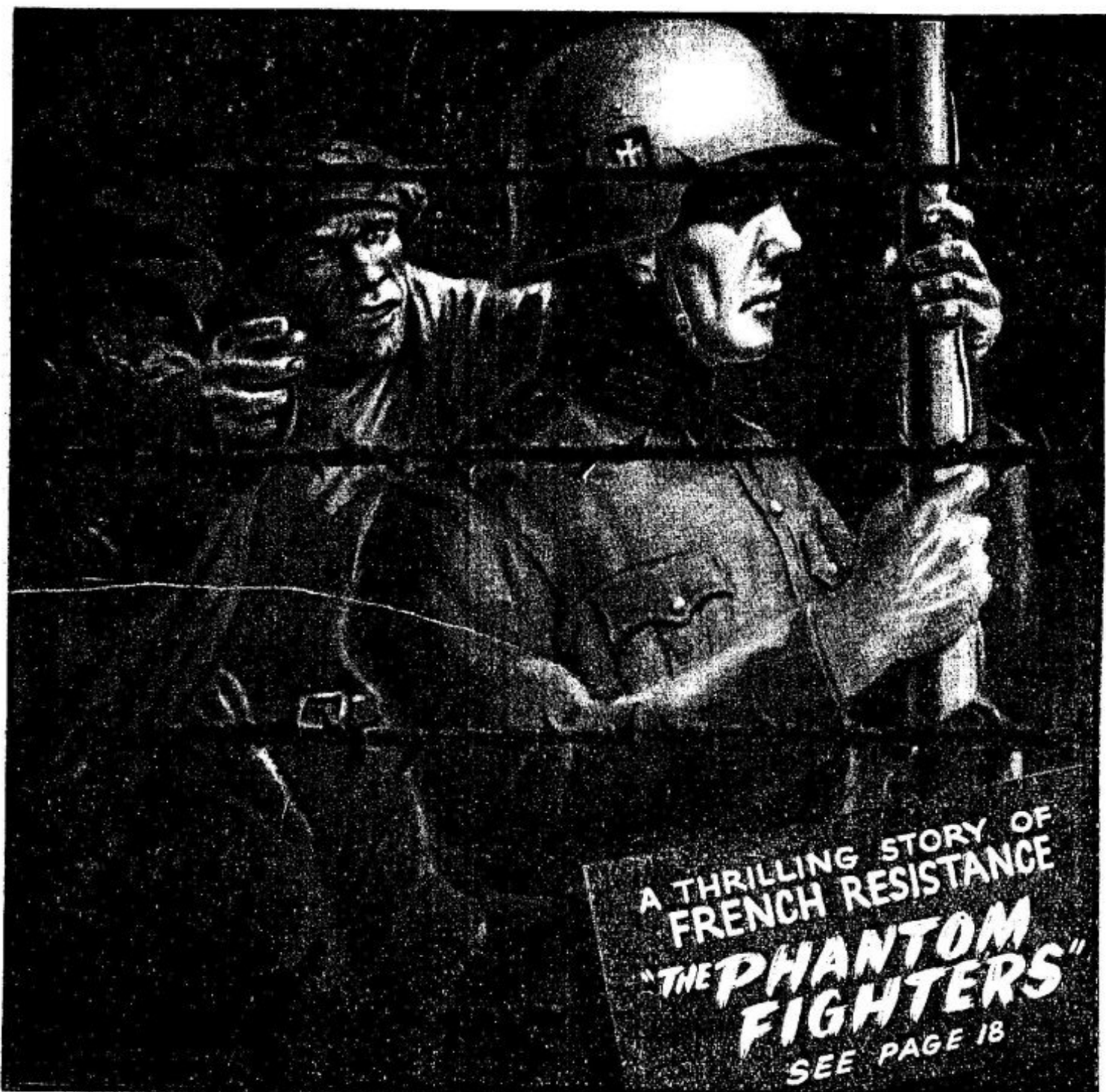


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A THRILLING STORY OF  
FRENCH RESISTANCE  
"THE PHANTOM  
FIGHTERS"  
SEE PAGE 18

**THIS IS AUSTRALIA'S FAMOUS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS!**

# The Barring-out at Carcroft!

PART 7  
"GAME TO THE LAST!"



By

FRANK RICHARDS

## SYNOPSIS

The fourth form rebels, still barricaded in their dormitory stronghold, have resisted all attempts by the "beaks" to dislodge them. Now, however, food is rationed and there is still no sign of the banknote which caused the sacking of the fat boy, Turkey Tuck. It's do or die now for the rebels who, after a fierce brush with the school prefects who tried to penetrate the stronghold in the dead of night, are anxiously awaiting further developments.

## NO SURRENDER!

"THE Head!"

"Oh!"

