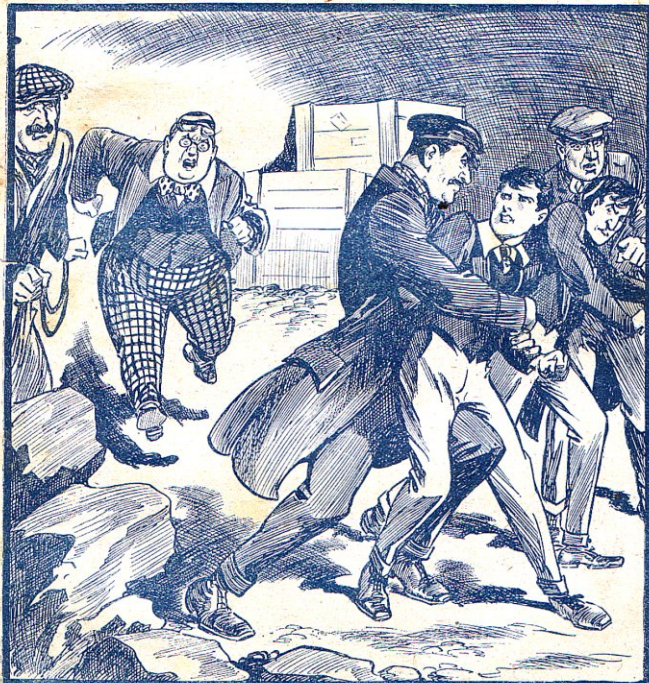
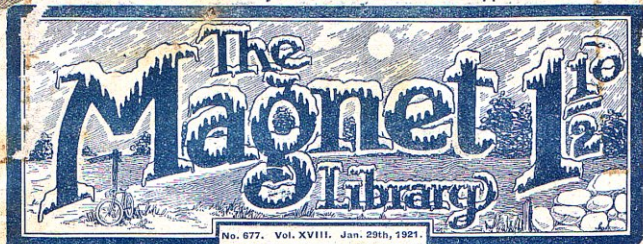


"BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY" HAS POPPED UP AGAIN!

The Fat Junior of Greyfriars Edits this week's Supplement!



BILLY BUNTER TO THE RESCUE! (A dramatic moment in the long complete School Story inside.)

THE EDITOR CHATS.

Address your letters to: The Editor, "Magnet" Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

FOR NEXT MONDAY:

"SCARING THE SCHOOL!"

By Frank Richards.

In this grand long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars Remove, we find that a mysterious monster is in the district. Mr. Prout, whose claim to championship honours with a rifle are well known, sets out with the intention of adding the beast to his collection of curiosities. But, in the meantime, the mysterious creature succeeds in

"SCARING THE SCHOOL!"

in no mean manner. Masters and prefects, juniors and fags—everybody is scared at Greyfriars. The end of the scare comes about in a most startling manner, and it is due to Bob Cherry's gallant attack that the creature is removed once and for all.

This is a grand tale, boys and girls, so don't miss it!

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD."

My chums will again find this paper of the boys of Greyfriars in next week's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY. Billy Bunter has received the knock-out blow so far as the MAGNET LIBRARY Supple-

ment is concerned, but I believe he has already worked out another scheme.

He has selected four subs. to work with him in his new venture, and they are not at Greyfriars. One of them, as a matter of fact, is Patty Wynn of St. Jim's. Monty Lowther of the Shell Form at the same school has dubbed the five as

"BILLY BUNTER AND HIS FOUR FAT SUBS."

so you can guess there's something in the wind. However, it is quite certain that Harry Wharton & Co. won't allow the "fat five" to take up their space in the MAGNET LIBRARY. So next week's supplement will be a fine number of

"THE GREYFRIARS HERALD."

A HINT.

There is going to be a grand competition for money prizes for readers of the "Popular" next week, boys and girls, and I want you all to enter for them. There will be several prizes offered every week for some time to come; but that is not all. Next week's "Popular" is going to be a bumper number.

More news of this competition will appear in my Chat in this Friday's issue of the "Popular."

NOTICES.

IR.

Correspondence.

Edward H. Hughes, Northcote, 326, Park Road, North Cloughton, Birkenhead, Cheshire, would like to hear from Companion Paper readers in Africa.

Miss M. D. Venish, 22, Sprigg Street, South End, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, asks for correspondence with readers anywhere.

—Miss Winnie Ferreira, 14, Kirkwood Street, Port Elizabeth, asks for correspondents anywhere.

—George Grieve, 53, Milford Street, St. Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, asks for correspondence with readers anywhere; ages 15-17.

—Fred Schefferle, Meredith, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

—Harold G. Currow, 10, Mercy Street, Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, wishes to exchange postcard views with a reader in New York.

Age 15.—Philip Goodman, 19, Walton Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with stamp-collectors.

—Jack Flanagan, 95, Victoria Street, Flemington, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wants correspondents in England, Canada, and Cape Town.

—Leo White, 4, Woodbine Avenue, Green Lane, Auckland, New Zealand, asks for correspondence with readers interested in postcards and stamps.

Your Editor

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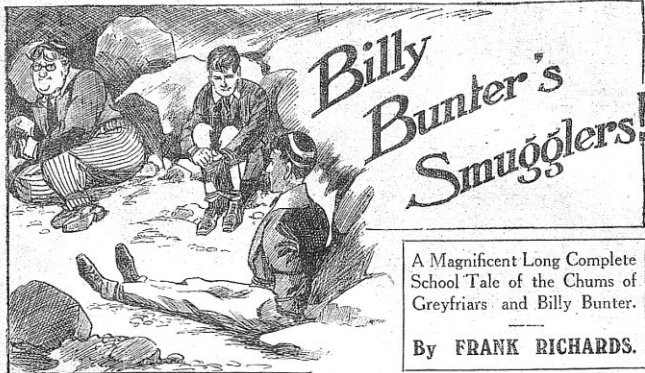
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A Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of the Chums of Greyfriars and Billy Bunter.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Vacant Bed!

"LIGHTS out!" It was George Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, who issued that warning in a stentorian voice as he entered the Remove dormitory.

Disrobing operations—conducted sluggishly, as a rule—had been hastened that night by the hard winter frost which penetrated the room. Thus, most of the juniors were already nestling snugly among the bedclothes. The remaining two or three made swift dives for their respective beds upon the appearance of the prefect. The buzz of conversation died away like magic.

Wingate raised his hand as though to switch off the light when he checked himself. His eye, roving swiftly through the long dormitory, had been attracted by a vacant bed.

"Who's absent from here?" he demanded sternly. "Do you know, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton, the Remove captain, who had been sitting bolt upright in bed chatting with the other members of the Famous Five about the footer match against St. Jim's, which had taken place that afternoon, followed the direction of Wingate's gaze to the empty bed.

"Why, that's where Smithy sleeps," he replied promptly.

"Oh, Vernon-Smith? I'd forgotten for the moment. Of course, he won't be sleeping here for a few days."

"Not for a few days, Wingate?" cried Bob Cherry, in surprise. "We heard he was only likely to stay in the 'sanny overnight. That kick he received during the soccer game this afternoon must have been a jolly sight worse than it appeared."

"There's no need to worry, kid," said Wingate. "I don't think the injury is likely to prove serious. Still, there's always the chance that a back on the knee may lead to complications if care isn't taken. Anyway, the doctor doesn't believe in taking chances, so he's making Smithy lay up in the sanny for a few days."

He stopped short as his ears caught the

sound of champing jaws and gurgles of satisfaction from a bed over to his left. The contour of the clothes of that bed suggested that a barrel of bulky proportions was concealed therein.

"Bunter, what are you eating?" Wingate rapped out the words in a tone that caused the barrel-like form in the bed to give a sudden squirm.

"M-m-m-m-m—I-I-m-m-m-m-m—" The prefect took a swift stride in the direction of the recumbent Porpoise of the Remove.

"Bunter, what are you eating?" he repeated.

William George Bunter blinked his eyes and gave a frantic gulp. At the same time, he surreptitiously thrust a bulging handkerchief beneath his pillow.

"M-m-m-m—that is—I-I'm not eating—m-m-m-m-m—anything, Wingate!" "D'you think I'm blind, you fat worm?" snapped Wingate. "Hand me the stuff you were stowing away beneath your pillow—at once!"

"P-p-please, Wingate, I—Oooh!"

Billy Bunter's last sudden remark was caused by the prefect yanking him into a sitting position by the collar of his pink-and-white striped pyjamas.

"D'you mean to tell me you weren't eating this?"

Wingate brought out from beneath the pillow a large piece of plum-cake, slightly the worse for wear, tied up in a handkerchief.

Bunter blinked at Wingate as though the prefect had performed a particularly astute conjuring trick.

"C-cake?" muttered the Owl, in a surprised tone.

"Yes, cake!" said Wingate, with a withering look at the fat junior. "You know you're not allowed to eat grub in the dormitory!"

"P-please, I was only nibbling it, Wingate," explained Bunter meekly.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Billy Bunter frowned severely at his laughing Form-nutes.

