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## THE RIVALRY OF ST WODE'S

BY CHARLES HAMILTON

Vol. I (New Series), No. 12.

### THE FIRST CHAPTERS

— OF —

### A NEW SCHOOL TALE.

— BY THE —

Author of "The Rivals of St. Kit's."



Dick is made comfortable.

DICK PENWYN, panting with his exertions, and a little startled by the knowledge that he had knocked down three or four St. Wodians before he had been a quarter of an hour in the school, stood in a state of bewilderment. Blagden slung his arm on the shoulder.

"Good for you, kid!" he exclaimed. "You are good stuff, and no mistake. Why, they'd have had the grab to a certainty if you hadn't slipped in!"

"Yes, rather," said Bamford.

"I'm glad I helped," said Pen. "I hardly knew whether I'd better at first. It's all very strange to me."

"Ha, ha! You'll get used to it. You see, we're always having rows in the Fourth, and we're up against Newcome's cads all the time."

"Phew! Look at the eggs!" said Bamford, opening the bag.

"My hat!"

The eggs, smashed in the fight, were clammily splashed over the interior of the bag and over its other contents. Blagden growled.

"Well, it can't be helped!" he exclaimed. "We can do without the eggs. There's plenty of ham and beef, and bread and butter and cheese. And there's the tarts and the jam-tarts."

"Rather eggs," grinned Bamford.

"Well, they put eggs in 'em, so I don't see why an egg or two outside should hurt 'em," said Blagden.

"Quite right."

"Now, let's have tea."

Bamford lifted up the teapot to pour out the tea. The fragrant scent of it was very welcome to Dick Penwyn, who was very hungry after a long journey. Ham and beef and crisp bread and butter seemed like the food of the gods to him then. He did not need a second invitation to begin. He ate well, and the juniors urged far more upon him than he could eat.

"How do you like this study?" asked Blagden, as he poured out Penwyn's fourth cup of tea.

"I think it's jolly," said Penwyn.

"Like to share it with me?"

"Very much."

"Bamford and I share it at present," Blagden explained; "but we usually do three to study here, and you would very likely be put in with us anyway. But you can ask Mr. Bush to make sure. I'll take you to his study after tea."

"I'll ask him, you may be sure."

"Pass the ham this way. More ham, Pen!"

"Thank you!"

"Like it?"

"Ripping!"

"Don't forget to try the tarts. They're good."

The tea proceeded merrily. Dick Penwyn's heart was very full. He wondered whether the wide earth held another such splendid set of fellows as Blagden & Co.

"How did you come to know I was arriving to-day, Blagden?" he asked presently.

"Got it from Mr. Bush," said Blagden. "He mentioned it to me, but we've expected you for some time."

"It's jolly decent of you to treat

me like this," said Pen gratefully. "But I suppose you're always kind to a new fellow?"

Blagden could not help grinning. As a matter of fact, he was rather given to ragging new boys.

"That depends," he said. "A fellow like you, of course, I could chum up with at once; but there's a chap expected at St. Wode's—may come any day—that we're going to be jolly well down on a natter, you know, who would be a disgrace to any school. We're going to make St. Wode's warm for him, and show him that we'd have done better to stay in the place he belongs to. I don't know exactly when he's coming, but we'll make things warm for him when he does. But if you've finished tea, old man, I'll take you to Bush's study. He will be expecting you."

Pen rose to his feet.

"I'm ready," he said.

"Come on, then!"

And Pen followed Blagden from the study. The other fellows, left alone, grinned at one another.

"What do you think of him?" asked Bamford.

"Oh, he's every inch a lord's son!" said Blagden. "You can tell it by his manner. There are lots of bounders yeaning about in these days, but you can always tell the real thing when you see it."

"Just what I think," agreed Carleton. "There's something about a gentleman—a something it's rather hard to define, but it's there, all the same."

"And he'll belong to our set, you bet!" grinned Bamford. "We've got him all right now."

"Oh, no doubt about that!"

The new boy at St. Wode's would have been very much surprised and enlightened if he had overheard those remarks. But he didn't.

His Lordship.