Bob Drake whistled softly. Harry Compton and Dick Lee looked very serious. Turkey Tuck quaked. Dudley Vane-Carter, who had an empty sardine-tin in his hand, and his hand half-raised, lowered it. V.C. had "buzzed" all sorts of missiles at the Sixth-Form prefects, and at Roger Ducas, master of the Fourth during the progress of the barring-out at Carcroft. But even V.C. did not think of buzzing that sardine-tin at the majestic Head. Dr. Whaddon was generally alluded to, in the Carcroft Fourth, as the "Old Boy". But he inspired awe and respect, all the same. The most reckless of the rebels lined up behind the barricade on the dormitory staircase, was a little subdued, at sight of the Head.

Forms other than the Fourth were in their form-rooms, that sunny summer morning. But it was days since the Fourth had been in their form-room.

Roger had been busy: but not in class. He had been busy trying to put down that rebellion in his form. So far, he had had no luck. Amazing as it was, unprecedented as it was, the Carcroft Fourth were still barring out the beaks: and Turkey Tuck, still under sentence of expulsion from the school, was still at Carcroft. So far, matters had been left in Roger's hands. No doubt the Head had expected him to restore order in his form in a short time. Now, however, the "Old Boy" himself was taking a hand.

"The Head!" repeated Lord Talboys. "Oh, gad! I wish the Old Boy would keep clear! We can't buzz things at the Head!"

"Not likely!" said Bob. "Keep that sardine-tin where it is, V.C."

Vane-Carter shrugged his shoulders.

"We're not giving in!" he said.



"They're not going to sack Turkey for something he never did!"

"No fear!" said Dick Lee. "But—"

"Rot!" snapped Levett. "What does Turkey matter? The fat smug! We're all on short commons because he's scoffed the grub—that's the thanks we get from Turkey! Let them sack him."

"Look here—!" hooted Turkey. "I keep on telling you that I never scoffed the grub, and I only did it because I was fearfully hungry—"

"Boot him!" said Vane-Carter.

"Ow! wow!" roared Turkey.

"Shut up, you fat ass," snapped Harry Compton. "The Head's going to speak. Mind, no cheek to the Head, any of you."

The Fourth-form rebels were crowded, behind the barricade, at the top of the dormitory staircase. They stared down over stacked bedsteads and boxes, at the study landing below. There stood the awe-inspiring figure of Dr. Whaddon, headmaster of Carcroft. Dr. Whaddon was gazing up the staircase. It was his first view of the rebels' stronghold: and he seemed hardly able to believe his majestic eyes as he gazed. A little behind him, stood Roger Ducas, master of the Fourth, looking anything but happy. Roger was accustomed to rule his form with an iron hand. He just hated to have to admit that the Fourth were out of control. But he had to admit it now. Gladly he would have kept the head-master off the scene. But the Head had intervened at last.

"Boys!" Dr. Whaddon's voice floated up the staircase, not loud but deep. "This disorder must end, and at once. I understand from your form-master that Tuck, who was expelled for pilfering, is among you—he must be given up at once, and sent away from the school. And—!"

"May I speak, sir?" asked Harry Compton, in his meekest tones.

"You may speak, Compton, if you desire to say that you will immediately cease this mutinous resistance to authority, and return to your duty."

"I don't think!" murmured Vane-Carter.

"Shut up, V.C.," whispered Lord Talboys.

"Is that what you desire to say, Compton?" came the Head's stern voice.

"No, sir, not exactly!" said Harry. "We don't believe that Turkey—I mean Tuck—pinched—I mean pilfered—that banknote in Roger's—I mean Mr. Ducas's—"

study, sir. Turkey's a little beast—"

"Look here, Compton—!" bleated Turkey.

"—and he would snoop any fellow's tuck," went on the captain of the Fourth, "But not a man here believes that he snooped that banknote. We're standing by Turkey because of that, sir!"

"Sticking to him like glue, sir!" said Vane-Carter. "It wouldn't be much loss if he was bunked: but fair play's a jewel."

"I never did it, sir!" squeaked Turkey. "I wasn't in Roger's study at all, sir, and the banknote wasn't on the table, sir, and I never touched it. And I only hid it in a book, sir, for a lark!"

"Pack it up, you fat fozzler!" hissed Bob Drake. "If you can't tell the truth, you podgy image, keep mum."

"I'm telling the truth," hooted Turkey. "I tell you I hid that banknote in a book on Roger's bookshelf, and if Roger can't find it, it ain't my fault. Not that I touched it, or even saw it—Yarooooh!" The fat Turkey wound up with a yell, as Bob's foot impinged upon his plump trousers.

"I will listen to nothing from you, Tuck!" rapped Dr. Whaddon. "You have been judged guilty of pilfering, and are sentenced to expulsion from the school. You were given an opportunity to return the banknote, and you have not done so. Be silent!"

"But I haven't got it, sir!" wailed Turkey. "I never had it! It wasn't in the study when I was there, and I—I never was in the study at all—it's all a—a mistake—Wow! Leave off kicking me, Drake, you beast! Wow!"