"You see, Wingate," he went on pathetically, "I—I never got enough to eat. To-night I was hungry—starving, in fact—and so I bought that cake with a postal order sent me by my uncle, Sir William—"

"Rot! I expect you raided the beastly stuff from somewhere!" Wingate viewed the stodgy chunk of cake with great disfavour. "Take a hundred lines for eating in the dormitory!"

"Oh, I say, Wingate!" protested Bunter. "Really, you know, I wasn't eating! I was only nib—"

"And another hundred for provaricating!"

Billy Bunter promptly subsided with a deepened air of injured innocence stamped on his fat features.

Harold Skinner, the cad of the Remove, and a number of the other juniors, chuckled audibly at the spectacle of the unhappy Porpoise. To Skinner particularly there was something extremely humorous in the aspect of somebody in trouble—providing, of course, he did not happen to be that "somebody" himself.

"Shut up, you kids!" ordered Wingate. "Now, no row to-night after lights out, mind!"

With that, he switched out the light and strode from the dormitory.

Hardly had the receding footsteps of the head prefect died away when a buzz of conversation broke out.

Harry Wharton and his chums of the Famous Five—Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Hurree Singh—resumed their discussion of the afternoon's footer match, that game which had proved so unfortunate for Herbert Vernon-Smith, the Remove outside-right and popular Sports' Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald."

Percy Bolsover, a hulking, cross-grained youth of sixteen summers and almost as many winters, was the most voluble of all the chattering Reusovites.

He had missed a valuable plum-cake from his study that evening, and certain suspicious he had harboured had been amply confirmed. In no uncertain manner he communicated his opinions to William George Bunter.

But for the wintry chill that permeated the dormitory, Bolsover would have taken dire vengeance on the ponderous Porpoise then and there. As it was, he contented himself with breathing blood-curdling threats concerning the

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"slaughter of a fat toad" on the following morning.

At the far end of the dormitory, Harold Skinner, whose bed was sandwiched between the empty cot of Vernon-Smith and the one occupied by Wun Lung, the Chinese junior, created a diversion all on his own. A week previously Wun Lung had remarked that Skinner was "allee same frightened skinny rabbit," and the alleged "frightened skinny rabbit" had not forgotten the incident.

Drawing a fives' bat from beneath the coverlet, Harold Skinner brought it down on the back of the unfortunate Chinese with a resounding thwack!

"Yow! Yaroooh!"

A wild howl like the shriek of a railway-engine entering a tunnel reverberated through the dormitory, followed by a breathless silence.

Footsteps sounded in the passage outside. Then the door was opened, and the voice of Horace Henry Samuel Quelch, M.A., the master of the Remove Form, pierced the darkness.

"What was that hideous noise I heard just now?" it demanded.

The response came in a chorus of snores.

"I demand to know who gave vent to that demoniac Apache war-whoop?"

More snores.

For a couple of seconds Mr. Quelch remained peering into the darkened dormitory suspiciously. Then, realising the futility of conducting further inquiries, he wisely withdrew.

After he had gone, Wharton was the first to break the silence.

"Who the dickens raised that beastly shindy?" he demanded, in a punctuating whisper.

"Me kickee up beasty shindy, Hally," came a thin, pained voice in reply. "Me tinkee big piece ceiling dloppee on top of poor Wun Lung."

"Rot!" retorted Wharton. "I expect that frog-and-seaweed pie you cooked in your study this afternoon, gave you the nightmare! Pipe down!"

Ten minutes later a genuine chorus of snores resounded through the Remove dormitory, the fat, grampus-like grunts of Billy Bunter providing an effective solo to the orchestral accompaniment of the rest of the juniors.

An uneasy conscience is a source of wakefulness to a good many people. Harold Skinner, though often possessed of the former, seldom suffered from sleeplessness on that account.

Whether on this occasion it was his conscience, or the advent of Trotter, the Greyfriars pageboy, collecting the boots of the juniors, it is impossible to say, but he awakened fully half an hour before rising-bell on the following morning.

On the dormitory windows were fanciful patterns traced by the white hand of King Frost; while the chill grey of dawn lent a dim, eerie light to the long room, with its two rows of occupied beds.

Harold Skinner opened his eyes and rolled lazily over. Then his gaze lighted on Vernon-Smith's bed, between his own and the window.

A flash of memory passed through his mind, and he shot bolt upright as though stung.

"M-my aunt!" he gasped.

The bed, vacant at "lights out" on the previous night, was now occupied.

For some moments Skinner remained motionless, gazing stupidly at the adjoining bed, the coverlet of which rose and fell rhythmically with the breathing of its occupant, whose head was tucked so low on the pillow as to be completely out of sight.

"Smithy!"

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Skinner's voice had a hoarse, scared ring in it, as he called the name.

"To his lady, is that you, Smithy?"

To this louder appeal there was still no response.

Wracked with curiosity and a vague sense of the uncanny, Harold Skinner clambered out on the cold floor and peered over the sleeping form in the next bed.

With a stealthy movement he started to draw aside the coverlet, when the figure in the bed suddenly came to life. Like a jack-in-the-box released by the touch of an invisible spring, there shot up a strange, freckled face surmounted by a shock of towed reddish hair.

"Ow!"

With a howl of surprise Harold Skinner leapt backwards fully a yard, banging his foot heavily against the iron leg of his own bed.

There was a general stir in the dormitory, one or two of the lightest sleepers among the juniors becoming wide awake immediately.

"What the thump?"

It was Harry Wharton who asked that extraordinary question, as he sat up and blinked in the dim light of the early morning.

From the opposite side of the room came a fat voice in muffled, irritable tones.

"Oh, I say, shut up! The rising-bell hasn't gone yet, has it? Why can't you chaps let a fellow get his well-earned sleep in peace?"

Wharton took no notice of the Owl's plaintive moan. He turned his attention to Skinner, who was dancing a reel on the hard floor, with his damaged foot clasped affectionately in both hands.

"What the thump's the row about, Skinner?" he demanded. "What are you—"

He stopped short, and his jaw dropped in the gaze carried to the freckled face and red hair of the stranger nearer the window.

"Who—who the dickens is that in Smithy's bed?"

"Ask me another!" growled Skinner.

"I found it there when I got up!"

The clothes of the bed nearest the window were cast aside suddenly, and a lithe form clad in a wonderful suit of mauve-and-yellow pyjamas came into full view.

The stranger, who was slightly shorter than Skinner, approached the end of the Remove in a threatening manner.

"See here, bo!" he said. "I'm not in the habit of leaving guys refer to me in the water-gate."

"Egad!" ejaculated Skinner. "It must be Fishy's brother escaped from the New York zoo!"

"I guess not!" came the voice of Fisher Tarleton Fish, the American junior. "There's no brother of mine with a head like a mop on fire! I guess it's that crazy galoot Wibley trying to pull our legs!"

"You always were a rotten guesser, Fishy!"

And William Wibley, whose talent for acting was well-known at Greyfriars, sat up in his bed with the clothes huddled round him.

Harry Wharton lit a candle-end.

"Let's have some light on the subject," he said.

He got out of bed, and, candle in hand, strode up to the gaudily-garbed stranger.

"Hallo, where did you spring from?" he asked.

"I didn't spring," replied the freckled lad. "I dimbled through a lower window and walked upstairs."

"What for?"

"Cause I wanted a place to sleep, of

course. You see, I didn't want to disturb anyone—it was about midnight when I arrived—so I poked around quietly, and happened to strike this dormitory with a vacant bed in it. Then I undressed and hit the hay."

"Hit the hay?"

"Wal, turned in—it's the same thing. Gee, it's chilly standing around here!"

"You're an American kid, aren't you?"

"Yep. How did you guess?"

"Oh, I've won lags of monkey-nuts in guesing-contests in my young life," said Wharton easily. "What's your name, and what did you come here?"

By this time a number of juniors, including Bob Cherry, Bunter, Fisher T. Fish, Hurrey Singh, Stott, and Snoop, had gathered round.

The stranger, whose teeth were beginning to chatter, made a dive for the genial comfort of Vernon-Smith's bed. Perched therein, he surveyed the crowd of astonished Removites with a pair of beady eyes that twinkled humorously.

"I guess I owe you kids an explanation," he said condescendingly. "My name's Diggy Durt, and I hail from Oskaloosa, Oklahoma—"

"Gee!" cried Fisher T. Fish. "I've got an aunt twice removed living there!"

"Shut up, Fishy!" ordered Bob Cherry. "Well, Diggy?"

"Wal," said Durt. "I reckon I've jest come over the pond to study at Greyfriars."

"My hat! You're a new kid, then?"

"Yep, that's about it. You see, Dr. Locke expected me to-morrow, but as the liner arrived at Southampton a day early, I blew right along. Unfortunately, there was a block down on your coast, so I had to reach Friarville till after eleven o'clock last night. Then, as I didn't want to wake any of the guys connected with this hyer reformatory—"

"Parson me, Rufus," said Johnny Bull politely. "It's a first-rate school for the sons of gentlemen, y'know."

"Gee! What d'you think of that, now?"

