



# Who was the Winner?

A Humorous Complete Story, showing how the most thrilling fight in the history of Greyfriars was fought and won (according to the amateur journalist of the Remove)!

By **MARK LINLEY**

## THE FIRST CHAPTER

I WOULDN'T have Harry Wharton's job for a whole term's pocket-money. His job of editing "The Greyfriars Herald,"

I mean. He has to be always alive, active, and alert. If anything in the nature of a "scoop" comes along, he must snap it up at once. If he lets it slip through his fingers, one of the rival papers steals a march on him.

Harry was seated in his study, wading through a poem by Alonzo Todd, in nine hundred and ninety-nine stanzas, when the door suddenly opened, and the slim, feather-like form of Fisher T. Fish blew in from the passage.

"Say, Wharton——" began the Yankee junior breathlessly.

The editor of the "Herald" looked up quickly.

"Got a scoop, Fishy?" he inquired eagerly.

"Yep!"

"What is it? Get it off your chest right away. I'm on the verge of going to press."

Fisher T. Fish took a deep breath, and told his story.

"I guess there's goin' to be a display of fireworks in the gym," he said. "Bolsover major and Bob Cherry had a few words, you know. Bolsover called Bob a chopheaded chump, and Bob called Bolsover a chump-headed chop! Result—Bolsover challenged Bob to a scrap."

"Where? When?" demanded the youthful editor.

"It's to come off in the gym at five o'clock. I sorter calculate that the stretcher-bearers will be wanted to remove what's left of Bolsover."

Wharton jumped to his feet.

"Is this a fact, Fishy?"

"Sure!"

Without another word, the editor of the "Herald" dashed out of the study.

It would soon be five o'clock, the time fixed for the fight.

Wharton would not be able to be present himself—he was fighting against time to get his next issue ready for the Press—but he didn't mean to miss this wonderful "scoop."

"I'll get one of the fellows to go along and report the proceedings," he told himself, as he dashed out into the close.

Standing just outside the school tuckshop were three fellows. They were Tom Brown, Dick Penfold, and Hurree Singh.

A short distance away, with his nose flattened against the window of the shop, was Billy Bunter.

"Heard about the big fight, you fellows?" asked Wharton, approaching the group.

"Yes, rather!" said Tom Brown. "I've booked a seat in the dress circle for five o'clock."

"It'll be a great scrap!" said Dick Penfold.

And Hurree Singh said that the scrapfulness would be terrific.

"Look here!" said Wharton—and Billy Bunter pricked up his ears. "I want somebody to report the affair for 'The Greyfriars Herald.'"

"I will!" said Tom Brown promptly.

"No, let me!" urged Penfold.

"Leave it to me, my worthy chum!" said Hurree Singh eagerly. "I will reportfully describe the scrapful encounter."

Wharton laughed.

"As you're so jolly keen," he said, "you can all report it. Let me have your descriptions by six o'clock, and I'll select the best for publication."

This course having been agreed upon, Harry Wharton went back to his study. And the three amateur reporters hurried away in quest of notebooks and pencils. Each of them was very eager to see himself in print.

That eagerness was shared by Billy Bunter, who had overheard the conversation.

"I'm a born journalist," murmured the fat junior. "I'll write a much better account of the fight than those three idiots. And I'll get Wharton to pay me at the rate of a penny a word. My hat! What a ripping way of raising the wind!"

And Billy Bunter rolled away, with a determined expression on his fat face. He had visions of netting quite a nice little sum of money for successfully reporting the great fight. He knew that there were three rivals in the field, but he did not falter. He was satisfied that he would be able to hold his own against all comers.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

SIX chimed out from the old clock-tower.

Harry Wharton sat in his study, surrounded by piles of manuscript.

"Surely the fight's over by now?" he murmured. "If those fellows don't buck up with their reports I shall have to go to press without including a description of the fight."

There was a knock at the door.

"Come in, fathead!" sang out Wharton.

The "fathead" proved to be Tom Brown. He entered somewhat breathlessly, threw a manuscript on the table, and hurriedly withdrew.

"Hallo!" ejaculated Wharton in surprise. "Young man in a hurry, what? How did the scrap go off, Browney?"

But Tom Brown was already out of earshot. Wharton was about to peruse the account of the fight, when the door opened again, and Penfold burst in like a cyclone. He aimed a folded document at the editor of "The Greyfriars Herald."

"Catch!" he exclaimed. "My report!"

And before Wharton could say "My only aunt!" Penfold was gone.

Then, after an interval of a few seconds, in dashed Hurree Singh.

"I have reportfully described the esteemed scrapful fight, my worthy chum," he said. "Here it is—a thrilling story, couched in the best English language."

