

THE "CARCROFT CHRONICLE"

Edited by HARRY COMPTON
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Sports Editor DUDLEY VANE-CARTER
Boxing Editor BOB DRAKE
Food Expert TURKEY TUCK

AN INTERVIEW WITH Mr. MARTIN CLIFFORD

By HARRY COMPTON

WE thought it a top-hole idea, in the editorial office, otherwise the corner study, to interview Mr. Martin Clifford, the celebrated author of "Tom Merry." If it came off, the "Carcroft Chronicle" would be the only school magazine ever to pull off such a scoop. So, provided with a large new note-book and having borrowed Vane-Carter's fountain-pen, I took the train from Sussex to Kent, and arrived ultimately at Mr. Clifford's door.

It was opened by a lady whom I concluded to be the great man's housekeeper.

"Does Mr. Martin Clifford live here?" I asked.

"Yes."

"Can I see him?"

"Mr. Clifford is busy."

"I represent the Press," I explained.

"Mr. Clifford sees reporters only by appointment," she explained in her turn: and the door closed.

I was a little dashed. I realised that I was probably not the only representative of the Press seeking interviews with the author of Tom Merry, and that no doubt a busy man had to ration them, as it were. On the other hand, I did not want to return to Carcroft and explain to Lee, and Drake, and V.C., and the rest of the Staff, that all I had learned of Martin Clifford was that he saw Press-men only by appointment. So I stood considering my next move.

I was still standing and considering, when a French window opened, and a rather kindly face, surmounted by a velvet skull-cap, looked out.

I had seen photographs in the papers—I knew him at once! This was the man!

“Haven’t you brought it?” he asked.

“Eh! Brought what?” I stammered, taken aback.

“The evening paper.”

“The evening paper!” I repeated, blankly.

“Aren’t you the boy from the newsagent’s?” asked Mr. Clifford.

I think I breathed rather hard.

“I am NOT the boy from the newsagent’s, Mr. Clifford,” I said, very distinctly, “My name is Harry Compton. I am captain of the Fourth Form at Carcroft. I am also Chief Editor and Roving Reporter of the “Carcroft Chronicle.” I represent that journal. I am here to interview you, Mr. Clifford.”

“Oh!” said Mr. Clifford, taken aback too, “The fact is, I never see reporters except by—”

I ventured to interrupt him.

“I’ve heard that one!” I said, “I’ve just heard it from your house-keeper. Please give me a few minutes.”

“I am rather busy to-day,” said Martin Clifford. He hesitated. But, as he has remarked in his own stories, the man who hesitates is lost. His kindly nature prevailed. He nodded. “Step in,” he said.

I did not wait to be asked twice!

A moment later, I was seated in the Presence: and could scarcely believe in my good luck. Here was I, in a comfortable armchair, face to face with the man whose name was a household word. I whipped out my note-book.

“Now, a few questions, Mr. Clifford,” I began, in a business-like manner.

“Fire away!” said Mr. Clifford, good-humouredly.

“Many of my readers,” I said, “would like to know just how old you are, Mr. Clifford.”

“I am not old at all,” explained Mr. Clifford, “But I have been young for more years than I ever confide to reporters.”

“Will you tell me when you were born?” I inquired.

“Certainly,” said Mr. Clifford, “on my first birthday.”

“Hem! Another interesting question is your various pen-names,” I said, “You wrote the old Gem as Martin Clifford! What were your other pen-names at various periods of your life?”

“Too numerous to mention,” answered Mr. Clifford.

“Hem!” I tried again, “I have heard that you were a great traveller in your younger days, Mr. Clifford—France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Holland, Belgium—is it true that you once descended into the crater of Mount Vesuvius?”

“Quite true.”

“What was it like?”

Martin Clifford seemed to consider for a moment or two.

"It was like the crater of Mount Vesuvius!" he answered, at length.

"Very like indeed!"

"Hem! Do you ever broadcast, Mr. Clifford?"

"Sometimes."

"How often?"

"As often as the B.B.C. ask me," said Mr. Clifford, with a smile.

"Speaking of the B.B.C., it may interest you to hear of one of my own little personal customs."

I was all eagerness at once. Note-book and fountain-pen were ready. In fact I was almost breathless.

