settee. Evidently the Redmayes trio were taking it for granted that the place was deserted.

Jim watched them curiously. What

the raiders were up to in Hall was rather a mystery. They might have ragged the junior studies, but Hall was not the place for a raid. With soft footsteps Ginger & Co. passed up the long, lofty room and halted before the figure of Sir Roger. Ginger chuckled.

“All serene, my infants! Safe as houses! It was worth tipping that bloated Boche a bag of tarts to give us the wire when the coast was clear, what?”

“What-ho!” chuckled Streaky Bacon. Jim Dainty sat up, still silent. He had rather wondered at the nerve of the Redmayes trio in venturing into the rival House in this way. But a bribe to Fritz Splitz made it safe enough. Fritz was a White’s man, but Fritz would have let down the House any time for a bag of tarts.

“Get on with it, Ginger,” murmured Sandy Bean. “Safe enough, with that Boche helping us out, but don’t waste time. If they caught us here—”

“Here goes!” said Ginger.

From under his jacket Ginger Rawlinson produced a can of green paint; from a pocket he drew a brush. Jim Dainty, still unseen and unsuspected, watched him prise off the lid of the can. The Redmayes trio were grinning.

“Will they jump when they see jolly old Sir Roger in a coat of green paint?” chortled Ginger. “Will they grin? What? The old bean who used to inhabit that suit of armour, donkeys’ years ago, was a Yorkist, and they make out that he used to mop up the Lancastrians in the Wars of the Roses! Well, if he did, we’re going to decorate him for it.”

“Oh, my hat!” murmured Jim Dainty.

He understood now.

White’s House, at Grimslade, were proud of Sir Roger, who had fought for the White Rose in those ancient days when knights were bold. Grimslade stood on the county border—White’s was in Yorkshire, Redmayes in Lancashire. The Wars of the Roses were still going on at Grimslade.

Redmayes didn’t care a bean for Sir Roger. They declared that he never had whopped Lancastrians; that in all probability he had funked, and that most likely he had never really existed!

There were Redmayes men who even stated that that ancient suit of armour had never been worn in the Wars of the Roses at all; that Dr. Samuel Sparshott, the Head of Grimslade, had picked it

up second-hand somewhere and stuck it in White’s House to get rid of it. All of which the White’s men scorned with wrathful scorn.

Painting Sir Roger with green paint was “one in the eye” for White’s House—there was no doubt about that. The whole House would rage—they would foam at the outrage. Jim Dainty was glad, after all, that Billy White had given him House bounds that afternoon. Quietly he rose to his feet behind the Redmayes three.

Ginger had the lid off the paint-can. He dipped the brush into the green paint.

“Now watch the old bean change colour!” chuckled Ginger. “I dare say he turned white when he saw Lancaster men in those jolly old wars! Now he’s going to turn green!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

Softly as a Red Indian stealing on his prey, Jim Dainty stole up behind the three. They had their backs to him; their eyes on the armoured figure.

The red-headed Redmayes junior was lifting the paint-laden brush to give Sir Roger’s steel vizor the first dab of green, when he was suddenly grasped from behind.

“Oh, my giddy goloshes!” stuttered Ginger.

He went over on his back with startling suddenness as Jim dragged him over. The paint-brush dropped on his face; the paint-can dropped on his waistcoat, where it emptied its contents in a sticky stream.

“What the thump?” yelled Sandy Bean and Streaky together.

Ginger sprawled and spluttered on his back. Jim Dainty grabbed up the brush and the can. Streaky and Sandy jumped at him. The former received the brush, the latter the can—and they jumped back faster than they had jumped forward. Green paint was all very well for Sir Roger—but the Redmayes fellows did not like it themselves.

“Come on!” grinned Dainty. “There’s more in the can! Have a little more!”

“Groogh! Keep off!” yelled Streaky.

“Ow! Keep that paint away!”

howled Sandy Bean.

Three to one was long odds, but not so long when the one had a paint-brush in one hand and a paint-can in the other.

Streaky and Sandy jumped away like active kangaroos. Ginger struggled to his feet. A swoop of paint from the

can landed on his head as he scrambled up. Ginger yelled frantically and dodged away.