As he spoke, Durt's gaze flitted lightly from Billy Bunter to Skinner, and from Skinner to Bolsover, Stott, and Snoop. Bunter, whose fat features had assumed a rich purple hue, seemed about to say something that was on his mind, when the loud clanging of the rising-bell burst forth.

A moment later Trotter, the pageboy, entered the dormitory, bearing a pile of boots in his arms. While the Removites hastily set about the task of dressing, Trotter, who was late about the duties he had assumed temporarily, rapidly distributed the footwear.

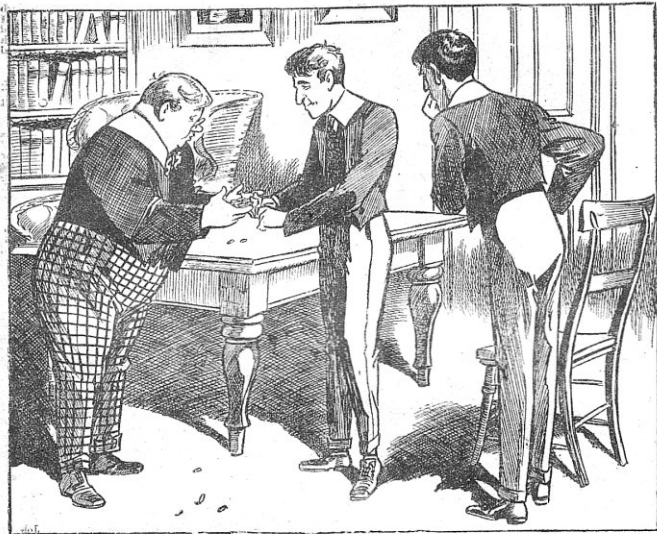
At the far end of the dormitory he encountered Diggy Durt sitting on the edge of Vernon-Smith's bed, still clad in his radiant pyjamas. He stopped short, for his mouth opened wide in astonishment.

"Ah, Mr. shoes, I see," said the new American junior, calmly taking a pair from the numbed fingers of the pageboy. "They're cleaned fine and dandy!" Durt fumbled in the pocket of his coat hanging at the foot of the bed, and drew forth a fat roll of banknotes. "I guess you deserve a lil' tip."

He peeled off a ten-shilling note, and thrust it into the grubby hand of the astonished pageboy.

"M-much obliged, sir."

"Don't run away, my lil' lad," said Diggy Durt. "When I've dressed, I'll jest get you to conduct me to the jolly old headmaster of this establishment. Dr. Locke they call him, eh?"



Dart drew from his pocket a handful of silver and thrust it into the grubby hand of the astonished Bunter. "There's a 'cuk shop in the village, so go and buy as much grub as you can—and bring it back, or I'll skin you!" said the new junior. (See Chapter 3.)

"Which as 'ow they do, sir," muttered the dazed Trotter.

"My aunt!" murmured Billy Bunter, as Dart replaced the roll of money in his pocket. "The chap's a giddy Croesus!"

Fisher T. Fish, who had made no move whatever towards dressing, approached his fellow-countryman with outstretched hand and a fixed, ingratiating smile on his hatchet face.

"Believe me, I'm right pleased to see you at Greyfriars, Dart," he said snavely. "I'm Fisher T. Fish, of New York City. I guess we shall be pals. Shake!"

And the freckled American took the proffered hand of his compatriot.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Surprise for Bolsover!

CONSTRUE, Bunter!" Billy Bunter opened his eyes with a start. The time was three hours later, and the scene the Remove Form-room.

Suddenly recollecting his environment, the Owl raised his ponderous bulk from his seat, and blinked at his Virgil.

"Come, boy!" rapped out Mr. Quelch irritably.

The Owl blinked at the book in his hand, and mumbled unintelligibly. It was obvious that either Billy Bunter had not found the right place or that his preparation on the previous day had been somewhat skimpily performed.

For ten seconds—that seemed like an age—Mr. Quelch waited patiently. Then his hand wandered to a long, yellow case lying on his desk. A look of expectancy lighted the eyes of the Removites, while beads of perspiration broke on Bunter's fat features.

At that dramatic moment the Remove door opened, and Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars, rushed majestically into the Form room. Behind him came a short, stockily-built youth, apparently about sixteen years of age.

"My aunt! What's this?" muttered Wharton. "Another new kid?"

"Seems like it," returned Frank Nugent. "But look at Diggorly Dart. He seems to know him."

More eyes than those of Wharton and Nugent were turned in surprise on the new American junior, for Diggorly Dart had made himself conspicuous by having half-risen from his seat. His eyes were fixed in an angry stare on the youth who had entered with the Head, and his lips moved convulsively.

Hurree Singh pulled the excited junior back into his seat as the Head addressed himself to the Remove Form-master.

"Here is another new scholar for your Form, Mr. Quelch," said Dr. Locke. He ushered the small, stockily-built lad forward. "He is Paul Gilbert, of London, and, owing to his age, I wish you to take charge of him." The Head lowered his voice. "You may find this lad some

what backward, Mr. Quelch, particularly in the classics. For reasons that I cannot explain just now, I wish you to be exceptionally lenient in his case."

With a rather surprised look, Mr. Quelch nodded his head. It was not usual for the headmaster of Greyfriars to tender unsought advice on matters relating to Form-room discipline.

His introduction of the new scholar completed, Dr. Locke swept from the room.

"Now, my boy," said Mr. Quelch to Gilbert, "you may take your seat over there by the window."

"Right you are, Mr. Quelch!" agreed the new boy cheerfully.

Mr. Quelch gasped.

"That's not the way to address your Form-master, boy," he said severely. "Remember in future to call me 'sir.'"

"Right-ho, Sir Quelch!" returned Gilbert genially.

The Form-master's face assumed the hue of an over-ripe tomato, and a ripple of laughter ran through the Removites.

"Silence!" he thundered. "If there is any more of this ribald merriment, I shall punish the whole class." He turned again to the little cockney. "I do not know whether you intend to be gratuitously insulting to me or not, boy, so I shall take the lenient view, and believe that you have merely been

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displaying the extraordinary ignorance already hinted at by Dr. Locke.

"Thank you, sir! Have it your own way."

Wearing a bland smile, the new boy dropped into his seat. With all the wind taken from his sails, Mr. Quelch picked up a Virgil, and ordered Bolsover to construe. Bunter, who had been in such imminent danger of a caning, was quite forgotten, and the Owl, with his fat face hurried deep in his Virgil, chuckled softly to himself.

"Say, Franky," whispered Wharton to Nugent, "that new kid, Gilbert, seems to be a bit of a character. What a midget he is, to be sure!"

"The Midget!" chuckled Nugent under his breath. "What a jolly good name for him!"

And as it turned out afterwards it was as the "Midget" that Paul Gilbert, the new Cockney junior, was to become famous at Greyfriars.

When Mr. Quelch dismissed the Form at twelve o'clock and the juniors trooped out to the quad, Harry Wharton sought out the Midget. As captain of the Remove he was anxious to make the lad's acquaintance, and give him what help he could by putting him up to the ropes.

But others had already surrounded the stranger, including Percy Bolsover, whose motives were not quite so altruistic.

"Hallo, my Cockney bantam!" said the bully of the Remove. "In what part of the Old Kent Road do you live when you're at home?"

"Between the police-station and your uncle's baked-potato factory," replied the Midget pleasantly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The small knot of juniors, which included Herbert Melrose, William Wiley, and Monty Newland, hailed the reply to Bolsover's impertinent question with delight.

A flash of anger crossed Bolsover's heavy features.

"Look here, you cheeky kid," he said. "You don't know who you're talking to. I'm Bolsover; and I can lick any other chap in the Remove with one hand tied behind my back."

"Here's Wharton and Bob Cherry coming up," interrupted Snoop. "Take one of them on. Now's your chance to show the new kid what you can do."

"Shurrup!" growled Bolsover. He faced the Midget again, and his face assumed a pleasant look. "See here, I don't want to quarrel with you, seeing you're a new kid, but you've got to learn to speak in a proper manner when you're addressing your betters. Still, it's only your ignorance, I suppose, Shaake hands."

As Bolsover made this last remark he extended one of his heavy fists, at the same time giving a wink in the direction of Snoop and Stott.

Without hesitation Gilbert accepted the proffered hand. Bolsover gripped with all his power. He would teach this new Cockney junior a lesson by making him squirm with pain and yell for mercy.

But the Midget neither squirmed nor yelled. His face wore its habitual blank expression. To judge from his look it appeared that he was totally unaware that the bully was making any effort to bring about his discomfiture.

Then, as Bolsover did not relax his grasp, the Midget obtained a firmer grip on the hand of the hulking Removite. Tighter and tighter grew his fingers round those of Bolsover. The bully gasped, his eyes watered, he squirmed, and finally a howl of pain left his lips.

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"My hat!"

That exclamation in surprised tones was ejaculated by more than one of the astonished onlookers.

The new boy relaxed his hold a trifle. As he did so Bolsover swung his left with terrific force at the Midget's head.

What happened after that no one was able to describe quite, least of all Bolsover. The Cockney junior stooped down suddenly and caught the bully of the Remove round the legs. Next moment Percy Bolsover went flying headlong over the Midget's shoulder.