BLAGDEN led the new junior to the door of Mr. Bush's study, and there left him. He impressed upon Pen to come back to No. 5 Study as soon as he was finished with the Fourth Form-master.

"I don't know how long Whiskers will keep you," he said; "but when you come out, come up to my study, and I'll show you round. Don't let those other fellows get hold of you. They'll rag you bad-headed, you know. That chap Newcome you gave the upper-cut to is an awfully vicious leger."

"Right you are!" said Pen.

And Blagden left him. Pen knocked at Mr. Bush's door, and a sharp, crackling voice bade him enter. Pen was not encouraged by the voice. There was a querulous note in it that spoke of a carping and, perhaps, hard nature. He entered the study, and found that Mr. Bush, the master of the Fourth—commonly known behind his back, of course, as old Budy or Whiskers—quite suited his room. He was thin, with clammy limbs and a very acid

THE UNEXPECTED ARRIVAL OF THE REAL LORD LOVELL

New Readers show it turn to  
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A New and Interesting School Story for All.

THE RIVALS OF ST. WODE'S.



A New School Tale by Charles Hamilton Author of The Rivals of St. Kitz.

face, and gleaming eyes almost hidden under thick brows. He wore whiskers which were of a much more pleasing colour than his hair and his eyebrows, and even the lad fresh from the country could not help suspecting that they were dyed.

Then he heard Newcome's voice about from the common room, and a swarm of juniors surrounded the newcomer. They were marching him about, and he was being turned away to make his way back to Blagden's study.

He found Blagden and his friend sitting at a table. They were probably talking about him, for the talk ceased the moment he entered.

"Hullo!" exclaimed Blagden. "You haven't been long. How did you find old Bushy?" "He wasn't very nice," Blagden whistled.

"That's exactly it," he said. "Come to the common room." "I'm sorry if I hurt you," said Pen frankly. "I chipped in to help my friends, you know. Of course, I'll fight you if you like, but I'd much rather be on good terms with everybody here."

"New little boy!" grinned Newcome. "That's exactly it," he said. "Come to the common room." "I'm sorry if I hurt you," said Pen frankly.

Blagden is Not Pleased. "W" Dick Penwyn looked at the angry junior in astonishment.

"It had not yet dawned upon him that a mistake had been made—that Blagden & Co. had lavished all those good things upon a stranger."

Blagden's mistake was the cause of this sudden change in his manner. Three minutes ago Blagden had been all friendly cordiality. Now, what a change was there!

Blagden rubbed out of the study, and the rest followed, Pen with them. It was evident to Pen, that it was a custom at St. Wode's to make a great fuss of a new boy. This was the second who had arrived that day.

"Yes, it's wet, don't you know," he said. "Jolly wet, don't you see. I've never seen such a doosed wet day myself."

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He stopped, with an exclamation, as he saw the Cornish lad. "Come away from old Bushy's door, my boy, and I'll give you my push back, and some more with it."

Blagden, the Fourth Form captain, meeting him at the station in the pouring rain. The truth is that Blagden & Co. take Pen for young Lord Lovell, who is expected to arrive to-day, but Dick has no idea of this.

Blagden makes a great fuss of the new boy, and rushes him up to the common room. Standing a feed. The feed, however, it rained.

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THE RIVALS OF ST. WODE'S.

"What do you mean?" demanded Blagden... "You're not going to..."

as he lifted, since no rounds had been arranged... "My hat," said Newcome...

Therefore, he had never thought of arranging rounds and a timekeeper... "Here, if this is going on, you'll have to have regular rounds..."

THE EDITOR'S TWO COLUMNS.



When in doubt, or when you feel inclined to criticise, address: The Editor, EMPIRE Library, 23-29, Boulevard Street, London, E.C.

THIS ISSUE

contains the second instalment of our new school story, "The Rivals of St. Wode's," by Charles Hamilton... "Practically every letter I have received has mentioned, in varying terms of praise, "The Rivals of St. Wode's..."

VENTRILOQUISM.

One of my Yorkshire readers has taken up ventriloquism as a hobby; but he is somewhat handicapped by the lack of a ventriloquist's figure, and seeks to obtain one second hand... "I should advise you, Harold Fisher, failing to find what you want in the advertisement columns of various papers, to insert a small advertisement in "The Boys' Herald" Hobby Club column..."