"Oh crickey! Keep off! Where did you spring from, you White's tick?" gasped Ginger. "My giddy goloshes! Keep that paint away! Oh crumbs!"

Jim followed them up. They backed to the doorway. Already they were covered with paint. They did not want any more! They yearned to collar Jim and mop him up, smite him hip and thigh, and strew him about the floor. But they didn't. That sticky, smelly green paint was too much for them. They backed out of the doorway, and, as Dainty charged after them, they fairly took to their heels and ran.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jim Dainty. "Won't you have the rest? It's your paint, you know!"

Ginger & Co. did not seem to want their paint. What they wanted was a wash! They dodged out of White's House and fled.

Jim Dainty chuckled. Ginger & Co. were gone, leaving Sir Roger still unpainted. The raid had been a ghastly frost, from the Redmayes point of view. But there was still some paint in the bottom of the can—and still some painting to be done. Jim Dainty scudded down the junior passage to Study No. 10.

In that study a fat German junior was travelling through a bag of jam tarts—Ginger's bribe. Friedrich von Splitz jumped at the sight of Jim Dainty with the paint. His saucer-eyes opened wide.

"Mein gootness!" ejaculated Fritz. "Vat— Here, geep off! Tat you touch me not mit tat baint, ain't it?"

"You pie-faced Boche!" roared Jim Dainty. "You've been backing up Redmayes House!"

"Ach! Nein! Neffer!" gasped Fritz. "I would not pack tem up, mein goot Tainty! I know not tat Chinger gum here to baint Sir Roger. I know notting apout it. Mein prain is a berfect plank. Groooogh! Ooooooh! Oh, himmel! Peast and a prute! Urrrg!"

Fritz Splitz, cornered in a corner of the study, spluttered and gurgled as Dainty ladled out the rest of the paint. Fritz's fat face was as green as grass in a few minutes.

"There, you bloated Boche!" Jim Dainty gave a final dab. "Now you can have the pot!" He slammed it on Fritz's head. "And there's the brush!" He shoved it down Fritz's back. "There, you piffing porker!"

"Urrrg! Ach! I am all baint!" wailed Fritz Splitz. "I was so bainty as neffer vas before! Gurrrrrgggh! Mein gootness, now I shall have to vash! Peast and a prute!"

Fritz Splitz did not like washing, but when Jim Dainty had done with him, even Fritz had to wash, and he put in more washing that afternoon than he had put in all through the term.

#### Beans for Fritz.

"KICK him!"

"Ach! Mein gootness! Whooop!"

Fritz Splitz fled.

It was the following day, and how many times Fritz Splitz had been kicked that day he could not possibly have counted.

Ginger & Co.'s raid had been defeated. But Sir Roger—the pride of the House—had had a narrow escape. And a White's man had acted as a spy in the camp—an enemy within the gates! Every junior in the House was keen to make it clear to Fritz Splitz what the House thought of him, and they made it perfectly clear.

The method was simple. Every White's man kicked Fritz whenever he came across the fat German. At rising-bell Fritz led the life of a football till he escaped from the dormitory. After brekker he collected more kicks, and, little as he liked class, he was glad when the bell called the Fourth into their Form-room.

In break he was hunted like a fat hare. After class he disappeared till dinner, lurking somewhere in hiding; but he had to turn up for dinner in the House. And after dinner six or seven fellows kicked him before he got clear, and in the quad he came on several more, who kicked him again.

He fled, roaring. Really, Fritz's baggy trousers seemed in danger of being worn out at this rate.

He panted across the quad, and took refuge under the windows of Redmayes House. There he came on Ginger & Co. But there was no rest for the wicked!

"My giddy goloshes! There's that Boche bloater!" exclaimed Ginger. "You pie-faced, piffing porker! What do you mean by setting Dainty on us yesterday, after I tipped you a bag of tarts? Kick him!"

"Ach! Geep off!" yelled Fritz. "I did not giff you away to Tainty, on te vord of a Cherman! Yaroooooh!"

"Well, if you didn't, you ought to have," said Ginger, rather unreasonably. "Kick him for letting down his House!"