"My aunt!"

"What the thump!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The astounding feat of strength, counting as it did from a lad half the size of the big Removite, caused a medley of surprised exclamations and laughter.

Percy Bolsover sat up with a dazed look on his face and rubbed his thick head.

Harry Wharton pushed his way through the throng of juniors.

"What the dickens is happening here?" he demanded.

"The esteemed Bolsover is only sitting resting on the ground, my worthy chum," volunteered Hurree Singh.

With a heavy scowl Bolsover staggered to his feet, gave one glance at the smiling Midget, and ambled hurriedly away.

Nobody gave much notice to him, for at that moment, in the crowd of juniors that had gathered, Digory Dart, the new American junior, his face convulsed with rage, burst on the scene. In his wake came Fisher T. Fish and Billy Bunter.

Dart faced the Midget and waved a freckled fist threateningly in the air.

"What in the name of George Washington have you come to Greyfriars for?" he demanded.

"Ma wanted me to learn hopscotch and marbles," replied the little cockney cheerfully. "But introduce yourself, my dear old haricot."

"I guess you know me right enough," fumed Dart, "and I'm wise to you and your game. So don't try handing the phoney stuff to me. Let me tell you right now, if I catch you hanging around me, there's going to be a whole heap of trouble for somebody!"

And with these dark and mysterious words Digory Dart allowed his way through the throng of juniors, and made for the School House.

The incident, following the surprise of seeing Bolsover's graceful somersault over the Midget's head, left the Removites puzzled and curious.

Harry Wharton turned to the little Cockney junior.

"What the thump is it all about, Midget?" he asked.

"The new boy smiled good-humouredly. 'I'm afraid I can't tell you,' he said. 'More he could not or would not say.'"

"Has the Head told you which study you're to dig in, yet?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Yes, number eight, with a kid called Robert Smith, and that new Yankee chap."

"Smith minor and Digory Dart, eh?"

"That's the arrangement, I believe."

The Midget chuckled softly to himself. "I can just imagine Dart's joy when he learns he's to have me for a stable companion."

At that moment the dinner-bell rang, and the juniors made a swift descent on the school. One and all the Removites felt that there was some strange mystery in connection with the new American junior and the little Cockney fellow.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Ride to Farnfield!

"O H, stow the crackle!" The remark was made by Smith minor, and it was addressed to Digory Dart.

Not until after four o'clock that afternoon had the new American junior discovered he was to share Study No. 8 with Robert Smith and the Midget for stable companions. To the former he did not object; but when he found that he was to be brought into daily contact with the latter in the confines of the small Remove study, his rage knew no bounds.

For ten minutes he hurled remarks of a none too complimentary nature at the Midget, who sat listening with a good-natured smile on his cute little face. Then Smith minor cut in.

"Stow the cackle, you tilly chump!" he repeated. "What's the Midget ever done to you, anyway?"

"Mind your own bizney!" snapped Dart.

He turned to resume his verbal attack on his fellow new-comer to Greyfriars, but the Cockney lad was not to be drawn into an altercation. Ignoring the taunts of the American boy, he calmly walked to the door and beckoned to Smith minor.

"Come and show me the way to the tuckshop, Smithy," he said affably. "I've brought a quid or two with me to Greyfriars, so we might as well change 'em now as any other time."

Robert Smith needed no second invitation, and with a contemptuous glance at the enraged Dart, left the study in the wake of the Midget.

No sooner had his study-mate left the room than Digory Dart threw himself in an armchair and clenched his hands savagely.

"Geel! That crazy galoot will be the death of me!" he muttered. "He keeps on my trail like a shadow, just as though—"

He broke off suddenly as a step sounded in the passage outside and a set of bony knuckles was rapped on the study door. A moment later Fisher Tarleton Fish entered the room. The hatchet face of the junior from New York City was split by what was intended to be an ingratiating smile. Fisher T. Fish was very anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of his fellow-countryman. The sight of Dart's wad of banknotes lingered pleasantly in his businesslike mind.

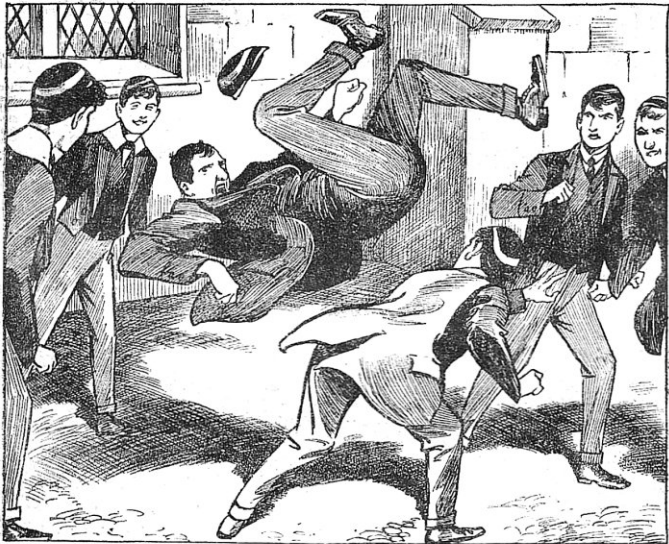
"Hallo, Diggy!" he began affably. "I kinder thought you might be feeling lonesome, this being your first day, so strolled along to have a pow-wow about li' old Askalooze. Say, how were all the old folk when you left 'em?"

"Aw, go and play marbles!" growled the red-haired junior.

But Fish had a skin far too thick to feel any such minor rebuff as this. He took a seat on the edge of the table and placed his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, thus assuming an almost paternal attitude.

"See here, Diggy," he said. "I guess if you only knew it, I'm your best friend byer. Some of the Greyfriars chaps are passable, but there's nothing like having a real live fellow American to show you the ropes. There are guys here who'll sponge on anyone with a few dollars to blow, so take my tip and stick right by Uncle Fish, and give the others a miss."

Either because of the homelike effect of hearing the nasal pronunciation of his native language, or the budding belief that Fish might be of service to him, Digory Dart thawed out a trifle. Fish noticed the change in the new boy's



The Cockney junior stooped down suddenly and caught the Bully of the Remove round the legs. Next moment Percy Belsolver went flying heading over the Midget's shoulder, to land with a resounding bump on the hard ground of the Close. (See Chapter 2.)

demeanour, and swung his legs in easy satisfaction.

"Yep," he went on, "all kinds and conditions of kids will want to pal up with you. I noticed Wharton & Co., Bunter, and some of the others trying to make themselves popular this morning. However, you can bet they'll steer clear when they see Fisher T. Fish by your side, old pard. By the way, have you ever met that new guy they call the Midget before?"

"Oh, quit yapping about that crazy galoot!" snapped Dart. "If you want to be pards with me, leave that guy out of the conversation. Get me?"

Fish looked a trifle disappointed. He had hoped to worm out of Diggy the reason for the marked antipathy he bore to the other new junior. He was wisely about to change the subject when the study door opened to its fullest width, and the ponderous bulk of the Porpoise of the Remove inserted itself into the room.

Fisher T. Fish swung round in annoyance.

"Say, jest you beat it, you fat beast!" he ordered. "There's no tuck for you to scoff in here!"

The beady eyes of Bunter gleamed through his little round spectacles straight at the junior in the armchair. Of Fisher Tarleton Fish the Owl took not the slightest notice.

"Oh, I say, Diggy, old chap," mur-

mured Bunter, in oily tones, "if you want to be shown the way to the tuckshop, I've got a few minutes to spare, and—"

"I guess Fishy'll put me wise to the grub store," interposed Dart. "Thanks all the same. Don't slam the door as you go out—my nerves are a bit wobbly to-day."

But if Fisher T. Fish had a skin like that of a hippopotamus, Bunter had a hide like the latest armoured war-tank. He beamed with the air of a benefactor at the new boy.

"As a pal, I think I ought to warn you, Diggy," he said blandly. "There are a lot of fellows who'll come sponging on you for the sake of your money—like Fishy here, for instance—"

"What's that?" howled Fisher T. Fish, leaping from the table. "I—I'll slaughter you, you great gormandising galoot, if you don't beat it!"

"Go and eat coke!" said Bunter politely. "As a pal, I feel it's my duty to warn Diggy. My conscience wouldn't be easy if—"

"If you thought you'd missed a chance of rooking a new chap for a feed," said Fish, with a sneer.

Billy Bunter gave a fat sniff.

"I'm offering to show Diggy the way to the tuckshop," he said, "where I'm going to stand treat."

"My hat!"

Smiling at Fish's amazed exclamation,

Bunter crossed to the new boy and laid a fat hand affectionately on his shoulder. "I've taken a liking to you, Diggy," he said, "and I want you to be my guest in the tuckshop. But—bat—er—unfortunately a postal-order—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bunter turned and surveyed the laughing Fish severely through his round spectacles.

"Wal!" intoned the new junior. "Get this postal order business off your chest."

"I was saying, when this prize ass interrupted," went on Bunter, "that my uncle, Sir William Bunter, promised to send me a postal-order, but unfortunately—"

"I've got you," said Dart. "You want to set up a spread for me, but you're minus the greenbacks, so to speak. Wal, I guess I can remedy the difficulty."