"RIVALS OF ST. WODE'S."

There was a diabolical keen. Who played till he grew very lean. When he took to his bed, His friends softly said: "His last throw of summer we're seen."

In response to my request for letters of criticism, I have received such a big batch that I have had a very difficult task in selecting the winner of the half-a-crown offered... "Dear Editor,—I am writing you this letter to let you know what I honestly think about the EMPIRE Library. In the first place, I must tell you that I have grown very fond of the first number—when it was in a smaller form, with a pink cover—and a letter half-pennyworth of reading for one could read far."

"The tales at present are just A.1. especially "Gimon Ethel." No boy could wish for a better tale, and I am sure I do not myself... "The detective tale is ripping, and I only wish there were more of it. I myself think that for a detective tale it is just grand."

"The Land of the Black," in my estimation, is just the sort of adventure story a boy likes, for there is good, wholesome reading in it... "I wish the EMPIRE luck and success as it grows older, and I shall do all in my power to more widely circulate one of the best books that has ever been published. Long may it live!"

M. G.'s letter, I am glad to say, represents the opinion of numbers; and I am particularly thanks for his custom of ordering in advance... "There was a young bouncer named Mac Who took out his motor one day; Had a fog, black as night, Had the landscape from sight; Now there's 'twas a waltz waltz wheels, they say."

"What about "The Rivals of St. Wode's"?—Ed.



"I may as well tell you at once, Penwyn, said Mr. Bush acidly, "that any insolence will not be tolerated at St. Wode's."

"I don't care," he said, "you can't look after it. He's too big for you, I tell you he's a boxer, Blaggy... "I don't care," he said, "you can't look after it. He's too big for you, I tell you he's a boxer, Blaggy..."

Blagden shorter in the reach, he was as strong and in better condition, with a better wind... "And he let himself go. Blagden's guard seemed to be no-where. Either his skill had deserted him, or the new boy's skill was greater..."

"Mind your own bizney!" "Now, then, you'll fight in rounds, and I'll keep time," said Bamford, as Pen stopped talking... "The brief rest had saved Blagden from immediate defeat. It gave him a breathing chance of getting ahead..."

Fast to Fix. LORD LOVELL was pushed back a little by the younger juniors crowding forward to see the fight... "And that tussle between the new boy and the bully of the Fourth was interesting enough for anybody to watch..."

REMINDER.

My new readers should note, and my old readers should remember, that the price of half-a-crown will be given for the best contribution in these columns... "A nervous old lady, named Kay, Hailed me once on one rainy day. As she scrambled aboard, A horse-cabby roared: "Look alive! It's the last time you may!"

POSTCARD EXCHANGE.

The following readers desire to exchange postcards: "38th LIST. M. I. Woolberry, Wahroonga, Deloraine, Tasmania, Australia, wishes to exchange postcards with readers in South Africa. A. J. Jacobs, 81, Hill Road, Randra, India, with Manchester, London, England. Miss E. Whorwood, 24, Rathgar Street, London, Ontario, Canada, with Southend, England. No. 825, Lance corporal W. Twyler, G. G. Coopers, Harcila, India, with Southend. Private A. McCreedy, No. 10066, The Company, at Seaforth, Highlands, Queensland, India, with Newcastle-on-Tyne, England. Miss S. Pervo, 130, Foles Street, East Sydney, Australia, with Surrey, England. Miss K. Hainy, Doroheanga, Auckland, New Zealand, with Mexico; Calcutta, India; Italy; Argentine; Sumatra, Siam, U.S.A.; Alaska; Fiji; Sandwich Isles; Canada; Nova Scotia. R. T. Parkins, 148, Sturtland Street, Paddington, Sydney, Australia, with Canada. Mrs. V. Hopkins, DuRoit Street, Lower Paarl, South Africa, with New Zealand, Western Australia."

A Novel and Interesting Story for All.

# COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOLDAYS

A TALE OF TOM MERRY'S CHUM  
BY MARTIN CLIFFORD

### GLANCE OVER THIS.

Ethel Cleveland is a new girl at St. Freda's, and on her first day at school is attracted by the personality of Dolores Pellham, a high-spirited girl of St. Freda's descent. Ethel subsequently saves Dolores from deep disgrace, and the two become firm friends.

Ethel takes Dolores over to St. Jim's College, where Arthur D'Arcy, her cousin, is at school, and the Schoolmistress is introduced to all Ethel's best friends. One afternoon Ethel is sitting in the garden at St. Freda's with Dolores when a note is brought her by the stationer's boy. It is from her cousin, Arthur D'Arcy, asking her to meet him alone at three o'clock in a certain stile. Ethel is puzzled by D'Arcy's secrecy, but decides to go.

My cousin is waiting for me near St. Freda's. She explains to Dolores. (Read as *John Leo*).

### Eid Craven's Find.

"Why doesn't he come here?" "I don't know." "Are you going?" "I don't know." "Shall I come with you?" asked Dolores indifferently. Ethel coloured.

Arthur asks me particularly to go alone," she said. "I don't know why, but he says it is very important." "Oh, don't go!" said Dolores. "Let him come here." "He asks me to."

"Oh, do as you please," said Dolores. "I hope you will know." "Of course, I don't want to detain you if you want to go." "I don't want to go specially, but I cannot very well refuse Arthur," said Ethel. "I suppose you will be offended about nothing, Dolores."

"I am not offended at all," said Dolores, in her most stately way. Ethel nodded, and ran out of the garden. It was very near the time Arthur Augustus had fixed in his note for their meeting, and she was anxious not to be late. She was curious to know what it was that was so important, and why Arthur Augustus was so very mysterious about it.

She could only surmise that something unusual had happened at St. Jim's; though even then there appeared to be no reason why D'Arcy should be so secretive. Ethel put on her hat and left the school. The stile was only a few minutes' walk from St. Freda's.

As the girl passed out of the gates she passed Eid Craven. Ethel had hardly spoken to him since that day when she had spoken to comfort her in the cubicle, after Ethel's narrow escape from expulsion. Ethel's kind words had made no lasting impression upon Eid; the natural repugnance between the two girls was too strong for that. And Ethel's growing popularity at St. Freda's was a thorn in the side of the jealous and bitter girl.

Ethel looked after her with a far from affectionate expression. The keen and caustic Cousin Ethel as she went out into the road, and she threw her hand up to her hat. Something white fluttered from her hand, and blew along the road. It was the note.

the shake of the head was as near a lie as was possible. "Well, never mind," said Ethel. "After all, it does not matter." She ran down the lane, fraying to be late for her appointment. As soon as she was out of sight, Eid Craven removed her hand from the note and picked it up.

### D'Arcy's Great Whistle.

"Ethel, dear girl—I mean dear Arthur Augustus D'Arcy raised his silk topper in his graceful way as Ethel came up to the door in Bedford Lane, with sparkling eyes and cheeks red from running." "What is it, Arthur?" "Nothing." "What has happened?" "Nothing." "What is wrong, then?" "I am not aware of anything being wrong, Ethel."

"Really, Arthur?" "Everything is all right so far as I know," said Arthur Augustus, looking puzzled. Ethel gave him an indignant look.

"Then why did you alarm me with your note?" "But you did not read it," said Arthur D'Arcy, suddenly. "Here's one of St. Freda's gate-keeper's little ways. You know I don't want to get you into a row!" and Arthur Augustus jumped over the stile and vanished, as Eid Craven approached.

"Ha! Jove! I never meant to alarm you, Ethel." "Why is it necessary to meet you here, and why did you write in so mysterious a way?" demanded Ethel. Arthur smiled mysteriously.

"Because it's necessary to keep it dark, dear girl." "To keep what dark?" "The where?" "The what?" "The where, you know." "I don't know, and I don't understand in the least," said Ethel. "What do you mean?" "I will explain. Now that you are at school, Ethel, I regard you as my own little possession, and I consider it my duty to put you up to the wiles, you know. As an old hand, I know all the tricks. There are lots of dodges for heaven's things up at school that you girls don't know anything about."