And Fritz fled once more, feeling more like a football than ever. Five or six White's men came on him in the quad, and the result was again painful. Once more he dodged out of sight, and spent the rest of the time till school in old Sykes' toolshed.

But he had to come out when the bell rang, and his way to Big School resembled running the gauntlet. Peck, the master of the Fourth, snapped at Fritz several times that afternoon for not sitting still; but Fritz was hardly to blame. It was difficult for Fatty Fritz to sit still after capturing so many kicks.

Generally Fritz Splitz longed for class to be dismissed. On this particular afternoon he dreaded it. When the Fourth went out, some of them gave Fritz significant glances. Fritz astonished his Form master by remaining behind and asking for information on some knotty points in Latin. Peck was quite surprised by this unusual thirst for knowledge on the part of his laziest pupil. Still, he was willing to oblige,

and Fritz absorbed extra Latin till he was assured that the fellows were tired of waiting for him outside.

When he came out at last Fritz blinked uneasily to and fro, and was thankful to find the coast clear. He ran for his House like a fat rabbit, but in White's House he was kicked along the passage. He dodged into the junior day-room and was kicked out again. Feeling as if life was not worth living, he locked himself in Study No. 10, and had a rest at last. The study door was locked when Dainty and Dawson came back from games practice for tea, and Fritz turned a deaf ear to rapping and banging and hammering.

"Will you let us in, you Boche bloater?" roared Jim Dainty through the keyhole.

"Vill you bromise not to kick me any more on mein trousers?" demanded Fritz Splitz.

"I'll promise to kick you into the middle of next week, if you don't open this door at once!"

"Peast and a prute!"

The door remained locked, but five minutes later the window of No. 10 flew up. Fritz Splitz gave a yell of alarm at the sight of Jim Dainty and Dick Dawson at the window. In sheer desperation he picked up a hassock.

"Go away, peast! Go away, prute!" roared Fritz, and he hurled the hassock at the two juniors clambering in at the window.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Oh, gum!"

Dick Dawson caught the whizzing hassock with his chin. He rolled back from the window-sill, grabbed at Dainty to save himself, and dragged Jim down in his fall. Two heavy bumps and two fearful yells sounded as the juniors hit the hard quadrangle.

"Ach! Now geep out, ain't it?" gasped Fritz Splitz, and he jumped at the window to slam down the sash.

But Jim Dainty was on his feet in a twinkling, the hassock in his grasp. It came back through the window like a bullet, and caught Fritz Splitz on his waistcoat.

"Ach himmel!" gurgled Fritz, as he flew backward.



Clank, clank, clank! The armoured figure strode straight at the group of juniors. A gauntleted arm rose and fell, sweeping the Grimsladers aside with blows that might have been delivered by a coke-hammer. "Run for it—yaroooooh!" yelled Jim Dainty, as a mail-clad fist smote him on the face with resounding force.

He hit the floor of the study with a bump. Before the fat German could lift his weight again, Dainty and Dawson had scrambled in at the study window. Jim unlocked the door and threw it open.

"Dribble him!" he panted  
"Ach! Kick me not, you peastly pounders!" gasped Fritz. "Mein gootness! I have a colossal bain! Yaroooh! I have no more te breff! Yoooop!"

Fritz rolled out into the passage and was dribbled to the end, where other feet took up the task. The hapless German escaped into Hall, where there were prefects, and found peace at last.

Not till the hour of evening prep was Fritz allowed to take his place in Study No. 10, unknicked. Prep had to be done. Even the indignant juniors of White's House admitted that. Fritz hated prep, but he rather liked it now, and wished that it would last longer. He thought anxiously of what would happen after it was over.

Dainty and Dawson put their books away at last, and went out of the study. That evening there was a prefects' meeting over in Big School, which meant that the House prefects would be off the scene.

Fritz could guess that the juniors would let themselves go. While the cats were away the mice would play. Billy White was dining with the Head, and would not be back in the House. Fritz remained in the study in fear and trembling. He had to hide somewhere. But where?

"Mein gootness! Tat peastly Sir Roger!" murmured Fritz. "I vill squeeze inside him till te prefects gum pack."