"Compton!" rapped the Head, "I command you, and the rest, to come down at once, and I will leave your form-master to deal with you. At once!"

"Sorry, sir—!" said Harry. "But—"

"Turkey can't help telling crammers, sir!" said Vane-Carter. "But he never had that banknote. He's not going to be sacked."

"I command you—!" The Head's voice rose.

"Please let me speak, sir!" Lord Talboys interposed. "We don't believe that Turkey's got that banknote, sir, or ever had it—he was just fathead enough to hide it in a book in Mr. Ducas's study, as he said. It might be found, sir."

"That will do, Talboys! You are aware that every investigation has been made, and that the missing

banknote could not be found in any book in Mr. Ducas's study!" rapped the Head.

"Yaas: but I've been thinking that out, sir!" said the Lizard. "Suppose somebody borrowed a book from Mr. Ducas's study, sir—"

"Wha-a-a-t?"

"I mean to say, sir, the beaks—I—I mean the masters, sir, do borrow one another's books!" said Lord Talboys. "Mr. Tinslow or Mr. Wooter might have—"

Dr. Whaddon stared at the Lizard.

"You absurd boy!" he exclaimed. "What you suggest is possible: but in such a case, the person who borrowed the book would have found the banknote in it, if it was there, and would have apprised Mr. Ducas of it."

"Mightn't have found it yet, sir?" said the Lizard. "Looks to me as if that's what might have happened, sir, because we all believe that that silly fathead Turkey did hide it in a book, just as he said."

"Nonsense!" rapped the Head. "I will hear no more! I command you all to come down and return to your duty. If you have not done so within a quarter of an hour, other measures will be taken! That is all!"

With that, Dr. Whaddon turned a majestic back, and rustled away. The rebels of Carcroft looked at one another, when he was gone. Bob gave a whistle.

"Roger will have to get a move on, now the Old Boy's butted in," he said. "He will be up to something before long. I wonder what?"

"We'll put paid to it, whatever it is," said Dudley Vane-Carter. "They haven't had much luck so far! No surrender!"

"No surrender!" echoed the rebels in chorus.

And they remained on the watch at the barricade, unable to guess what Roger's next move would be: but little doubting that it was coming soon—and quite ready for it when it came!

#### A NEW ONE FROM ROGER!

ROGER DUCAS sat in his study, with a frowning brow.

Other masters at Carcroft were with their forms: as Roger would gladly have been. But Roger had no form to take, in the unusual circumstances. During the past few days, having no form of his own, he had occasionally taken the Fifth Form: Mr. Groom, master of the Fifth, being away. But most of his time had been taken up in dealing

(Cont. page 28, col. 1)



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erable books were there: and in one of them, according to his statement, the fat and fatuous Turkey had hidden the missing banknote—that being the ineffable Turkey's idea of a "lark". Since he had examined every book in his study with the most meticulous care, without finding any trace of the missing banknote, Roger could hardly be expected to believe that statement: especially as the hapless Turkey mingled so much fiction with his facts, that his word was worth nothing at all. The fact that the Carcroft Fourth had backed up Turkey, against the sen-

who cared to drop into his study and borrow one: and it might have happened that some master had dropped in and borrowed the very book in which Turkey had hidden that banknote.

So, after the Head had intervened that morning, Roger made a round of the school, asking every master, one after another, whether he had borrowed a book from the study and not yet returned it. He did not expect a reply in the affirmative: and he did not get one. Not a master at Carcroft was in possession of a book belonging to Roger's study.

**PHIZZICS IS FUN!**

**A** N ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB IS PAINTED BLACK AND WHITE AS SHOWN. A BULLET IS FIRED THROUGH IT. WHICH WAY WILL THE BLACK AND WHITE FRAGMENTS FALL.....AND WHY?

**IF YOU ARE  
OUT IN THE  
RAIN FOR FIVE  
MINUTES, WILL YOU  
GET WETTER, STANDING  
STILL, WALKING OR  
RUNNING?**

**B** EFORE YOU IS A  
GLASS OF WATER  
FILLED TO THE BRIM  
AND CONTAINING  
SOME LUMPS OF ICE  
PARTLY SUBMERGED  
AND PARTLY  
STANDING IN  
THE WATER.  
WHEN THE ICE  
MELTS WILL  
THE WATER  
RUN OVER?



**T** his time we fire  
through a glass  
window. Is it true that the  
window is actually  
broken before the  
leaden bullet  
touches it?

**READER'S  
PROBLEM.**

**M** R. CONTANG WENT FOR A HOLIDAY. HE GAVE HIS SECRETARY THE KEY TO HIS OFFICE AND TOLD HER TO FORWARD HIS MAIL. HOWEVER, HE FORGOT TO GIVE HER THE KEY TO THE LETTER BOX. DAYS LATER HE RANG AND ASKED HER WHY HE HAD RECEIVED NO MAIL. HIS SECRETARY EXPLAINED THAT SHE DID NOT HAVE THE KEY TO THE LETTER BOX. SO HE PROMISED TO FORWARD IT TO HER AT ONCE. THE KEY WAS DULY POSTED BUT STILL NO MAIL WAS FORWARDED. AFTER HIS HOLIDAY HE RETURNED HOME AND PROMPTLY SACKED HIS SECRETARY.