"Such as putting rats in the headmistress's basket," suggested Cousin Ethel, with a smile. "Well, I only advised that for extreme cases," said Arthur Augustus. "But this is not a jape on the head that I am thinking of now. I suppose you remembered the study feeds we've had at St. Jim's?" "Yes, certainly."

"You ever have study feeds at St. Freda's because you haven't any study feeds I regard that as wotten?" Ethel laughed. "My dear Arthur—" "But there is no reason why you shouldn't have a dorm feed," said Arthur Augustus, "and that is the where." "A dorm feed?" repeated Ethel, in wonder. "Yes, wash! You see," went on D'Arcy confidentially, "we often have that sort of thing in the School House at St. Jim's after lights out, you know. We light up candles or, like lanterns, and have a feed."

"I don't think I should care for it," said Ethel. "You might catch cold." "We are waddy to wick that, you know." "And you might have indigestion, and make your nose red," said Ethel severely. "Nonsense, Ethel—" "Very, very naughty of you, Arthur." Arthur gasped. He was prepared to be considered very dogmatic or very reckless, or very dashing; but very naughty was not pleasing.

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"Arthur!" "And the sweets as 'Jink.'" "Jink!" "Oh!" "And several other things undah stah names," said D'Arcy. "You will get the whole lot in a without any- body feeling the slightest twispah on the subject. It's a jolly widdin' dolly, don't you think?"

Ethel did not know what to say. "But Jove, I never meant to alarm you, Ethel." "Why is it necessary to meet you here, and why did you write in so mysterious a way?" demanded Ethel. Arthur smiled mysteriously.

"Because it's necessary to keep it dark, dear girl." "To keep what dark?" "The where?" "The what?" "The where, you know." "I don't know, and I don't understand in the least," said Ethel. "What do you mean?"

"I will explain. Now that you are at school, Ethel, I regard you as my own little possession, and I consider it my duty to put you up to the wiles, you know. As an old hand, I know all the tricks. There are lots of dodges for heaven's things up at school that you girls don't know anything about."

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"Excuse me, dear girl," said Arthur D'Arcy, suddenly. "Here's one of St. Freda's gate-keeper's little ways. You know I don't want to get you into a row!" and Arthur Augustus jumped over the stile and vanished, as Eid Craven approached.

Ethel's face was troubled as she went back to school. As she came up to the gates, she caught sight of a van in the side lane which led to the task-room's entrance. The van had a Burford confectioner's name upon it.

### Hats, Wink Care.

"Dear me, dear girl—caution, you know. I don't want to get you into a row!" and Arthur Augustus jumped over the stile and vanished, as Eid Craven approached.

"Ha! Jove! I never meant to alarm you, Ethel." "Why is it necessary to meet you here, and why did you write in so mysterious a way?" demanded Ethel. Arthur smiled mysteriously.

"Because it's necessary to keep it dark, dear girl." "To keep what dark?" "The where?" "The what?" "The where, you know." "I don't know, and I don't understand in the least," said Ethel. "What do you mean?"

WANTS YOUR CO-OPERATION. EMPIRE—No. 12.

A CAPITAL LITTLE SHORT COMPLETE STORY.

# FRANK MONK & Co. HAMPER



A Tale of the Chums of  
Rylcombe  
Grammar School.

BY  
PROSPER  
HOWARD.

CHAPTER I.

Talpole Has Some News.

"THERE'S one thing I never hear to grumble about to the dear old maw," said Carboy, grinning at his two study chums in the Fourth Form at Rylcombe Grammar School. "She always absolutely craves a hamper to the last eighth of an inch."

"Hear, hear!" assented Frank Monk and Laney. Carboy returned the letter he had just received to the envelope, and pushed it into the breast pocket of his jacket.

"Of course, I don't know what the size of this one'll be, but I think we'll have a few leads in to share the feed," he said.

"Hear, hear!" Carboy grinned as his two chums reared their asses once more, only this time they emphasized their entire agreement by banging their fists upon the large table in the common-room.

"Well, I've got an inkling to finish off," said Carboy, after a brief pause. "I can't have that on my mind when I have the hamper."