He left the study on tiptoe, and stole away like a scared rabbit. Hall was deserted; only a dim light burned there. Fritz crept into the lofty room and stopped at the armoured figure which Ginger had so nearly painted the day before. He blinked at it.

Like many of the suits of armour that were worn by the bold knights of ancient days, it was of moderate dimensions. There were Sixth Form men at Grimslade who could not possibly have got into it. But there was plenty of room for Fritz—vertically, at least. Sideways it was rather a squeeze.

In the distance Fritz heard a sound of calling voices. Prep was over, and the juniors were looking for him. The traitor in the House was booked for a hectic time that evening. Fritz shuddered.

Generally his movements were in slow time; now he showed remarkable activity. In frantic haste he stowed his podgy person into Sir Roger de Grimslade's armour—breastplate and back-piece, greaves and helmet, lowering the steel vizor over his fat face. It was not easy work, unaided. Fritz had not, like old Sir Roger, a squire to help him get into his metallic outfit, but he managed it somehow. Terror spurred him on.

Voices and footsteps were heard in all quarters. The juniors were hunting for him, and there was no time to waste. By the time he had finished, and was standing clad in armour, the footsteps and voices approached Hall. Someone switched on the light, and the lofty room was illuminated.

"Must be here!" exclaimed Tommy Tucker. "We've searched everywhere else."

"Cut out of the House, very likely," said Paget.

"Well, root round for him."

A crowd of fellows streamed up and down Hall, searching for Fritz Splitz. They hardly glanced at the armoured figure—little dreaming that two terrified, saucer-eyes were watching them through the eyeholes of the vizor. Fritz Splitz stood perfectly still, hardly daring to breathe. Jim Dainty put in his head at the door.

"Found him?"

"No; he's not here," answered Paget.

"The fat rotter's bunked out of the House, I suppose—dropped from the study window, most likely. We shan't be able to have a game of football with him now!" said Dawson.

Fritz Splitz grinned in relief behind Sir Roger's vizor.

"Rotten!" growled Tommy Tucker. "We've got everything ready to give him beans for backing up those Redmayes ticks. Now all that soot we've got down the chimney will be wasted."

Fritz shuddered. He knew now what he had escaped.

"Hallo! Is that jolly old armour safe?" exclaimed Jim Dainty, staring at Sir Roger. "Did you fellows see it move?"

"Looks all right," said Dawson. "That jolly old figure's stood there for years on end. Why—what—Great pip!"

There was a yell of amazement and consternation from the juniors. The armoured figure was moving!

### The Ghost of Sir Roger.

**F**RITZ SPLITZ had had a brain-wave.

Brain-waves did not often come Fritz's way. His podgy brain worked slowly, when it worked at all. But Fritz had been kicked so often and so hard that day that his fat brain had been jolted into unusual activity.

He had hidden himself in Sir Roger's armour to escape a ragging. But now he was in it, there dawned upon him an idea to turn the tables on the ragers. Clad in complete armour, he was difficult to attack. The heaviest fist or foot at Grimslade could have produced no effect on a suit of armour. On the other hand, a tap from a steel gauntlet would do terrific damage.

For the first time in history Fritz Splitz was not only a match for any of the best fighting men in White's House, but more than a match for them all together. And as he realised that the fat German ceased to shiver with funk, and grinned with glee. This was where Fatty Fritz was going to get his own back.

But to the juniors, who had not the faintest idea that the fat German had encased himself in Sir Roger's armour, there was something uncanny and nerve-racking in seeing the armoured figure move. No eye at Grimslade had ever seen it stir before. Generations of Grimsladers had seen it standing there on its pedestal, motionless, immovable.

There was a legend at Grimslade that on the anniversary of the day he had fallen at the battle of Towton, the spirit of the old knight revisited the scene on the moor, and stalked abroad in his old armour with clanking stride. But it was not on record that anybody had ever seen him doing it.

Now it was seen. With eyes bulging from their heads, gasping for breath in amazement and alarm, the juniors saw the stout armoured figure step down from its stand.

Clank, clank, clank! The iron-shod feet fairly rang on the old oaken floor.