"But—but what's the hurry?" gasped Wharton. "School isn't on fire, is it?"

"You said you were waiting to send the stuff to the printers pressfully. I therefore put an esteemed jerk in it."

"Quite right. But it isn't a life and death matter. I've a few minutes to spare. Was it a good scrap?"

"I suggestfully propose that you read what I have reportfully written, and see for yourself," said Hurree Singh.

And he quitted the study.

Wharton picked up the three manuscripts, which had all been delivered within the space of one minute; and he was about to read them with a view to selecting the best of them for publication, when Billy Bunter rolled in.

"Buzz off, porpoise!" growled Wharton. "I've no time to attend to you just now."

"Oh, really, Wharton! That's hardly the way to treat a valued contributor like myself!"

"What rubbish have you brought me now?"

"It isn't rubbish!" said Bunter indignantly. "It's a report of the great fight."

"Oh!"

"And what's more it's jolly good stuff! It knocks all other reports into fits, and I shall expect to be paid at the rate of a penny a word."

"No harm in your expecting!" said Wharton drily. "Hand over your article, and quit!"

Billy Bunter obeyed.

## GREYFRIARS LANDMARKS



THE CRYPT

A dim and dismal place is this,  
Where monks of old held meetings;  
You see the spiders in their bliss,  
You hear some ghostly greetings,  
Your throbbing heart beats quick and loud,  
You pause in fear and wonder;  
You long for sunshine and the crowd,  
And hate to be "down under."

Here, in the grim and gloomy crypt,  
Beneath the ancient cloisters,  
The merry monks once sat and sipped  
Their wine, and ate their oysters,  
The monks have vanished long ago,  
They're gone, but not forgotten;  
Man dwells no longer here below,  
The place is rank and rotten!

And yet the crypt has been of use,  
For when the Hun invaders,  
On Greyfriars School their bombs let loose,  
We here defied the raiders,  
We heard the anti-aircraft guns,  
We heard the bombs descending,  
But here found safety from the Huns,  
Who failed to catch us bending!

This dim vault also plays its part  
When anyone transgresses,  
And munches cake and apple tart,  
Within its dark recesses,  
Here Billy Bunter sometimes comes,  
With tuck which has been raided;  
Like monks of old, he leaves no crumbs,  
But scoffs the lot, as they did!

I do not love thee, dingy crypt,  
You favour not the muses;  
For on your stony floor I've slipped,  
And I'm a mass of bruises!  
I much prefer the open air,  
The footer field and river;  
To be a prisoner down there  
Would make the bravest shiver!

When the fat junior had gone Wharton took the precaution of locking the door. Then he threw himself into the armchair, and prepared to read the four reports which had been handed in. He was bursting with eagerness to know how Bob Cherry had fared in his fight with Bolsover major.

The first manuscript he perused happened to be Tom Brown's.

The writer evidently believed in brevity, for his description of the fight was short and sweet. It ran as follows:

### "STIRRING CONTEST IN THE GYM! HOW THE BEST MAN WON!"

"In the historic gymnasium of Greyfriars, before a packed audience, Bob Cherry encountered Percy Bolsover in fistic combat.

"The first round was tame.

"The second round was ditto.

"The third round resembled a display of fireworks. Bob Cherry drove his burly opponent round the ring, amid great excitement.

"Bolsover was soon in a bad way. He was suffering from injuries to the nose, eyes, ears, jaw, ribs, and spine. He pleaded for quarter, but none was given, and Bob Cherry finally dispatched his opponent with a blow on the solar plexus.

"Bob's victory was well-deserved, and he showed his chivalry by assisting the ambulance men to convey Bolsover major to the Cottage Hospital."

"Good!" muttered Harry Wharton. "I'm awfully glad Bob won. Afraid I can't publish Browney's report, though. There's not enough of it. It's more like a 'stop press' announcement than a full report. I expected better things from Browney. Now let's see what Inky's got to say."

Hurree Singh's report ran as follows:

### "THE TERRIFIC SCRAPFULNESS! BOLSOVER MAJOR LICKFULLY THRASHES BOB CHERRY!"

"The English playwright, William Shakespeare, has informfully told us that, 'twice armed is he who hath his quarrel justfully; but thrice is he armed who gets his blow in justfully.'

"The wisdom of this esteemed saying was demonstrated in the Greyfriars gymnasium



this afternoon, when Bolsover major defeatfully licked Bob Cherry in the first roundfulness.

"As the special reporter of 'The Greyfriars Herald,' I was allotfully given a seat on the box-horse, which served as a Press box. I was thus enabled to obtainfully get a clearful view of the fistful combat.

"The applause, as the two combatants squared up face-to-facefully, was terrific.