**WAS HE JUSTIFIED IN DOING SO?****ANSWERS  
NEXT  
MONTH.****PRIZE TO** W. STEVENS  
"BUCKLAND PARK"  
TWO WELLS, SOUTH AUST.**CARCROFT***(Continued from page 5)*

with the barring-out: and he had to admit that he had not been able to deal with it successfully.

His brow was grim. He was going to deal with it! The rebels had driven off attacks by way of the barricaded staircase: the whole force of the Sixth-Form prefects had failed to get through. Even a surprise-attack at night by way of the dormitory window, had sputtered out in failure. But this state of affairs could not continue. Roger was going to end it—and he was far from being at the end of his resources yet.

His eyes, as he sat, were on the book-shelves in his study. Innum-

erence of the head-master, only exasperated Roger: it was sheer impertinence.

Nevertheless, Lord Talboys' suggestion had impressed him a little. It had caused him to wonder whether, after all, the juniors might be right in their judgment of the matter. There was hardly a fellow in the form who had not booted Turkey for snooping tuck: yet they all agreed, unanimously, that Turkey never had snooped that banknote. And it was possible—Roger had to admit that it was possible—that Talboys had hit the nail on the head. "Beaks" did borrow one another's books, when the spirit moved them so to do—Roger's books were at the disposal of any other master at Carcroft

Roger would have been glad and relieved had that explanation of the missing banknote turned out to be the right one. He would have been very glad indeed to learn that there was, after all, no pilferer in his form: and that the sentence of expulsion on Tuck might be washed out. He was prepared to take even a lenient view of the rebellion in his form, if it transpired that the barring-out actually had prevented an act of injustice. But that faint hope had left him now: only a negative reply was received to all his inquiries.

Tap! came at the study door.

"Come in!" rapped Roger.

It was Ruggles, the house-porter, who entered.

"I've got it, sir!" said Ruggles.



Roger rose to his feet. He had been waiting for Ruggles, who had been despatched to the iron-monger's at Ridgate.

What Ruggles had "got" was rather a curious implement to be brought into a master's study at Carcroft. It was an enormous iron hook, attached to the end of a coil of rope, looped over the house-porter's arm. Roger glanced at it. "Excellent!" he said. He took the coil of rope from the house-porter. "Kindly go to the Sixth-Form room, Ruggles, and request the headmaster to allow Langley and the other prefects to join me on the study landing."

"Yessir."

The coil of rope, with the big hook attached, was over Roger Ducas's arm, as he left his study, and proceeded up the stairs to study landing. He stopped at the foot of the dormitory staircase, and looked up. There was a shout above:

"Look out! There's Roger!"

A crowd of faces lined the barricade, at once, looking down. Many of them were grinning. If Roger had come there to "jaw", it was not likely to produce much effect on the rebels, who had passed by even the august headmaster's commands unheeded. And if he was coming to action again, they were more than ready—in fact, eager for the fray.

"Hallo, Roger!" called out Vane-Carter. "Thought up a new one, old thing?"

"Trot it out!" grinned Bob Drake.

"Yah!" came from Turkey Tuck. Turkey, with a barricade of stacked bedsteads between him and his form-master, was full of beans. "Yah! Why don't you go and look for that banknote, Roger! Yah!"

Turkey, greatly daring, put a fat thumb to his fat little nose, and extended fat fingers. Roger's glare was almost petrifying.

"Chuck that, Turkey, you fat ass!" exclaimed Harry Compton, laughing. "Want anything, sir?" he added. "We're all ready to come to terms, sir! We don't want to keep up this shindy, sir—"

"Don't we?" grinned Vane-Carter.

"We're not giving in, at any price," went on the captain of the Fourth. "But as soon as it's agreed that Turkey's not to be sacked, and nobody else punished, we're all ready to toe the line, sir."

"Silence!" roared Roger. "I have not come here to listen to im-

pertinence, Compton. You have disobeyed me, and disobeyed your headmaster—"

"We're sorry for that, sir!" said Harry. "No disrespect to you, sir, or to the Head. But we're not letting a man in our form be sacked for nothing."

"You will descend at once, or that barricade will be removed, and the Sixth-Form prefects will deal with you!" rapped Roger.

"They've tried it on more than once!" grinned Vane-Carter. "Let 'em try again! We'll handle the pre's all right, sir."