He drew from his pocket a handful of silver, and thrust it into the grubby palm of the astonished Porpoise. The greedy eyes of Fisher T. Fish nearly started from their sockets.

"I'm not keen on stowing away pastries and that sort of thing at this time of the day," Diggy continued. "But I guess you might buy a few tins of sardines and suchlike for a study spread to-night. There's a village near the school, isn't there? Wal, you might

hike down on your bike—if you've got one."

"Oh, I've got one all right!" cried Bunter, his eyes sparkling. "It only wants the tyres pumping up, the forks straightening a bit, and the pedals tying on. It's heavy chumps like Bolsolver, who keep borrowing it, who flatten it out of shape."

"Vamoose, you sponging fat toad!" snarled Fish. "Bring the full whack of tuck back hyer, or my pard Diggy and I'll slaughter you!"

Thoroughly enjoying the envy and ill-humour of the American junior, Bunter rolled out of the study. He had succeeded beyond his wildest dreams, and his eyes glistened at the thought of the spread the silver that Dart had given him would buy.

But the idea of regaling himself with the jam-puffs, scones, and ginger-pop parveyed by the worthy Mrs. Mumble was regrettably discarded. He would like killing the goose that laid the golden eggs. The new boy appeared to be rolling in wealth. If Bunter failed to put in an appearance with an armful of provisions from Friardale, he would probably fall into disfavour with the open-handed Diggy. Bunter would not have had that happen for worlds, so he took consolation from the fact that he would share the tuck with Dart and Fish, and be eligible for future feuds.

Pondering in this manner, the Owl of the Remove made his way to the cycloshed and selected a good-looking machine.

"Poor old Smithy won't want to use this for a few days," he mused. "The bike'll only get rusty while he's in the 'sanny' if it isn't used!"

A couple of minutes later the fat form of the Remove porpoise might have been seen pedalling through the duck in the direction of Friardale. Having purchased a stock of provisions at Uncle Clegg's shop and other places, he lighted the lamps on the bike, and set off on the return journey.

Puffing and blowing like a grampus, he was just approaching Greyfriars again, when a dark, spectre-like figure appeared suddenly before him on the road. So startled was Bunter by the apparition that he gave vent to a wild yell and tugged the handlebar of Vernon-Smith's cherished bicycle to the right. The bike swerved sharply from the road-way and dashed into a small ditch by a hedgerow. Bunter descended with his full weight of fourteen stone twelve and a half pounds on top, with the result that the forks of the machine snapped like matchsticks.

"Ouch! Ooo—groooh!" Hurt and frightened, the fat junior was struggling to extricate himself from Smithy's damaged machine, when he heard footsteps approaching. Looking up, he saw the dark figure draw near—a man in a cape, with a soft hat pulled well down over his eyes.

Bunter squirmed in alarm. To his imagination the whole attitude of the man was sinister and threatening.

"Oh, p—please, sir, lemme go!" he stammered. "I've got no money, really I haven't. Take my bike if you like, sir, but—"

"Say, what the heck are you skeered about, kid?"

The stranger halted, and viewed the recumbent Bunter with a smile. Feeling very sheepish, the Owl of the Remove staggered to his feet.

"I—I wasn't scared," he explained. "That remark was only my little j—joke. Ha, ha, ha!"

The explanation and the mirthless laugh caused the stranger to smile yet.

more broadly as he surveyed the muddied and bedraggled Greyfriars junior.

"Very funny," he commented dryly. "You seem to have stored that bike o' yours into a bit o' a hole."

"The beastly thing went wrong somehow and ran away with me," said Bunter. "Fortunately, it isn't mine, though."

He started to collect the tins of sardines and other provisions which had burst from their brown paper wrapping in the fall. The man in the cape good-naturedly lifted the broken bike out of the ditch and put it on the road.

"I suppose you're a scholar at the school that's situated around hyer somewhere?" suggested the stranger.

"Yes, Greyfriars," replied Bunter. "It's not far up the road. If you're going that way you might give me a hand to get this bike and these tinned goods and things there."

To the fat junior's great gratification, the man responded by grasping the damaged bicycle at once. Side by side the two walked along in the darkness. Any apprehensions Bunter might have had about the smashing of Vernon-Smith's bike were subdued by the pleasure of seeing someone else perform the heavy task of pushing the crooked machine home.

At the gates of Greyfriars, Bunter took over the bike and was about to take a cheery farewell of his kind helper, when the man laid a restraining hand on his arm.

"You had a new kid come to the school yesterday, I believe," he murmured. "A nipper with red hair and a comic kind of freckled face."

"You mean Diggy Dart?"

"So that's what he calls himself, is it?" muttered the man, as though talking to himself. "Ain't he said, 'Yap, I guess that's the guy. I've got a letter hyer for him. You might deliver it for me when you get back to the school, if you don't mind.'"

"That's no trouble," said Billy Bunter, as he took over the note.

The stranger put his mouth close to the Owl's ear.

"Don't you mention so much as a word to the other scholars about your meeting with me!" he hissed. "If you do, I could stammer out the question that rose to his lips, the man swung round on his heel and strode rapidly away. In no little trepidation Bunter staggered through the school gates, supporting the bike with one podgy hand and clasping the tinned edibles he had not been able to stow in his pockets in the other.

With qualms of trouble to come, he put Vernon-Smith's crooked machine in its place with the others in the shed, and then hurried towards the School House. Like a great fat shadow, he was rolling across the darkened quad, when a hail caused him to come to a sudden halt.

"Hallo; there!"

Bunter, whose nerves had become a trifle frayed owing to his recent experiences, swung round like a tee-to-tum in the direction from which the call had sounded. The thought that Henry Wharton or one of Vernon-Smith's other chums had seen him replace the broken

bicycle in the shed filled him with apprehension.

"Who—who's there?"

"Only little me!"

And through the gloom there strode up the new boy, Gilbert, who had been dubbed the Midget so expeditiously.

Billy Bunter glared through his spectacles at the little Cockney fiercely, yet with a suspicion of relief in his gaze.

"What the dickens do you want?" he demanded.

"Your help, Bunter," said the Midget. "I've a large jar of jellied chicken, and I'm afraid it will go bad if it's kept. Will you come and help me to eat it?"

Bunter blinked with pleasure, but, remembering the tuck he had purchased as Uncle Clegg's, he hesitated. The Midget seemed to read what was in his mind, for he stopped and picked up the parcel Bunter had dropped.

"I see you've been buying some provender," he said. "Still, this will keep—my jellied chicken won't. As a personal favour, help me to dispose of it."

Billy Bunter beamed. Rendering such an esteemed favour was after his own heart. Besides, jellied chicken was as enticing as it was rare in his experience.

With a condescending gesture, he accepted the parcel he had dropped, and signified his willingness to help. Suddenly he remembered the fact that the Midget shared Study No. 6 with Robert Smith and Diggy Dart.

"Oh, I say, Midget," he remarked. "Where do the other chaps in your study come in?"

"They don't come in in this act," said the new junior. "A fellow called Tom Redwing has given me the loan of his study for to-night. I couldn't do my prep in my own owing to the beastly shindy Dart has been kicking up. So Redwing, who has a late pass to go to Courtfield, kindly told me to make myself at home in Study No. 4."

"Oh, good egg," said Bunter, as he fell into step with the smaller lad. "Then we shall have the place to ourselves, as Smithy, Redwing's stable companion, is in the 'sanny.'"

The two reached the study unobserved, save by a few fags on their way to the Common-room. A roaring fire was burning in the grate, and there was a genial air of comfort about the place. Bunter's eyes roamed round the room in approval; but, failing to notice any signs of the jellied chicken, his face fell somewhat.

"Sit down and make yourself at home," said the Midget. "I'll be along with the tuck in a half jiffy!"

With that the new boy hastily slipped out of the room, closing the door carefully after him. For some minutes Bunter sat regarding the fire dreamily, but just as he began to get impatient the Midget returned with his coat bulging with something concealed beneath it.

"Here you are, old chap! File in!"

He slammed a large glass jar containing the chicken on to the table, and drew from his pocket a combination table-knife and fork and a small bag of dry biscuits. Then he crossed to the fire and stoked it up till it roared like a furnace.

Billy Bunter needed no second invitation to begin. He set to with a will, while the Midget stood by lost in admiration. When a quarter of the jar had disappeared from view Bunter ceased his exertions for a moment.

"Why, you're not eating anything, old chap?" he said in surprise. "It's your chicken, you know. Share and share alike. That's the fair thing."

In a sudden generous impulse he placed a three-inch cube of the jellied chicken



BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY.

This jernal has no connexshun what-ever with "Wharton's Weekly Weekly."

EDITED BY
William George Bunter.

No. 2. Week Ending January 29th, 1921.



IN THE EDDITER'S SANKTUM; or, YOUR EDDITER SPEEKS! By W. G. Bunter.

Hear we are agane, deer readers!
This edditer of the kompania papers tells me you have been klammering for another issue of my poplar "Weekly," and I hearily detest the gods! (Get out, Bolsover, you hee! Can't you see that I'm busy writing my editorial?)