"Please go on, Mr. Clifford," I exclaimed, "Anything of that kind—the personal touch, you know—will delight my readers. Please tell me."

"You see," said Martin Clifford, "It sometimes happens that some boring person may drop in, and stay too long and talk too much. Hospitality forbids me to tell him to cut it short and travel. So I have instituted this little custom I am going to tell you about to solve the difficulty. I have a press button under this rug—!" He indicated the spot with his foot.

"A press-button under the rug," I repeated, scribbling away busily in my note-book.

"Unseen by my boresome caller, quite unnoticed, I press it with my foot," continued Mr. Clifford. "It rings a bell in my house-keeper's room."

"—in the house-keeper's room," I repeated, scribbling down Mr. Clifford's words as fast as he uttered them.

"Edith then taps at the door," went on Mr. Clifford, "and announces 'A telephone call from the B.B.C., Mr. Clifford! They are holding the line'."

I made more hurried notes.

"My boring visitor then takes his hat, and his departure," said Mr. Clifford, "We part on the pleasantest of terms, with feelings unruffled. Rather neat idea, what?"

"Excellent!" I exclaimed, heartily, "An excellent idea, Mr. Clifford. Bores never know they are boring, do they?"

"Seldom," agreed Mr. Clifford.

"And they wouldn't like to be told," I remarked, with a smile.

"They wouldn't indeed."

"By that simple dodge, you get rid of a bore who is wasting your time, and without ruffling his feathers," I said.

"That is the big idea," said Mr. Clifford.

"Very, very tactful!" I said.

"Very!" assented Martin Clifford.

"I am sure that that will interest the readers of the 'Carcroft Chronicle'," I said, "Now, I have a few more questions to put, Mr.

Clifford—" I was going on, when I was interrupted by a tap at the door.

It opened, and the trim house-keeper appeared.

"What is it, Edith?" asked Martin Clifford.

"A telephone call from the B.B.C., Mr. Clifford," said Edith, "They are holding the line!"

I looked at Edith. I looked at Martin Clifford. A few moments more, and I was heading for the railway station!

WHO'S WHO AT CARCROFT

By DUDLEY VANE-CARTER

CARCROFT SCHOOL is on the Sussex coast, about ten miles from St. Jim's. The headmaster is Dr. Whaddon, quite a popular old boy, though sometimes severe: and it is well known that he can whop! In the Lower School we don't see much of the Head: the Sixth have that pleasure chiefly. On the whole, they are welcome to it.

Our own beak, in the Fourth Form, is Mr. Roger Ducas. We call him Roger—not in his hearing—and sometimes Red Roger, because he has a spot of ginger in his hair—still more carefully not in his hearing! He has another spot of the same in his temper!

There are a crowd of fellows at Carcroft: too numerous to mention, in fact. But here is a list of the fellows you may like to know:

SIXTH FORM

CECIL LANGLEY, Captain of the School

HERBERT HENRY GUNTER, generally called the "Goat"

GEORGE WILSON, his pal

CREWE, a prefect whom we don't like

GATES, a prefect whom we do

LUCIUS PACKE

FIFTH FORM

Master : Mr. GROOM

MONTAGUE CUTLER, rather a bad hat

POWE, a slacker

AUBREY TUNSTALL

SHELL

Master : Mr. TINSHAW

SUTTON

PAGE

HANSON

TOM MERRY'S ANNUAL

FOURTH FORM

Master : Mr. DUCAS

Study

- No. 2 BABBIE
No. 3 LICKE
No. 4 JONES minor
No. 5 (the corner study). HARRY COMPTON, Captain of the Form,
BOB DRAKE and DICK LEE
No. 6 CARR, SCOTT and DRUMMOND
No. 7 LEVETT and LEATH
No. 8 BENT
No. 9 DUDLEY VANE-CARTER, nicknamed the "Sportsman," and
TURKEY TUCK, the fattest man ever.
No. 11 RUPERT, Lord TALBOYS, nicknamed the Lizard

THIRD FORM

Master : Mr. WOOPER

BRAY, GUNTER's fag
DONKIN, CREWE's fag
COOT

WHO'S WHO AT ROOKWOOD

By JIMMY SILVER

Headmaster : Dr. CHISHOLM

SIXTH FORM

Classical

GEORGE BULKELEY,
(Captain of the School)
CARTHEW
DICKENSON
JONES major
LONSDALE
NEVILLE