There was a tramp of feet behind Roger. Ten stalwart Sixth-Form men, the whole body of Carcroft prefects, came into view: Langley, and Gates, and Vance, and Packe, and Crewe, and Crocker, and the rest. At close quarters, that formidable body of hefty seniors would no doubt have made short work of two dozen juniors. But the barricade was between. Not in the least dismayed by the sight of the enemy, the rebels of Carcroft greeted them with a yell of defiance.

"We're ready, sir!" said Langley.

Roger glanced round at them.

"Very good," he said. Then he turned grimly to the rebels again, uncoiling the rope on his arm.

"What on earth's this game?"

muttered Bob Drake. "Does he think he's going to lasso us like a Texas cowboy?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Or hook us like jolly old fishes?" said Vane-Carter. "That's a hook on the end of the rope—what the deuce is he up to?"

"Old Roger's a downy bird!" muttered Lord Talboys. "He's thought up somethin'—Oh, gad! Look!"

"Phew!" breathed Harry Compton.

Roger, evidently, had thought up something! Standing at the foot of the staircase, he was swinging the rope, rather in the manner of a cowboy with a lasso. The iron hook at the end circled in the air. The prefects, from behind, watched him—the rebels, across the barricade, watched him. Suddenly the rope flew, and the big iron hook clanged down among the stacked bedsteads.

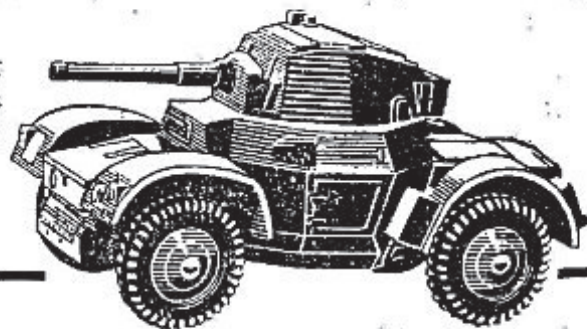
"Now—!" rapped Roger, to his followers.

"Ready, sir!" grinned Langley.

The whole crowd of Sixth-Form men grasped the rope. They drew it taut, and pulled. Roger stood watching them with a grim smile.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob Drake. "That's it, is it?"

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That, clearly, was "it". The iron hook, falling in the midst of the bedsteads packed and jammed across the staircase, had a good hold. And with ten hefty senior men putting all their beef into the pull, the barricade began to creak, and rock, and slip. Frontal attacks on that barricade had failed. But the wary Roger had thought up a new one! The barricade was to be dragged bodily down the stairs, leaving the way open for a rush.

"Oh, haddocks!" gasped Turkey Tuck. "I—I—I say, it—it—it's going! I—I—I say, they've got us! Oh, jiminy!"

Creak! creak! crash! The whole barricade was loosening, under the steady strong drag on the rope. One of the bedsteads slipped out of place, and rolled and thundered down the stairs.

For the first time since the barring-out had started at Carcroft School, something like dismay fell upon the rebels.

"The game's up!" muttered Levett.

Vane-Carter set his teeth.

"No surrender!" he snapped. "If they get the staircase, we'll hold out in the dorm! They haven't got it yet! Give them all you've got!"

A sardine-tin whizzed from his hand. It missed Roger's nose by an inch, and banged on Langley's ear. There was a yell from the captain of Carcroft. Roger stepped back, rather hastily, out of range. But the Sixth-Formers, pulling on the rope, were within range—and missiles flew fast. Empty tins, cakes of soap, anything and everything that came to hand, rained on them, and the pull on the rope slackened, as they jumped and dodged to escape the fusillade.

But it was only for a moment or two. The barrage from above only drove them out of range. They backed round the corner, at the foot of the staircase, and the pull on the rope recommenced. And that pull was long and strong. The barricade was toppling.

"Roger's done us!" breathed Dick Lee. "The stairs will be cleared in two minutes more." There was another crash, as he spoke, as a dislodged bedstead went trundling and thundering down. Three or four boxes rolled after it, and then another bedstead. The barricade was breaking up under the staring eyes of the rebels of Carcroft. It was a "new one" from Roger: and this time, Roger looked like getting through!

### THE LAST STAND!

"BACK into the dorm!" rapped Harry Compton.

It was the last resource.

The barricade was going. The whole structure had been dragged loose, and bedstead after bedstead, box after box, trundled echoing down the stairs, and rolled on the study landing below.

"No surrender!" breathed Vane-Carter.

"No fear!" Compton's face was set, his eyes gleaming. He was in no mood for surrender. "Bob, you've got your tool-box in the dorm—get to it—nails and screws for the door—quick—!"

"What-ho!" said Bob. He rushed back into the dormitory. Most of the Fourth followed him in. It was clear now that the staircase could not be held: the dormitory was the last hope of the rebels.