"My hat!" laughed Frank Monk. "Flatter not! And that reminds me I've got a few lines. Let's go and get 'em done!"

"Right-o!" said Carboy. "Come on, lads!"

And the three chums fled out of the common room, and made their way to their study.

"Gaw!" Now, shut up, Taddy," growled Gordon Gay, who was seated before the fire, with his two other study chums, Frank and Harry Wootton, in Study 13. "I've got to learn a jolly difficult part, and I can't do it if you're going to row."

"But really, Gaw!" said Talpole. "I want to explain to you how we can score off Frank Monk & Co."

"But really, Gaw!" said Talpole. "I want to explain to you how we can score off Frank Monk & Co." Gordon Gay, Frank Wootton, and Harry Wootton turned their heads round with a jerk which threatened to dislocate their necks.

"What's that?" they cried, so loudly that Horace Talpole gave a jump.

"I—I happened to be looking for a tube of paint which I dropped by the fireplace in common room," explained Taddy, after a moment's pause. "It was a tube of crimson which I wanted rather badly. I think I'll paint that swag's eyes red in my great picture of—"

"Oh, dry up, damme!" interrupted Gordon Gay. "You can paint the angels' eyes any blessed colour you like, but what's that got to do with scoring off Monkey!"

"Well, I was going to explain," growled Talpole. "While I was looking for the tube of red paint, who should come in but Frank Monk, Laney and Carboy!"

"Well, I never!" gasped Gordon Gay & Co. in pretended surprise.

"Yes," continued Taddy. "And although I'm not an eavesdropper."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Harry Wootton. "You mean eavesdropper, dummy!"

"I say, although I'm not an eavesdropper," repeated Taddy, "I could not help overhearing Carboy read a letter from his mother, saying that he might expect a hamper by the same post."

"My hat!" cried the two Woottons, jumping to their feet.

"Yes, my chums!" laughed Gordon Gay. "We must bag it and invade Monkey & Co. in to the feed."

It'll be a rattling good wheeze. They'll think they'll be able to have a feed at our expense, and then have another in their own study."

Gordon Gay suddenly held up his hand for silence.

"Listen!" he cried. "Isn't that the carrier's van?"

A low rattle of wheels could be heard in the study.

"It's," whispered Harry Wootton. "It's You can hear the clatter of old Gildy's grey horse a couple of miles off."

"Well, come on," said Gordon Gay excitedly. "We ought to be able to work the wheeze now if we are sharp."

CHAPTER 2.

Invitations Go Clear in the Fourth Form.

"GOD AFTERNON," Mr. Giles said.

"Afternoon, young gentlemen!"

"Hope you've got that hamper," said Gordon Gay, as the old, grey-haired carrier almost tumbled from his box seat to the road.

"Ay, ay, young gentlemen," replied Mr. Giles. "There's a big one, ah!"

"Good egg!" interrupted Gordon Gay. "You're always welcome, you know, Mr. Giles. Hand it down, and we'll give you the bag of lagging it into the lodge."

"Thank 'ee, young gentlemen," said the carrier, drawing a hamper from the back of the cart. "Here be one, ah—"

"Come on, chaps!" cried Gordon Gay, grasping the large wicker basket by one handle, and turning to the two Woottons. "Quickly, now."

"Rather!" said Frank Wootton excitedly. "Yank it in!"

The janitors had the hamper out in a second, and, pressing a shilling into the palm of Mr. Giles's rheumatically hand, Gordon Gay hurried through the iron gates of the Grammar School before the carrier could either thank his donor for the tip, or explain to the excited janitors that he had yet another hamper to deliver.

However, Mr. Giles had delivered hampers at the old school for nigh on fifty years now, and he was accustomed to the excited reception he always received. The old man gave vent to a shriek which indicated that his brain was swelling on reminiscences, and then he drew out a more bulky hamper than the first one, and which at a glance looked more heavy.

The old man struggled with it up to the door of the lodge, and delivered it safely into the hands of the porter just as Gordon Gay & Co. hurried through the school entrance door, and passed into the front hall.