I have left no turn unstoned—I mean, no turn unturned—(Dry up, Bolsover! How can a fello kollekt his thortse, while you're belovving at him from the doorway? As I was saying, deer readers, I have left no stone unstoned in providing what I, as an expert edditer, konsider to be a top-whole number.)

I was offered a story from the lanky pen of that talented young lady othter, Miss Bessie Bunter. Bessie insists upon being paid at the rate of tuppence a kilm. I tride to heet her down to 24 pence, but in vane. She said, "Tuppence a kolum, Billy, or I'll send my story to the 'London Maggazine!' " I don't no if she sent it, but I couldn't aford to pay her, and the mat-terpence was lost.

With regard to the other leechers in this issue, deer readers, they are all top-notch, with the exception of the "Diary for the Weak," and Penfold's potty poem about Vernon-Smith. These two kontribushuns really belong to the "Greyfriars Herald," and I hope you will excuse me all the spelling defex. (Bolsover, if you don't cleer out I'll skwirt my fowntain-pen over yore ugly chivry!)

It has been a hard task, my chums, to prepare this ponderful feast of fishshun. As usual, I've had to do all the donkey-work myself. The other felless say that I'm rather an ass to do the donkey-work; but never mind! I regard it as a labor of love.

I sincerely trussed, deer readers, that by yore Kristmas break—Kristmas has gone, but I like this expression!—you will sit and devour doe-nutts—and my "Weekly"—with a viddity (whatever that may mean).

(Ed?) What are you saying about yore plum-cake, Bolsover? I don't understand you, get out, or I'll summon my Piting Edditer—(that's ME!)

Well, readers all, I hope you are kwite well as it leaves me at present in a ravenna state, with the pangs of hunger nawing at my vitshuns. Don't forget to write and tell me what you think of this number, and then—

(Hellup! What are you up to, Bolsover? Stop punching me, you beestly booly, or you'll sock my glasses off, and brake them, and then you'll have to pay for the wite what's that? I pinched yore plum-cake? Ow! I didn't! Yow! I never! Wow! I shouldn't dream of such a thing!)

Bliff! Thud! Bliff! Thud!

"Yarooooooh!"

EDDITER.

MY FOOTBAWL KOLLUM. By Billy Bunter.

A very eggating thing happened the other day, deer readers.

Harry Wharton, the kaptin of the E-move Eleven, went up to Wingate of the oth, and said:

"Look hear, Wingate, we'll challenj the 1st eleven to a 'loder' match!"
"Very well," said Wingate. "I'm afeard!" said Wharton. "Why, if we were to play the Remove, the skore would be about twenty goles to nil in our favor!"

Wharton barfed.
"We shall see!" he said. "Will you axsept our challenj?"

"Their is just one stipulashun I have to make," said Wharton. "You must agree to play with gole-posts wich are only four feet apart."

"Oh, very well!" said Wingate good-wyvermally.

Well, the day of the match dorned, and the 1st eleven were konfident that they would put it across the Remove.

"Bunter, old chap," Wharton said, gripping me by the fleshy part of my neck, "I want you to keep gole for us this afternoon. We shall just about wedge you in!"

And he did.

The rezult was, deer readers, that it was impossibul for the 1st eleven to skore, because I took up the hole of the space in between the posts.

Wingate & Co. bombarded me with shotts, and I felt like one of those merchants who used to be put in the millery and pelted.

In the sekond I, Frank Nugent, scored a grand gole for the Remove. It was the only gole of the match, and thus it was that the 1st eleven was humbled in the dust.

OUR WEEKLY KARTOON.



"FRY!"

EXTRAX FROM MY POST-BAGG. By Billy Bunter.

AN INVITASHUN FROM FILLIS.

To the Edditer.

My Dear Ed,—It is my birthday on Saturday, and there is to be a hamper celebration at Cliff House. We have arranged to kill the fatheaded cat—as Hurree Singh would put it—and I have no doubt that everything will go off swimmingly. Do come along!

Yours sincerely,

PHYLIS HOWELL.

(This invitashun is evidently intended for the edditer of the GREYFRIARS HERALD, but as it has come into my hands I mean to jump at it. What do you think of a grake man with the ladies, you no!—Ed.)

HARD LUCK, LODER!

To the Edditer.

You cheery Young Cub,—I am given to understand that the Weekly Limerick in your potty perpetration will deal with me. Allow me to inform you that if the Limerick does deal with me, I'll take an early opportunity of dealing with YOU! I'll come along to your study with a five-shilling note and you'll howl for the mercy that you'll never get! I'm not going to have my name taken in vain by an over-iced young porpoise like you.

Yours in grim earnest,

GRAND LODER.

(If Loder thinks he can eat-in-timmy-date me by making threats of that sort, allow me to inform him that he's kwite off-side! For whiere'er I go I fear no foe; and I'll punch old Loder on the nose, you see! He nose I will, too! As for the Limerick in question, it will be found on another page.—Ed.)

SKINNER'S LITTLE JOKE!

To the Edditer.

My Dear Porpoise,—The other day a pal of mine showed me the following doggerel, and said it was an acoustic. I can't make head or tail of it. Can you?

"My first is thrown at my head sometimes.
My second's a place in distant climes.
My third to everyone does belong.
My fourth is the name of a well-known song.
My fifth are sold at Uncle George's.
For my sixth at the tuckshop Bunter beats.
My whole, when the puzzle is intact,
Will reveal an undisputed fact."

That's the conundrum, Porpoise. See what you can make of it.

Yours, HAROLD SKINNER.

(Skinner, you rotter, you're trying to take a rise out of me! I have konsulted a puzzle expert, and he tells me that the solution is as folows:

R O O T
U T S H
N E E H
T H O R A
E G G S
R O I L S

—Ed.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 577.



By BILLY BUNTER.

I. September 1st, 1920.

To Master W. G. Bunter,
Greycliffs School.

Dear Nephew William,—You have occupied my thoughts a great deal of late, and I was very pleased indeed to get your letter. I am glad to hear that you are now captain of the Remove, and that you won the football match for your side last Saturday, scoring no less than seven goals off your own hat—or should I say boot? I am also referred to learn that you are at the top of your class. You must have improved tremendously, for when I was last at Greycliffs you occupied the lowest position! In fact, I remember one of your Form-fellows, a boy named Skinner, asking me a conundrum, the words, "What fellow in the Remove class resembles a town on the East Coast?" I gave it up, and Skinner replied, "Billy Bunter, because he's lowest off (lowest class)." I regard Skinner as a very impertinent young fellow, and I am delighted that you have made such rapid strides in the Form-room and on the playing-field!

You say in your letter that you consider you are entitled to some reward. So do I. In view of your splendid progress, I shall forward you, by next post, a postal-order for five shillings. I hope you will not make a pig of yourself, and I strongly recommend that you open a Post-Office Savings Bank account with the money.—With fondest love, dear nephew William, your devoted
AUNT REBECCA.

II. September 3rd, 1920.

Dear Aunt Rebecca,—I hope you are in the best of health, as it leaves me at present, still waiting for my postle-order. You said you were sending it by the next post, but it hasn't arrived, and all the fellows are harping at me, and saying "Same old postle-order! It's been coming ever since the Flood, but it hasn't got here yet!"

I am in a state of great expense, and I eagerly await your explanation.—Your loving nephew,
BILLY.

III. September 5th, 1920.

Dear Nephew William,—I cannot understand why the postle-order has not arrived. I posted it on the evening of the 1st instant. There must be some delay in the post. I suggest that you get into touch with the postal authorities.—Your affectionate
AUNT REBECCA.

IV. September 7th, 1920.

To the Postmaster,
Frisland, Kent.

Sir,—On the 1st of the month my Aunt Rebecca sent me a postle-order for five bob, but it hasn't got here yet.

For goodness' sake pull your socks up! You are as slow as a Government department. I suggest that you provide the local post-man with an hair-pole, instead of a beastly old push-bike that's only fit for the scraggy-heep.

I suppose your postman started out from Frisland five days ago, and he's still on the way? Is there any chance of him reaching Greycliffs before next Christmas?—Yours earnestly,
W. G. BUNTER.

V. November 1st, 1920.

To Master W. G. Bunter,
Greycliffs School.

Sir,—I regret the delay in replying to your communication of September 7th last, but it
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has taken our officials nearly two months to decipher the spelling!

Your letter, having been duly interpreted, has been passed on to the postmaster at Courtfield, from whom you will hear in due course.—Yours faithfully,
T. ARDY,
Postmaster.

VI. November 15th, 1920.

To the Postmaster,
Courtfield, Kent.

I have been expecting to hear from you about my postle-order, which was dispatched on September 1st last.

But a jerk in the fat of my ankles to buy myself a plum-cake for Christmas.

W. G. BUNTER.

VII. December 31st, 1920.

To Master W. G. Bunter,
Greycliffs School.

Sir,—I regret the delay in replying to your letter of November 15th, but our staff was packing up for the Christmas holidays when it came.