Crash! crash! crash! went boxes and bedsteads down the staircase: crashing and rolling. The stairs were almost clear now. Only one bedstead remained, precariously perched on the edge of the dormitory landing, and that too would have rolled, had not Vane-Carter grasped it in time and held on to it. Only Harry Compton, Dick Lee, and V.C. remained at the front now: the rest had swarmed back into the dormitory where Bob was already busy with hammer and nails from his tool-chest. He was banging long nails into the edges of the door, all ready to be driven home into the door-post, and Lord Talboys, wielding a screw-driver, was driving in screws for the same purpose. But time was short.

"Better cut!" muttered Dick Lee, as Roger and Company appeared in sight again at the foot of the stair.

"Stick on!" hissed Vane-Carter. "We've got to give Drake time to get ready with the door! If they follow us into the dorm, we're done."

"But what—?"

Vane-Carter did not reply, but he grasped the bedstead that rocked on the edge of the dormitory landing, his eyes gleaming. Below, Roger's hand was raised, pointing up.

"Langley! The way is clear now—kindly proceed—!"

"Come on, you fellows!" said Langley. He stepped on the stair, and the whole body of prefects, ashplant in hand, gathered behind him.

Vane-Carter's voice rang out!

"Look out, Langley! This bedstead's coming down!"

"Oh!" Langley stopped suddenly, staring up. Gates, Crocker, Packe, and the rest, behind him stopped also. V.C. grasping the bedstead, stood ready to topple it over. "Stop that, you young ruffian—!"

"Likely!" jeered Vane-Carter. "Come up and you go back faster than you came."

"Good man!" grinned Dick Lee.

"Let them have it if they rush!" exclaimed Harry Compton, breathlessly.

There was a pause. A bedstead from a junior dormitory was not a massive affair, by any means: but sweeping down the staircase, it was certainly going to sweep away any fellow coming up. Nobody below seemed to like the prospect. There was quite a long pause—which was what the rebels wanted. Every minute was precious, in preparing for the defence of the dormitory.

"Look here, you cheeky young rascals!" exclaimed the Carcroft captain. "You can see your game's up—let that bedstead alone—"

"Rats!" retorted Vane-Carter.

"By gum! When I get hold of you—!" breathed Langley.

"When!" jeered V.C. "Come up and try."

Langley made a step up: but he paused again, as the bedstead rocked. Roger's voice boomed from below.

"You are wasting time! Go up at once—"

"That young rascal's going to trundle that bedstead down on us, sir—"

Snort, from Roger.

"If you prefer me to take your place, Langley, I will do so," he snapped.

Langley reddened. He did not like the look of that bedstead above: but he could hardly relinquish the lead in a rush, to a portly middle-aged gentleman. He made up his mind.

"Come on!" he exclaimed: and he rushed up the stairs. After him rushed the Sixth-Form men.

"Go it!" panted Lee.

Vane-Carter did not need telling. Coolly, he waited till the enemy were halfway up the staircase. Then, with a sudden push, he toppled the bedstead over. It went careering wildly down the stairs.

Crash! crash! crash! It seemed rather like an earthquake to the Sixth-Form men coming up at a rush. The rolling bedstead fairly swept them away. Langley, Packe, and Crocker went over, yelling: Gates was knocked over them,



Vance sprawled over Gates. Two or three of the prefects, at the rear, jumped clear in time—but the rest were distributed over the stairs, rolling down with the rolling bedstead. There was a wild chorus of yells and howls from the mix-up.

"Now cut!" breathed V.C.

Leaving that scene of havoc behind them, Compton, Lee, and V.C. ran into the dormitory. Compton, the last in, banged the door shut.

"All ready!" gasped Bob Drake. "Hold it shut, you men, while I bang in the nails."

Bang! bang! bang! went Bob's hammer. Nails innumerable were already driven, slanting, in the edges of the door. The bangs of the hammer drove them into the door-post. Others, at the bottom of the door, were driven into the floor. Bang! bang! bang! rang the hammer in Bob's vigorous hand.

Loud voices and trampling feet were heard, on the dormitory landing outside. The Sixth-Form men had come up: raging. Most of them had been rather damaged in the mix-up on the staircase. They were fairly yearning to handle the ashplants on the rebel juniors. But for the door between, those ashes would certainly have done a lot of execution. But the rush had to stop at the door of the dormitory.

Thump! bang! Kick! Thump! came at the door. It creaked, under heavy pressure from outside. But within, a crowd of juniors jammed against it, while nail after nail was driven home. Lord Talboys, his aristocratic hand wielding the screwdriver with vigour, was driving in screws. The door creaked, but it showed no sign of yielding.

Roger's voice came booming.

"What are you stopping for, Langley? Why do you not enter the dormitory? You are wasting time—!"

"The door won't open!" howled Langley. "We can't get in through the keyhole."

"What? what! Open the door—!"

"Perhaps you can open it, sir!" hooted Langley. The Carcroft captain seemed to be losing his temper, "I can't, anyhow."

"Pooh! pooh! Give me room."

"You'll want a battering-ram, Roger!" yelled Vane-Carter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my word! The door is certainly fastened somehow—it is not the lock—what—what—what—?"