"My hat!" muttered Gordon Gay, as the door of Study 13 closed rapidly on the commotion of the hamper.

"That was really—"

"Noes' hah!" laughed Harry Wootton. "I don't think anybody saw us, either, excepting that doffer Ben."

"Well, he's only a fag, so we needn't be afraid of him," said Gordon Gay. "Come on, let's get this spread ready."

In almost less time than it takes to tell, the hamper was forced open, and the straw and paper packing was sent flying in all directions as the wonderful contents were extracted.

In a few minutes the table was literally groaning under the pile of "tack," "cakes," "tinny goods,"

preserves in glass bottles, fruit, sweets, ginger beer, some same as the roll, a packet of butter, a large piece of Gorgonzola cheese, a lacy noose of straw-berry jam, and another one of marmalade, some Japanese paper serviettes, and a fine tongue with a pink paper frill round it had the position of prime importance at the head of the table.

"It was," whispered Harry Wootton, telling his eyes in ecstasy at the sight. "Have you ever seen anything to beat it?"

And Gordon Gay, Frank Wootton, and Horace Talpole grinned, and in a loud voice said:

"Never!"

Gordon Gay busied himself in making one or two alterations to make things fit more comfortably on the table.

"Well," he said at last, "I think—"

"Tap, tap!" A heavy knock on the door interrupted the leader of Study 13, and the next moment a grinning fag put his head into the room.

"That's me, kid. What is it?"

"Note from Monk. Here you are. He told me to wait for a reply, so, if there wasn't any reply, he said 'tell the silly fatheads to lock up'."

Gordon Gay stared at the grinning fag, and then spread out the folded piece of paper which was handed to him. His face suddenly wrinkled up into a broad grin as he read the few lines which Frank Monk had written to him.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he roared. "Just listen to this, kids!"

"Dear Gay,—We know a feed will do you dumplings in Study 13 a bit of good, so if you like you can help us to gorge a hamper which Carboy's maw has sent. You

"Seems funny they haven't come," he muttered. "The twenty minutes is up, and—"

"I can't see how half an hour" interrupted Harry Wootton. "Hanged if I can see the need of waiting with all this grub on the table!"

"That's a lot 'o' say!" added Wootton miser.

"Well, let's give them another five minutes," said Gordon Gay, "and then if they don't turn up, we'll go and drag them out. After all, we can't gorge their grub without abusing it, you know."

And with much murmuring and many covetous glances at the overladen table, the chums of Study 13 waited the extra time.

Gordon Gay frowned as he replaced his hat on his pocket. "Time's up," he said at last. "We'll go and drag 'em along. Come on, chaps!"

"Hullo!" he muttered, turning an anxious glance on his chums. "What on earth does this mean? Just listen!"

The excited tone of Laney's voice floated out into the corridor.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Jolly good, Carboy!"

"Jolly good!" came Carboy's voice in response. "I do think this has been a bumper feed, and I suggest we pass a vote of thanks to my maw. You know, unfortunately, she doesn't quite grasp how we appreciate her hampers—"

"Will she did?" came Frank Monk's voice in interruption. "Then

we've left. I can tell you that. My maw has absolute confidence in me. This time, we have no more to say. He said she did it. I suppose she'll be puffed in his last bit usual time."

"The hamper of course, dummy?"

"Really, Gildy," he said. "I have made a mistake that I can't help. Taddy didn't get any further."

"I do think it's a bit funny," said Frank Wootton, "but I'm sure you can't get out of the study in any way."

They hurried on toward No. 13, and each one had some words of commendation to say for the diligent voices from the study.

"Hullo!" cried Gordon Gay.

"No. 13 was crowded with juniors, and each one had some words of commendation to say for the diligent voices from the study."

"What's this?" cried Gordon Gay, facing Carpenter, who appeared to be leading the raid.

Carpenter's face was crimson rage.

"You rads!" he roared. "You blessed kids, you've tried to sneak a grab in by going to feed a cage down to the study. I found that wasn't any blessed hamper for us."

"You were right," said Gordon Gay, "because an old snark was sent to tell you that you expect it. Besides that, young Hoss saw you bag a corker and ran it up here, and—"

"The cads!" roared Carpenter, following.