Your communication has been forwarded to the Postmaster-General, from whom you will hear in the fullness of time—if you're lucky!—Yours faithfully,
P. DILEY-DALEY,
Postmaster.

VIII. January 7th, 1921.

To the Postmaster-General,
London.

Sir,—Ages and ages ago my Aunt Rebecca sent me a postle-order for five bob, I am still waiting, like Mr. Mick Awher, for it to turn up!

I am wasting away to a shuddo three lack of nutriment, so please check up and get on the track of my postle-order.

I enclose an unstamped addressed envelope for your reply.—Yours truly,
W. G. BUNTER.

IX. February 1st, 1921.

The Postmaster-General begs to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Bunter's letter dated January 7th, and to inform him that the matter shall receive attention.

X. February 15th, 1921.

To the Postmaster-General,
London.

When are you going to wake up? At this rate, I shall grow a beard and side-whiskers before my postle-order arrives!

W. G. BUNTER.

XI. April 1st, 1921.

Dear Nephew William,—I have just discovered a dreadful mistake!

On September 1st last I fully intended to send you a postle-order for five shillings, but I inadvertently put it in the wrong envelope, and sent it to your sister Bessie. I do not suppose she has cashed it yet, so if I were you I should go round to Cliff House and collect it. So sorry!—Your affectionate
AUNT REBECCA.

(Sms hopes!—W. G. B.)

OUR CYCLING CORNER!

By Tom Brown.

I WANT to tell you this week the tale of the ten jolly cyclists.

On the last half-holiday, the members of the G.S.S.S.—Greycliffs Society of Scooters and Skiddlers—met together in the Cloak with their ancient girlfriends, and decided to go for a spin.

"Ten jolly cyclists briskly toed the line,

One ran into Gosling's lodge, and then there were nine!"

Bolover major was the victim. He lost his head—and his sense of direction—and went careering through Gosling's front door.

"Nine jolly cyclists travelled through the gate,

Toddy met a brewer's dray, and then there were eight!"

Poor old 'Toddy! His pals left him to sort himself out, and colourfully rode on.

"Eight jolly cyclists—two got in a fix—
(Can't locate a rhyme for 'seven,' and so there were six!)"

The unfortunate train who got themselves in a fix were Bob Cherry and Frank Nigent. There was a grinding collision in the middle of the roadway, and the sparis flew in all directions.

Meanwhile:

"Six jolly cyclists manfully did strive

Bull met his namesake, and then there were five!"

Alas, poor Johnny! It's no joke to get mixed up with the horns of a mad bull.

"Five jolly cyclists rode a mile or more.

Wharton met an old-frien vendor—then there were four!"

The old-frien merchant offered Wharton fourpence-a-penny for his machine. Wharton closed with the offer at once, for he knew it was far more than his bike was worth.

"Four jolly cyclists stopped to have some tea.

Bunter ate enough for twelve, and then there were three!"

You see, Bunter was so weighed down with cares—and cream-buns—that he simply couldn't more!

"Three jolly cyclists down a steep hill flew.

One forgot to use his brakes, and then there were two!"

Dick Rakeo was the victim this time. He went whizzing over the handlebars, and the poor chap was quite cut up about it.

The next stage of the ride was so tragic that I think I'll devote three lines to it.

"Two jolly cyclists had a race for fun.

Traction-engine came along, weighing twenty tons.

Bulstrode failed to ring his bell, and then there was one!"

And I, Tom Brown, the sole survivor, returned to tell the tale.

(You seem to be quite an expert at "telling the tale," Browney!—Ed.)



The Revenge that Failed!



A Short Story of Greyfriars School.

By JOHNNY BULL.

FISHY was furious.

He considered that he had been very badly treated, and that his rights as an American citizen had been grossly violated. Further, he considered that Quincey, our respected Form-master, was the biggest tyrant breathing.

It was half-time at Greyfriars. And as we trooped up the stairs to the Remove dorm, Fisher Tarleton Fish was groaning and squealing his hands.

"What's up, Fishy?" inquired Bob Cherry.

"Been kicked."

"Yep!"

"What for?"

"Wix!"

"Oh, come off, Fishy!" said Harry Wharton. "Quincey doesn't lick fellows for nothing. You must have been playing the giddy goat in some way."

"When we reached the dorm Fishy explained. 'I had a job of work to do for the 'Greyfriars Herald,' he said. 'It was a cowboy yarn. I had the plot all out and dried, but I guess I couldn't be bothered to write it all out by hand. I decided to type it, and I went along to Quincey to ask permission to use his typewriter.'

"And what did he say?" asked Nugent.

"He wasn't there. So I sat down and got on with the washing."

"You—used Quincey's tapper without permission?" gasped Mark Linley.

"Yep! Why shouldn't I? Guess I wasn't going to chase all round this stinky old island for Quincey. I went ahead with my yarn, and I was just killing off the villains in the last chapter when Quincey blew in."

"And then?" I queried.

"Three on each hand!" said Fish drolourously. "Ow! I feel as if I've been battered with red-hot irons!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's nothing to cackle at!" said the Yankee junior wrathfully. "I mean to make Quincey sit up for this!"

"Don't be an ass, Fishy!" said Harry Wharton. "It's no use kicking against the beams, as you ought to have learnt by now. You deserved your kicking, and there the matter ends."

"I guess it hasn't ended yet—not by long chalk!" said Fish. "I'm going to get my own back on Quincey."

"Dry up, fathead!" muttered Bob Cherry. "Here comes Wingate. If he hears you talking like that, you'll go through the hoop!"

Wingate of the Sixth came into the dorm. He frowned as he noticed that quite a number of us hadn't started to undress.

"There's a hundred lines for the last one in bed!" he exclaimed.

Instantly there was a mad scramble. Nobody was anxious to be the recipient of Wingate's generosity.

The affair resolved itself into a neck-and-neck race between Fishy and Billy Bunter. And Bunter won.

"Take a hundred lines, Fish!" rapped out Wingate. "And let that be an example to everybody to get a move on in future."

So saying, the captain of Greyfriars extinguished the lights and retired.

There was the usual buzz of conversation after lights out. It continued for about an hour, and then we heard somebody getting out of bed.

"What's that?" demanded Wharton sharply.

"Guess it's me!" said Fishy.

"What's the little game?"

"I'm going to have my revenge on Quincey!"

"How?" inquired half a dozen voices.

Fishy lighted a candle, and encased his bony feet in a pair of slippers. Then he proceeded to drape himself from head to foot in a sheet.

We followed Fishy's movements with amazement. He wrapped the sheet around him in such a way that only his eyes were visible. From beneath the sheet came a muffled chuckle.

"Guess Quincey'll have the scare of his life to-night—some! Gee! But won't he yell when the ghost comes stalking into his bed-room!"

"The—the g-g-ghost?" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Yep! Don't you think I make a ripping phantasm, you jabberers!"

"You—you don't seriously mean to say that you're going to walk into Quincey's bed-room like that?" ejaculated Nugent.

"I guess that's the caper."



"Tyrant! Galoot! Slabsided jay! Tr-remble!" said the ghost.

Quincey's eyes simply bulged—but not with fright.

"You chump! You fathead! You burbling jabbercock! You'll be fairly asking for trouble!"

"Quincey's not going to know who I am. He'll think I'm a spook from some other incarnation."

"Rats! He'll spot you a mile off."

"Oh, let the jilly duffer go ahead!" growled Wharton. "He'll get it in the neck, as sure as fate, but it'll be his own funeral."

Fisher T. Fish seemed to have no doubts as to his ability to play the part of a ghost. He imagined that he would be able to scare Quincey out of his wits.

Our own opinion was that it was Fishy who was likely to get the scare!

The Yankee junior was in the act of leaving the dorm, when his legs became entangled in the sheet. He pitched forward, and hit the floor with a terrific concussion.

"Yaroooooop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mind the step, Fishy!"

"Fall out, the stretcher-bearers!" mur-

mured Bob Cherry. Fishy picked himself up, and made a very unghostlike exit.

Filled with curiosity as to how his little scheme would work, several of us got out of bed and followed him.

Progress was difficult, owing to the intense darkness, but in due course Fishy arrived outside the door of Quincey's bed-room.

A light gleamed through the crack beneath the door. But no sound came from within the room. We concluded that Quincey was indulging in the pernicious practice of reading in bed.

For a moment Fishy hesitated. And we could understand his hesitation. For it needed a deal of nerve to walk into a master's bed-room at dead-of-night—even with the protection of a sheet.

Fishy would probably have thought better of it, and gone back to the dorm, but for the fact that we were behind him. In the circle, he couldn't very well back out.

Scrawing his courage to the sticking-point, he threw open the door. And we dodged back into the shadows, breathlessly awaiting developments.

Quincey sat up in bed with a jerk as the shrouded figure stalked into his room. The book he had been reading fell with a crash to the floor.

"Who—what?" he gasped, in blank amazement.

With his arms thrust forward, Fishy advanced towards the foot of the bed.

"Tremble!" he exclaimed.

"W-w-what?"

"Tyrant! Galoot! Slabsided jay! Tr-remble!"

Quincey's eyes nearly bulged out of their sockets—but not with fright. It was a state of anger that he directed upon the ghostly intruder.