"Nails and screws, old thing!" called out Lord Talboys. "Push in through the keyhole, Roger."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Upon my word! Langley, Gates, Packe—all of you—push your hardest on the door—all of you together!" boomed Roger.

Ten stalwart Sixth-Form prefects braced themselves and pushed. They exerted all their strength. The door creaked, and almost groaned. But it held fast. Nails and screws beat muscle. Roger Ducas looked on, with a thunderous brow. He had not counted on this. But it was a case of "thus far, and no farther." The rebels of Carcroft had been driven into their last refuge. But they were still holding out: and the barring-out was still on, and still going strong.

"Boys!" Roger's voice came in a roar.

"Man!" came back Vane-Carter's reply.

"Open this door at once—"

**"ARE YOU OBSERVANT?"**

**Answers.**

1. Hume and Sturt.
2. a. Greece.  
b. Panama.  
c. Turkey.  
d. Egypt.
3. The numbers are from right to left: A, B, F, J, L, M, U, V, X, Y.

"Think again, Roger."

"Otherwise I shall call up Cuttle, to break it in with his axe."

"Go and eat coke!"

"What—what—?"

"Coke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Roger Ducas breathed hard and deep. But there was no arguing with a nailed and screwed door: and Roger turned away, at last. The prefects followed him down the stairs: and there was a triumphant yell from the rebels as they heard the enemy departing. Matters, undoubtedly, were getting critical: but the rebels of Carcroft were game to the last!

**LIGHT AT LAST!**

"GROOM, I suppose!" grunted Roger.

A pile of letters lay on his study table. Roger Ducas was not much interested in correspondence that morning. He was interested in routing the rebels of Carcroft out of their last refuge. But he had to wait for old Cuttle, before he could proceed with his next and final move. Word had been sent to Cuttle to come to the House, and bring with him his axe, to be handled on the dormitory door. That was going to be the finish.

While he waited in his study, Roger glanced at his letters. One of them had a French stamp and a French postmark, from which he guessed that it was from Mr. Groom, the master of the Fifth, who was on leave of absence after a bout of influenza. Groom had left on the day the trouble started, and knew nothing of the barring-out at Carcroft. Roger picked up the letter, and slit the envelope, to read it while he waited for Cuttle.

He unfolded the letter. Then he gave a start, and stared. A flimsy strip of engraved paper was folded in the letter.

He stared at it blankly. It was a £5 note. Why Groom was sending him a £5 note was an utter mystery to Roger Ducas. Groom, like all travellers on the Continent, had to keep within his traveller's allowance, and certainly couldn't have had too much money with him. In amazement, Roger looked at the letter. Then he jumped almost clear of the floor of his study.

Dear Ducas,

You're getting careless, old man: using banknotes as book-marks. I borrowed a book from your study, the day I left, to read in the train, and did I get a surprise, when I found this £5 note in it? Never heard of anyone using banknotes to mark a place in a book before. You must be rolling in it! Might have landed me in a spot of bother, too—you know travellers' cash is allowed by your paternal Government. Here's your fiver—and don't be so careless with it, old fellow—it might have been lost."

There was more in the letter: but Roger read no further, just then. He stared at the letter, and he stared at the banknote.

"Upon my word!" breathed Roger.

He took out his pocket-book, and looked at a number entered therein. He looked at the number on the banknote. They were the same. It was, in fact, the missing banknote: the fiver that the fat and fatuous Turkey had hidden in a book on his book-shelf—and which, as Roger now knew, Groom had borrowed to read on his journey to France! Lord Talboys' surmise was, after all, well-founded: though no one had thought of the master who was absent from Carcroft.

Roger's face reddened.

Turkey Tuck had been expelled for "pilfering" that banknote: and here it was, in his hand: it had been in the book all the time! Cer-

(Continued page 34)



## CARCROFT

*(Continued from page 31)*

tainly, it was all due to Turkey's fatuous folly in playing idiotic tricks with a banknote in his form-master's study. His form-master, and his head-master, had only been able to act on the evidence: and the evidence had condemned Turkey. Nevertheless, Turkey was, as the Carcroft rebels had maintained, innocent of the charge—Turkey hadn't pilfered that banknote. For there it was!

There was a tap at Roger's door, as he stood with Groom's letter in his hand, and an extraordinary expression on his face. Old Cuttle looked in. He had a large and heavy axe under his arm.

"'Ere I am, sir," said Cuttle. "And 'ere's the haxe."

"Oh!" Roger caught his breath. "Oh! Ah! Yes! I—I—ahem! The—the axe will not be wanted now, Cuttle! You—ahem—may go!"

"Yes, sir!" Cuttle stared, and went.

For several long minutes, Roger stood staring at Groom's letter, in deep and not pleasant thought. Then he left his study at last, and proceeded to the Sixth-form room. Dr. Whaddon, deep in Greek, looked round as Roger looked in.