"But look—"

Gordon Gay opened his mouth to explain. He saw that he had made a mistake; but he was too late, and before he could say another word he was swept off his feet by the yelling juniors.

He struggled valiantly, but he and the two Woottons and Horace Talpole were outnumbered by a sea of red caps and in less than ten minutes the juniors of Study 13 were panting on their backs, each bound up like a trout fish.

"Come on, chaps!" called Carpenter. "Daub some of that jam on their pretty faces!"



"Come on, chaps!" cried Carpenter, the leader of the raiders. "Daub some of that jam on their pretty faces!"

know what Frank Monk sends, so you can be sure of a rattling good feed—"

"You see," said Harry Wootton, "I might bring a tablecloth and some knives if you don't mind. Somebody has bagged some—F.M."

"P.P.S.—Carboy says we want some forks—F.M."

"P.P.P.S.—You might chuck in one or two spoons as well."

As Gordon Gay finished reading, the juniors gave a roar of laughter, and only stopped when Frank Monk's messenger yelled in a high-pitched voice whether he was to give an answer to Monk.

"Yes, of course," said Gordon Gay, winking his eyes with his handkerchief.

"Tell him we are sorry we can't come, but will be any Laney and Carboy join us in a feed!"

"Right!" cried the fag, and he hurried off, slamming the study door to with a bang.

CHAPTER 3.

A Slight Mistake.

"IT'S absolute rot waiting for the dumplings any longer!" growled Harry Wootton. "If Monkey & Co. really wanted a feed, they would have been along here at once."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Gordon Gay, looking at his watch for the twentieth time within as many minutes.

she might send a blessed hamper every day!"

Gordon Gay & Co. in the corridor without, looked at each other askance.

"What in the dickens are they talking about?" muttered Gordon Gay. "Hamper? What blessed hamper?"

"Get in!" said Harry Wootton. "They're hitting it, but gently!"

Gordon Gay, with a pained expression on his handsome face, tapped on the door, and in answer to the common invitations of the juniors within, turned the handle warily.

"Come in, fatheads!" shouted Frank Monk. "Don't be afraid of it!"

Gordon Gay grinned for a moment, and then walked boldly in, followed by the two Woottons and Horace Talpole.

"Hullo!" laughed Carboy. "You have come, have you?"

Gordon Gay & Co. stared at the study table. It had been somewhat depleted of its goods, but there still remained a splendid collection of eatables. Frank Monk & Co.'s faces were flushed with satisfaction, and it was clear to the juniors of Study 13 that their rivals had partaken of an extremely satisfactory feed.

"Yes!" faltered Gordon Gay, after a pause. "We've—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Carboy. "Why the dickens didn't you come earlier? We've waited most of the grub; but if you like, you can finish up what

He struggled valiantly, but he and the two Woottons and Horace Talpole were outnumbered by a sea of red caps and in less than ten minutes the juniors of Study 13 were panting on their backs, each bound up like a trout fish.

"Come on, chaps!" called Carpenter. "Daub some of that jam on their pretty faces!"

"Rather, and a little wot we'll move things a bit, and then we'll be pushing his way through to the fireplace.

"You—your—you rads!" spat Harry Wootton, as he saw the white hair of his features with the mixture. "Yes you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Monk grinned, and despite the study to whom was an empty commiserated lamplight.

"Is this the hamper you purchased?"

"Yes! Is the hamper the red one in?" replied Gordon Gay, grinning in spite of himself.

Frank Monk dragged the hamper out, and looked for the label.

"Ah, here it is!" he said, after a moment's pause.

"What's that?" exclaimed Carboy.

"Master Carpenter, Fourth Form, Rylcombe Grammar School, Gloucestershire, from Frank Monk & Co. (bought from you)—"

"That's a real corker, a real corker," said Gordon Gay, "the mistake which Gordon Gay & Co. made, was to buy a corker from you!"

"Oh, dry up!" growled Gordon Gay. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Frank Monk & Co., bounding their sofa and moving toward the rest of Study 13.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

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WANDERING WILLIE WILL BE HERE AGAIN NEXT WEEK  
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