"It's moving!"

"It's alive!" yelled Tommy Tucker.

"Hook it!"

"What the thump!" gasped Jim Dainty. "What—Oh, my hat!"

Clank, clank, clank! The armoured figure strode straight at the group of juniors. A gauntleted arm rose and fell, sweeping the Grimsladers aside with blows that might have been delivered by a coke-hammer.

"Run for it! Yaroooh!" yelled Jim Dainty, as a mail-clad fist smote him on the face with resounding force.

There was a rush and a scramble to the door. Jim Dainty staggered after the rest, his face stinging from that clump. Clank, clank, clank! came the ringing stride of the armoured figure in pursuit.

"He—he—he's come to life," babbled Tommy Tucker. "Oh crikey! Help!"

Tommy Tucker went out headlong,

and two or three fellows in their haste stumbled over him. There was a jam in the doorway—everybody struggling to get through at once. And Sir Roger de Grimslade came clanking up as they scrambled and pushed.

"Ow! Yaroooh!" roared Dawson, as a gauntlet smote. "Gerraway! Help!"

The jam in the doorway broke, and the juniors fled. Clank, clank, clank! came after them as they went. With howls of panic the juniors scattered through the House.

Some of them bolted into their studies and slammed and locked the doors. A dozen fellows rushed into the junior day-room, turned the key, and dragged the table against the door. What it all meant—that it could possibly mean—nobody knew, but there was no doubt that there was wild panic in White's House at Grimslade.

Behind the steel vizor Fritz Splitz was grinning. He was enjoying this. The Fourth had planned a high old time while masters and prefects were out of the House. They were getting it, but certainly not in the way they had planned.

Clank, clank, clank! Jim Dainty and Dick Dawson, their faces smarting from the clumps they had received from the heavy gauntlets, dodged into Study No. 10. Clank, clank, clank! came up the passage. The ghost of Sir Roger was giving his particular attention to them. They slammed the door; but the key was gone. Some fellow had taken it away lest Fritz should lock himself in the study again. There was a crash of a steel gauntlet on the panels that made the door shiver.

"Hold it shut!" gasped Dainty.

Crash! Bang! Crash! They held the door shut desperately. It was awful, hair-raising, to think of that uncanny figure in armour on the other side, striving to get at them. Bang! Crash! Bang! The door rocked under the heavy smites.

"Hook it from the window!" gasped Dawson.

They cut across the study, tore open the window, and scrambled out. The door flew open, and Sir Roger clanked in. The juniors were half out of the window, when he clanked across the study after them.

Bang, bang! came the heavy gauntlets, and Dainty and Dawson roared as they rolled out headlong into the quad.

They picked themselves up dizzily and stared back at the window. Full in the light stood Sir Roger, looking exactly as he was wont to look on his stand in Hall. They gazed at him with their flesh creeping.

"What—what does it mean?" gasped Dawson.

"Goodness knows! Oh crikey!" The armoured figure turned away from the window. They heard it go clanking out into the passage again. Jim felt his bruised face.

"It's a jape!" he gasped. "It's somebody in armour—some Redmayes tick! Ginger, perhaps! Look here, I'm going in again!"

"Better not. All the fellows are coming out!"

From doors and windows White's juniors were bolting like rabbits from the House. There was already a swarm in the dusky quad and a buzz of alarmed voices. But Jim Dainty clambered back through the window. He crept across the study and peered into the passage.

Clank, clank! The armoured figure was in sight, clanking along, its back to Jim. He had no intention of getting to close quarters with it; he had had enough of steel gauntlets! But he caught up a heavy hassock, stepped into the passage, and took aim!

Whiz! Crash! The missile landed in Sir Roger's back with a terrific concussion. The armour-clad figure stumbled, tottered, lost its footing, and crashed down on its back, with a clang of metal that rang through the length and breadth of White's House.

Jim Dainty did not wait for it to get up again. He cut back through the study window, and rejoined Dawson in the quad.