"Go it, ye cripples!"

"Now then, Bob!"

"Knock him into the middle portion of next weekfulness!"

"These, and other cries, resoundfully echoed through the gym.

"The referee consultfully glanced at his watchfulness, and blew the whistle for the esteemed kick-off.

"My Cherryful chum was in great form, but he could not breakfully get through Bolsover's guardfulness. And presently Bolsover sailed in dashfully, and administered the dotfulness on the boko.

"Bob Cherry went crashfully to the mat, and in my dismay I toppled from my perchfulness.

"Buck up, Bob!" urged the supportful partisans of my Cherryful chum. "Surely you haven't shot your boltfulness? Get up, man, and give Bolsover the sockfulness!"

"But Bob failed to bobfully bob up again; and the groanfulness, as the referee counted him out, was terrific!

"Thus ended the terrific scrapfulness."

"M-m-my only aunt!" gasped Harry Wharton when he had finished reading that extraordinary report.

He scarcely knew whether he was on his head or his heels.

According to Tom Brown, the fight had been won by Bob Cherry. According to Hurree Singh, it had been won by Bolsover major.

"There's something wrong somewhere," said Wharton dazedly. "They can't both have won. Either Tom Brown's indulging in flights of fancy, or else Inky is."

For some moments Wharton remained in a state of utter stupefaction. Then he picked up Dick Penfold's report.

"Now we shall see what really did happen," he told himself.

And he settled down to read the third report of what Hurree Singh had described as "the terrific scrapfulness!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

DICK PENFOLD is quite a decent fellow. But unfortunately there's a strain of lunacy in his make-up. You see, he's a poet. And all poets have bats in their belfry.

Just as some fellows can never keep their hands from picking and stealing, so Dick Penfold can never keep his brain—such as it is—from evolving poetry. Instead of reporting the Cherry-Bolsover contest in good, honest prose, as any civilised person would do, he had reported it in rhyme. And his version of the affair ran as follows:

"ROBERT CHERRY VERSUS BOLSOVER MAJOR!

"Quite an Exciting Scrap, I wager!

"By DICK PENFOLD.

"It was a winter evening,

And in the crowded gym

Two boxers fought, as boxers ought,

With energy and vim.

A storm of cheering rent the air,

For Bob had backers everywhere!

"Bob started with a smashing left

That laid Bolsover flat;

The bully rose, and punched Bob's nose—

That made it tit-for-tat!

Then came a spell of rush and thrust,

(I couldn't see the ring for dust.)

"Bob gained the honours in Round One,

Bolsover in the second;

And in Round Three, the referee

To both the boxers beckoned,

And cried, 'Your faces are a sight!

You've had enough. I'll stop the fight!'

"'You silly chump!' Bob Cherry roared,

'We haven't started yet.

We mean to go twelve rounds, you know;

No need to get upset.

Although our faces are disfigured

They're handsomer than yours!' (Crowd sniggered.)

“ At this the referee grew wild,  
He tried to part the boxers;  
A fierce free fight ensued, and then  
I had an awful shock, sirs  
I toppled headlong from my seat  
Amid a mass of arms and feet!

“ I will not dwell upon that scene  
Of chaos and disaster;  
I crawled away from the affray  
In search of strapping-plaster.  
As for the thrilling fight I saw,  
The final verdict was, ‘ A Draw!’ ”

“ A draw!” gasped Harry Wharton, in blank amazement. “ Well, I’m beat! I’ve read three versions of the fight, and they’re all different. Tom Brown declares that Bob Cherry won; Inky says it was the other way about; and Penfold calls it a draw. Dashed if I know which of these reports to publish. They can’t all be correct!”

The editor of “ The Greyfriars Herald ” was almost at his wits’ end. He ran his fingers through his curly hair, and stared blankly at the manuscripts which were piled on his knee.

The harassed editor then remembered that he had yet another report of the fight in the gym—the report which Billy Bunter had written.

“ If Bunter’s account tallies with one of the others,” he said, “ I shall take it to be genuine. It can’t very well differ from all the rest—that’s one blessing. Where is it? Oh, here we are! I could tell Bunter’s spidery scrawl a mile off.”

Harry Wharton then proceeded to read Billy Bunter’s version of the fight. It was an amazing narrative, and it was worded thus:

## “ THE GRATE FITE IN THE JIM! ”

BY WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER.

“ At 5 o’clock this afternoon, deer reeders, Bob Cherry was dew to meat Bolsover major in the jim. But at 5 minnits to 5 his curridge failed him.

“ As I was wending my way to the seen of the kombat, Bob Cherry tapt me on the sholder. I notissed that his face was as pail

as deth, and he was tremmlin like a naspen leaf.