Modern

CECIL KNOWLES,
(Captain of Manders' House)
CATESBY
TRESHAM

FIFTH FORM

Master : Mr. GREELY

EDWARD HANSON
BROWN major
LUMSDEN
JOBSON

EVANS

SHELL

Master : Mr. MOONEY

HOWARD
GILBEY
TRACY
ADOLPHUS SMYTHE

LANG
PERKINS

FOURTH FORM

Master : RICHARD DALTON

JIMMY SILVER
ARTHUR EDWARD LOVELL
GEORGE RABY
ARTHUR NEWCOME
VALENTINE MORNINGTON
CYRIL PEELE
DICK OSWALD
TOM RAWSON
HAROLD TOPHAM
CECIL TOWNSEND
TEDDY GRACE
ALFRED HIGGS
KIT CONROY, the "Cornstalk"
CHRIS ERROLL
REGINALD MUFFIN, "Tubby"

TOMMY DODD
TOMMY COOK
TOMMY DOYLE
CLARENCE CUFFY
ALBERT LEGGETT
JAMES TOWLE

THIRD FORM

Master : Mr. BOHUN

HAMLEY
HAWES
ALGY SILVER
TEDDY LOVELL

SECOND FORM

SNOOKS
TRACY minor

WHO'S WHO AT ST. JIM'S

By TOM MERRY

Headmaster : Dr. HOLMES

School House

New House

House-master, VICTOR RAILTON

House-master, HORACE RATCLIFF

SIXTH FORM

ERIC KILDARE
(Captain of the School)
GEORGE DARRELL
GERALD KNOX
LANGTON
NORTH
RUSHDEN

MONTEITH
(Captain of the New House)
GRAY
HALL
WEBB

FIFTH FORM

Master : Mr. RATCLIFF

GERALD CUTTS
GILMORE
LEFEVRE
ST. LEGER
PRYE

SHELL

Master : Mr. LINTON

Study

No. 3 GRUNDY, WILKINS, GUNN CLAMPE
No. 5 SCROPE JIMSON
No. 7 CROOKE, RACKE FRENCH
No. 9 GORE, SKIMPOLE, TALBOT
No. 10 TOM MERRY, MANNERS,
LOWTHER
No. 11 BERNARD GLYN, HARRY
NOBLE

FOURTH FORM

Master : Mr. LATHOM

Study

No. 1 DURRANCE, LUMLEY- FIGGINS, KERR, FATTY WYNN
LUMLEY
No. 2 TRIMBLE, WILDRAKE, CHOWLE
MELLISH
No. 3 BATES LAWRENCE
No. 5 REILLY, HAMMOND OWEN
No. 6 JACK BLAKE, GEORGE REDFERN
HERRIES, ROBERT PRATT
DIGBY
ARTHUR AUGUSTUS DIGGS
D'ARCY
No. 7 ROYLANCE
No. 9 CARDEW, CLIVE, LEVISON
major

THIRD FORM

Master : Mr. SELBY

WALTER ADOLPHUS D'ARCY minor

LEVISON minor

MANNERS minor

GIBSON

FRAYNE

PIGGOTT

JAMESON

HOBBS

TURKEY TUCK'S DREAM!

I dreamed I sat in Study Nine,
In V.C.'s soft armchair,
The day was bright, the weather fine,
But life was full of care.
The study cupboard was, alas,
Like Mother Hubbard's, bare!
I asked where tea was coming from,
And echo answered "Where?"

Then suddenly the door flew wide,
And in came old V.C.,
He didn't say "I want that chair!"
Or heave a book at me.
He said "I've just remembered, Tuck,
You haven't had your tea,
So here's a bag of juicy tarts!"
Which filled my heart with glee.

And, as Vane-Carter turned away,
In came my old pal Drake,
He said "Oh, here you are, old chap!
How would you like this cake?"
Then Harry Compton trickled in,
Our captain good and true,
And said "If you like chocolates,
Here's a whole box for you!"

I'd not had time to take a bite,
When in came Richard Lee,
He said "I thought I'd bring along
Some sosses for your tea."
And then the Lizard ambled in,
With two large pots of jam,
And Babbie brought some new-laid eggs,
And Scott a pound of ham.