But, as a matter of fact, he might as well have waited. For that armoured figure did not get up again. It heaved on the floor in desperate efforts to get up! But it couldn't! That ancient suit of armour was too heavy to be lifted once its occupant was on his back! Like many a knight of ancient days, weighed down by his iron outfit, Fritz Splitz had to lie where he fell! He wriggled and clanked and clinked—but he could not get up; and he wriggled and clanked and clinked in vain!

**Sammy Lays the Ghost!**

**D**R. SAMUEL SPARSHOTT stared into the quad.

"Something amiss in your House, White!" he remarked.

Billy White grunted. The roar of excited voices across the quadrangle told only too plainly that something was amiss. Headmaster and Housemaster stepped forth together, to find out what it was. They found a wildly excited crowd outside White's House.

"Here comes Sammy!" yelled Dick Dawson.

"What's the trouble here?" barked Sammy. "What are you boys doing out of your House after prep?"

"It's Sir Roger!" gasped Paget.

"He's come to life!" panted Tommy Tucker.

"What?" roared Sammy Sparshott.

"I say, it's true, sir!" gasped a dozen voices. "Sir Roger—he got after us—"

"You young asses!"

Dr. Sparshott frowned, and strode into the House. Sammy, at least, feared no foe in shining armour! If there was a ghost in White's House, Sammy was the man to lay that ghost!

"Come on!" exclaimed Jim Dainty.

And he followed the Head in; and some more fellows followed on—ready to bolt again, however, at a sight of the armoured figure bearing down on them.

"Clank! Clink! Bang! Clank!"

"What the dickens!" gasped Sammy Sparshott.

He could scarce believe his ears as he heard that sound of clanking armour. It came from the junior passage.

Grimly the Head of Grimsdale strode on. He turned the corner, and came in sudden sight of Sir Roger.

Sir Roger lay on his back, making frantic, but vain, efforts to rise! He clanked and he clinked, he clinked and he clanked; but there was nothing doing; he was horizontal, and had to stay horizontal. Dr. Sparshott stared at him with amazed eyes. It was not easy to surprise Sammy; but there was no doubt that Sammy was surprised.

"What—" gasped the Head.

He strode forward, and bent over the fallen armoured figure. From a safe distance a crowd watched him with bated breath. As he bent, Dr. Sparshott could hear a breathless gurgle within the steel vizor.

"Urrrrrrrrgggh!"

"My only hat!" said Sammy.

He unfastened the vizor and pushed it up. A fat, crimson, breathless face was revealed. Sammy Sparshott stared at it like a man in a dream. For a

moment he could not speak. Then he roared:

"Splitz!"

"Urrrh! Mein gootness! I gannot get up mit meinsel!" moaned Fritz Splitz. "I have no more to breeff! Ach himmel! I tink two times pefore I get into tat peastly armour vunce more after!"

"Fritz!" came a yell from the White's juniors.

"Fritz!" gasped Jim Dainty. "That's where he was hiding—in Sir Roger's armour! My hat! The whole House scared—of Fritz!"

"Fritz! That Boche bloater!"

"Fatty Fritz!"

It was rather fortunate for Fritz that Sammy was on the spot. Otherwise, the ghost of Sir Roger would have been laid with a vengeance.

A gasping, gurgling, breathless Fritz was extracted at last from Sir Roger's armour. And Sammy—doubtless realising how matters stood in White's House—awarded him a couple of days in the punishment-room for having meddled with that venerable relic of Grimsdale's past.

It was a welcome sentence to Fritz—in "punny" there was nobody to kick him!

*(Jim Dainty proves himself a hero in next week's lively story of the Grimsdale chums. But he doesn't want the reward that's coming to him—neither would you if you were in his shoes. Don't miss this treat—or the next Free Photo-Plate.)*

**A CHALLENGE FROM THE SKIES!**

*(Continued from page 570.)*

Above, Wagstaff's plane was battered and tossed by the terrific force of that explosion, which wiped out practically the whole factory. He came down with torn and strained wings and with an under-carriage three parts wrecked. But the machine was still flyable, and he kept the engine ticking over as he shouted and beckoned to his smoke-grimed and tattered comrade.

John Henry staggered across and climbed up thankfully into the plane. He could hardly speak. He could only cling tremblingly to his place.