“ ‘ What’s rong, Bob? ’ I inkwired.

“ ‘ Everythink!’ he cride horsely. ‘ I arranjed to fite Bolsover major at 5 o’clock, and now that the time has come I’m in a blew funk.’ ”

“ ‘ Cowherd ’ I said skornfully. ‘ I mite have known you would show the wite fether.’ ”

Bob Cherry klutched my arm konvulsively. The look of terror on his face would have melted a hart of stoan.

“ ‘ I—I can’t go threw with it!’ he muttered. ‘ Help me, Bunter! We have allways been boozum palls.’ ”

“ ‘ What, eggsactly, do you want me to do? ’ I asked.

“ ‘ I want you to take my plaice.’ ”

“ ‘ And fite Bolsover major? ’ ”

“ ‘ Yes.’ ”

“ I hezzitated. Then, struck by the look of abjeck mizzery on Bob Cherry’s face, I kon-sented to take his plaice in the ring.

“ Of corse, Bolsover major is a hefty grate booly, considerably above my wate. But I walked boldly into the jim, without any nervus tremmers.

“ ‘ Want do you want hear? ’ demanded Bolsover.

“ ‘ Yore blud!’ I replide.

“ ‘ Rite you are. I’ll deel with you as soon as I’ve nocked out Bob Cherry.’ ”

“ ‘ Bob Cherry is indispojed,’ I said. ‘ I have there 4 undertaken to fite in his plaice.’ ”

“ Bolsover larfed—a hollo, mocking larf.

“ ‘ I’ll jolly soon put pade to your akkount, you fat porpuss!’ he eksclaimed.

“ And the neckst minnit, having donned the gloves, we were fiting hammer-and-tongs.

“ To give Bolsover major his dew, he fort pluckilly. But of corse he was no match for a sezoned vetteran of the ring like me. I led him a terribul danse in the first rownd, and twice I lade him on his back. But wen the referree had cownted up to nine, he man-ridjed to scrambel to his feat.

“ In the sekkond rownd, howevver, I had my oponent at my mersy. He pleaded for  $\frac{1}{4}$ , but there was nothing doing. ‘ In an affare of

this sort,' I said, 'no  $\frac{1}{4}$  should be asked or given. Take that, you beestly booly!'

"So saying, I shott out my left, strate from the sholder, and Bolsover went down for good. Eggsperts deklared it was the finest nock-out blow they had ever seen.

"And so, deer reeders, I defeated Bolsover major in fistick kombat. And I think you will agree that it was a fare nock-out!"

Harry Wharton hurled that precious manuscript into his waste-paper basket.

He had hoped to get some definite information concerning the result of the fight; but he was as much in the dark as ever.

Billy Bunter's narrative was, of course, a pure invention from beginning to end. The idea of the fat, ungainly Owl of the Remove defeating Bolsover major was too absurd for words.

"Blessed if I can make head or tail of the business!" grunted Wharton, rising to his feet. "I've read four reports, and I'm still left guessing as to who won the fight."

He paced up and down in his study, and then, chancing to look out of the window, he espied Bob Cherry in the Close.

"Oh, good!" he muttered. "Now I shall be able to find out the real facts of the case."

He thrust his head out of the window and gave a shout.

"Bob! Bob, old man!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" said Bob Cherry, stopping short in his stride and gazing up at the window.

"Who won the fight?"

"Eh?"

"Did you lick Bolsover major?"

"No."

"Oh, crumbs! You don't mean to say he knocked you out?"

"No."

"Then—then it ended in a draw?"

"No."

Wharton looked utterly mystified.

"You didn't win, you didn't lose, and it wasn't a draw," he said in tones of perplexity. "Would you mind explaining what actually did happen?"

"Nothing."

"What!" shouted Wharton.

"Nothing at all. You see, the fight didn't come off. It was fixed for five o'clock, but shortly before that Bolsover came to me and apologised, and the affair was smoothed over."

Harry Wharton nearly choked.

He could see it all now.

Tom Brown, Dick Penfold, and Hurree Singh had planned a practical joke on the editor of "The Greyfriars Herald." They had reported an imaginary fight, and they had deliberately arranged that their reports should differ from one another.

Billy Bunter had also reported an imaginary fight. But Bunter's motives had been different from the rest. He wanted to see his article in print, and to be paid for it at the rate of a penny a word.

Needless to state, the fat junior was unlucky.

As for Harry Wharton, he caught up a cricket-stump and rushed full-pelt from the study.

He was going to look for Tom Brown, Dick Penfold, and Hurree Singh.

The three practical jokers, however, were wise in their generation. They had vanished!



**The End**