"One moment, sir—!" said Roger.

The head-master came to the door.

"What is it? The rebellion is over, I trust! I—"

"Please look at—at this, sir!"

The Head took the letter and the banknote, and looked at them. Then he handed them back, and looked at Roger. His expression was very expressive.

"Bless my soul!" he said. "Really, Mr. Ducas—really—it would appear, then, that there has been an act of injustice, and the boy—Tuck—is guiltless. Bless my soul! Really—really—Mr. Ducas—!"

"I had, of course, no idea that Groom had borrowed a book from my study, sir, the day he left—that particular book, as it happens—"

"Quite! Quite! Nevertheless, an act of injustice has been done! It is very fortunate, in the circumstances, that Tuck had not left—certainly he must have been allowed to return, had he gone home. Mr. Ducas, the boys of your form have saved us both, from a very disagreeable situation. If they had not kept Tuck here—" The Head paused, and they looked at one another in silence. Both of them rea-

lised that, in the peculiar circumstances, the barring-out at Carcroft had been a fortunate occurrence—which was certainly not the view they had taken of it hitherto!

"Bless my soul!" said the Head, again. "You must apprise Tuck immediately that the facts are known, and that he is not to be expelled, Mr. Ducas. As for the other boys—" The Head coughed. "As for the others, Mr. Ducas, are we to blame them for loyalty to a schoolfellow who, as we now know, was innocent of what was laid to his charge? If they had not kept the boy here, the situation would have been most awkward! You will tell them, Mr. Ducas, that if they return to their duty at once, the whole affair will be forgiven and forgotten!"

"I am glad to hear it, sir!"

And with that, the Head returned to the Sixth and Greek, and Roger Ducas proceeded to the Fourth-form dormitory—minus Cuttle and his axe!

## HAPPY LANDING!

"COMPTON!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Ready for you, Roger!" yelled Vane-Carter.

"Shut up, V.C. Go ahead, sir!" called out Harry Compton, through the dormitory door. "We're not giving in, sir—not so long as Turkey's to be sacked!"

"I should jolly well think not!" bleated Turkey. "You go and hunt for that banknote, Roger—!"

"Silence!" came Roger's voice through the door. "Listen to me, all of you! The banknote has been found."

"Oh!" exclaimed Harry Compton.

"Oh, gad!" said Lord Talboys. "What did we tell you, sir? Turkey never had it—"

"It is now established that that utterly stupid boy, Tuck, did actually hide the banknote in a book in my study, as he stated. It was not pilfered at all."

"I jolly well told you—!" bleated Turkey.

"Silence, Tuck! The whole trouble is due to your stupidity and to your untruthfulness. But your sentence is now rescinded, and you are not to be expelled from the school."

"Oh, haddocks!" gasped Turkey.

Roger's deep voice went on:

"In view of this very fortunate outcome, I have your headmaster's instructions to tell you all, that if you immediately return to your duty, this outbreak of insubordin-

ation will be forgotten and forgiven."

"Bravo!" chirruped the Lizard.

"The dinner bell will ring in half-an-hour," went on Roger. "If you are all in hall, when the bell rings, there will be no punishments, and nothing further will be said on the subject. That is all."

Roger was heard to rustle away.

The rebels of Carcroft looked at one another. Lord Talboys picked up the screw-driver. It was time to get those screws out again!

"Well, my hat!" said Bob Drake, with a whistle. "We're through, you men! Nothing to bar out for now!"

"We're not going to lose our Turkey!" grinned Dick Lee.

"Pity!" remarked Levett.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Not worth keeping, if you come to that," said Bob. "But fair play's a jewel. "You're all right now, Turkey, you fat, fozzling, footling frump! And if you ever lark in Roger's study again, you bloated bloater, we'll skin you alive."

"I—I suppose we can't carry on, now there's nothing to carry on for!" said Vane-Carter, reluctantly.

"Fathead!" said Harry Compton. "Get those nails out, Bob."

"We're jolly lucky it's ended so well," said Lord Talboys. "The sooner we're down in hall, the better."

"Yes, rather," said Turkey. "We don't want to be late for dinner! I say, I wonder what they've got for dinner to-day!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Only V.C. rather regretted that the shindy was at an end. Everyone else was glad that it had ended so well for all concerned. By the time the bell rang for dinner, all the Carcroft Fourth were in hall—stared at curiously by fellows in other forms, and eyed rather grimly by the prefects at the high table. They were relieved to find that Roger was perfectly normal in manner, quite good-tempered, and had, apparently, dismissed the whole affair from his mind. As for Turkey Tuck, the fat cause of the spot of bother from beginning to end, he was wholly concentrated on the foodstuffs, and seemed to have forgotten that he ever had been sacked, or that there ever had been a barring-out at Carcroft!

## CONCLUSION

Next Month

"VERA CRUZ"

The story of the Movie