As the machine took off again it lurched giddily, and the smashed under-carriage dropped clean away. What was worse, Wagstaff saw that the petrol was leaking badly, the tank having been strained and split by the force of that explosion. Even though they had taken off, they had only enough fuel to cover a mile or so.

And they couldn't land. To try to land a Bentley Camel without an under-carriage is to court nothing less than certain death.

Wagstaff did the only thing that was possible. He cleared the town, and then brought the plane down squarely on a lorry that was speeding along a main road, thus taking away the worst shock of the impact.

Naturally enough, the lorry swerved wildly off its course. The astonished driver kept it out of the ditch by a miracle, and then pulled up and jumped down, to find himself facing Wagstaff's revolver.

After which the German wondered if the whole world had gone crazy.

Two smoke-blackened, tattered figures fell upon him and robbed him of his suit and overalls. They tied him up and dumped him behind a hedge, whilst they dressed themselves in the garments they had taken.

And then one spoke to the other in a reckless, laughing voice.

"Dear old Waggah, now Mr. Baron Copperknob can have his feathers back! You speak German like a native. Drive this bus—with the plane an' all—to his aerodrome; tell him it crashed in the town, and we've been instructed to bring it to him. He'll be no end bucked. And we'll get a chance to pinch one of his jolly old armour-plated machines."

Langton Wagstaff gasped, but suddenly saw the possibilities of bringing off John Henry's reckless plan.

He drove the lorry to the Red Baron's aerodrome. The Baron von Rokkopf was called from his office, and came out showing delight as he saw the half-wrecked Angels' machine.

He roared with laughter, and patted Wagstaff on the back. Indeed, he told the two "lorry hands" that they could go down to the men's mess and take refreshment at his expense. When Wagstaff asked with great respect that they might be allowed to look at the wonderful Herr Baron's fighting plane, he seemed more pleased than ever.

In a thoroughly jovial mood, he said he would show them round personally. He took them to the main hangar, where his spare planes were standing in front of a wide, open door, and led them into the shadows within.

John Henry and Wagstaff glanced at each other, and nodded. They fell upon the Baron and rammed their hands over his mouth. They gagged him and bound him with wire, whilst his own aerodrome staff was no more than fifty yards away outside.

As an afterthought, young Mr. Dent emptied a can of black oil over the Baron's head, and then liberally plastered the sticky mass with a bunch of white feathers which he took from his pocket. Carefully he placed a card on the Baron's chest—a card which read:

**"SINCE YOU HAVEN'T GOT THE PLUCK TO COME AND FETCH THE THINGS YOU LEFT BEHIND,**

**WE'VE BROUGHT THEM ALONG. THEY SEEM TO BE YOUR FAVOURITE FLOWERS. WHAT PRICE PFALTZ B. 6's NOW?"**

A minute later the German aerodrome staff received a distinct surprise.

One of the Herr Baron's armour-plated planes started up suddenly out of the hangar. It thundered across the aerodrome, tossed up into the sky, and then headed southwards straight towards the battle front.

The staff were amazed. They could not understand why the Herr Baron had taken off so suddenly and in such an unusual manner.

Nearly half an hour passed, indeed, before a German mechanic, passing by chance through the hangar, discovered the bound and helpless Baron, and the truth was realised. But by that time two highly delighted young men were roaring through fierce anti-aircraft gunfire over the British lines.

They thundered their scarlet plane straight towards the Angels' aerodrome. And at the sight of it the Angels' pilots tumbled over themselves, with Baldy yelling orders as they made ready to take off and give battle to the lone German.

To their utter amazement, the plane came down and landed flat in their midst. Dazedly Baldy saw his second-in-command and his crack pilot climb down from the cockpit. Young Mr. Dent rammed a dusty monocle into his left eye and grinned.

"We've just been puttin' a little salt on the tail of a comic red bird!" he said. "Here's the bird, but— Dash it all, we've left some of it's jolly old feathers behind!"

*(Bud Atlee, John Henry's best pal, plays the traitor! Boys, you simply must not miss this super story of thrills on land and in the air. It's in next week's Free Gift number of the RANGER.)*