"Boy!" he rumbled.

"I guess I'm not a boy. I sorter calculate that I'm a ghost—the ghost of Greyfriars!"

"Fishy!"

The "ghost" nearly fell down.

"Oh crumble! How—how did you know it was me, sir?"

"By the intonation of your voice, and by your un-English manner of speaking!" said Quincey grimly. "Fishy, you utterly ridiculous boy, what do you mean by coming into my bed-room in this way? How dare you, sir!"

"I—I guess I wanted to give you a fright, sir," muttered the unfortunate Fishy.

"Remove that sheet immediately!"

Fishy obeyed. He stood blinking sheepishly at Quincey in the glare of the electric-light.

"You shall be severely punished for this outrage!" roared the master of the Remove, stepping out of bed.

He glanced round the room as if in search of something.

"Ah! I will trouble you to hand me that slipper, Fishy!"

Again Fishy obeyed.

"Now touch your toes!"

"Oh, Jerusalem crickets! I—I—"

"Do you hear me?" roared Quincey. "A moment later the silence of the night was broken by a series of sounding whacks, mingled with piercing yells. Chuckling softly, we returned to the dorm. 'I don't think Fishy will play the giddy ghost again in a hurry!' remarked Bob Cherry. And he was right!

MY DIARY FOR THE WEEK.



By George Wingate.
(CAPTAIN OF GREYFRIARS.)

MONDAY.—My fag brought me an early morning cup of tea, and swamped it down my neck as I sat up in bed. I addressed him forcibly—with a slipper!—Asked the young blunderer to come and kipper for brekker, and he brought me up a shrivelled, scrotched, shapeless thing that I couldn't get my teeth through! Promptly scotched the little post, and advertised for a new fag.

TUESDAY.—Spent the day interviewing scores of jinky-fingered applicants for the post of fag. Engaged Bolsover minor, and the clumsy young idiot managed to put his boot through my bookcase! Sacked Bolsover, and engaged young Tubbs, who broke my crockery. Sacked Tubbs, and engaged Page, who broke my study window. Sacked Page, and engaged Nizem minor, who broke my heart! And now I'm featureless. By Jove, it isn't all honey being captain of Greyfriars!

WEDNESDAY.—Prepared my own meals tonight, and cleaned up my room. Swept the chimney, dusted the furniture, and cleaned the window. The Head looked in after I had finished sweeping the chimney, and, falling to recognise me through the soot, he said, "Ah, is that you, sweep? I want you to go along and do my chimney next!" I stammeringly explained that I was Wingate, and the Head remarked that chimney-sweeping was hardly a suitable occupation for the captain of Greyfriars!

THURSDAY.—Again advertised for a fag, and my young brother came to the rescue. He agreed to work for me at a salary of a hair a week (free of income-tax). He made himself jolly useful to-day, too. Cleared up everything in the place—including the grub! Glad I've got a fag at last. Shall be able to sleep soundly in my bed to-night—unless the young fag has made me an "apple-pie" bed!

FRIDAY.—Everything going swimmingly. Tea was a huge success, for my minor only broke five cups (my sole stock). He also burns frotch butter than any fag I've ever had, and I've already decided to double his salary.

SATURDAY.—Played foor for Greyfriars First against Highcliffe First. Invited Langley, the Highcliffe skipper, to tea in my study. When we got there, behold! a swarm of cheeky young fags sat round the table, picking into my tuck! Before I could say "Oh crumbs!" the last crumbs had disappeared! Picking up an aspirant, I addressed a few cutting remarks to the assembly, and told my minor that I had no further use for his services.

Confound these fags! They'll bring down my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave!

NOTE TO THE EDITOR.—I have heard a rumour that your "Weekly" is going to be a permanent feature of the "Popular," and, as I also understand that you are going to be assisted by Four Fat Sibs, I hope you will not trouble me by asking for my diary. Clumps of your circumference should be able to largely increase the circulation of the "Popular" without my aid.—GEORGE WINGATE.
(Who has been and gone and let the kat out of the bag? I'd splash the idiot who is telling everyboddy about "Billy Bunter's Weekly" going to the "Popular." Wharton will be keeping my piece in their nose.—W. E. B.)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—NO. 677.

OUR HART-TO-HART TALKS.

Conducted by
"UNCLE BILL."

(All readers who are in trouble of any sort, either in the face or elsewhere, or in the fall of circumstances, are requested to send fool detakles to the office of this paper. Over-lipules should be marked "UNCLE BILL," and a remittance of sixpence should be enclosed.)

"LOVELORN NOBLEMAN" (Remove Form).—You tell me that the other day fell in luv—and in the River Sark—at the same time. The fact was, you were crum in the old rustick bridge, when you saw a most wintun and attractiff yung damsel on the opposite bank. Yore hart beat like a hammer. You said, "What a nailing girl! And you rivveted yore eyes on her. You lost yore hart—and yore footing—at the same moment, and terved a komplet—summersall into the water. When you had dragged yore self out, and a dripping yore face, you looked round for the laly whose smile was as soft as butter. But she had gone. Fare Margarine had fled! And now you tell me that you wish to dress a pence to the yore lad, and want my advise as to how to proceed. Well, if I were in yore place, I should start sumthing like this:

Yore face is like a toasted scone,
It has a bowery air its own.
And more divine than rabbit-pies
Is the brittle tuster of yore eye.
Kind then are sticking into yore hart
Like sirrup in a treacle-kat.
Yore golden lock, my lavy one,
Present a most delicate bem.
The teers that trickled down yore chops
Are sweeter far than acid-dropt!
Yore nitid jumper, neatly creased,
Is hotter than a midnite feast!
In place, as kessick as you can,
To this pore lovelorn nobleman!

"ANGRY ORRIS" (Fifth Form).—I am very agreed to lern, my der fello, that sum cheeky yung eubb borried yore motor-bike without permision, and left it in peaces by the roadside. I hardly say what to say to console you in yore terrible affliction. I can assure you that I didn't damage yore machine on purpose. It was a pure accident. The beastly thing got out of control, and I am jolly lucky to have escaped with my neck!

When yore' jog, jog, joggin' along the wite road,

With yore bike all upside-down:
Well, you don't much care if yore' on the wite road.

When yore' bound for Courtfield Town,
I'm just as happy in the by-way—

My ways—wherever I may be;
But I'm very thankful that the wite roadways
Weren't strown with little bits of—ME!

"MILING ALONZO."—It is with deep sorrow that I lern that you are the victim of a very bad koff—in fact, that you koff like a horse from morning till nite. Never mind! Yore Uncle Bill will doctor you up! I'm a grand authority on koffs. I wince had an uncle who was an undertaker, and he was always koffin, but a dose of my special Bizack soon put him rite. My charge for medicine attence is a bob a time. Clear up, Lony! Hear is a little verse which will help you to bare yore trouble with 40-tude:

It was the seconer Hesperus
That sailed the wistry sea;
And the skipper he blew a wiff from his pipe,
And a skordal koff kuffed he.

OUR WEEKLY LIMERICK.

No. 5.

There's a lanky young lamp-post
Named Loder,
Who frequently gets in bad ocer,
To the "pub" he goes ocer,
When Greyfriars is sleeping,
And calls for a limejuice-and-soder!

WHAT IS YORE FAVORITE HOBBY?



(We have put this questhun to several well-known Greyfriars fellows, including ourself—with the following rezult!—Ed.)

THE KIDBITER.—My favorite hobby is kooking. I've got Mrs. Beeton's kookery everer time at that game! Have you ever tasted "Bunter pooding"? If you have one helping, you'll never want to eat anything else!

BOB CHERRY.—My favourite hobby is sweeking a net spoonce over the flabby features of the editor of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" at seven o'clock in the morning!

HURREE SINGH.—The esteemed and tufficuous game of chess-takins!

LORD MAULEVEREL.—Snoozin', bezad!

ALONZO TODD.—In reply to yore query, my der fellow, I am prepared, on due deliberation, to make the incontrovertible asseveration that my favourite hobby is the disinterested and benevolent one of collecting funds for the provision of pale pink pyjamas for the Fiji Islanders, I shall be glad to receive a contribution from you, my dear Bunter, the moment yore postal-order arrives. (Sumbold's going to be unlukey!—Ed.)

WILLIAM GOSLING.—A sweepin' up the leaves in the Close, and takin' forty winks.

HAROLD SKINNER.—Nap—not of the Manicover brand, but nap for penny points. I am also a red-hot enthusiast for poker!

CLAUDE HOSKINS.—My favourite Hobby is the Hobby who's captain of the Shell.

S. Q. I. FIELD.—My favourite hobby is trying to find one!

FISHER T. FISH.—Guess my favourite hobby is piling up the dollars, and fleecing silly jays who have got more money than sense!

NUGENT MINOR.—I find it a very difficult matter to deside which is my favorite hobby, you see I have so many for instance I keep rabbits and wite mice and a tame hedgehog and I also keep yung Bunter in order bekwase I'm very fond of dum animals and I also like fretwork and I also keep a stamp-collector and I also collect pucker, postcards and I also— (Dry up, you yung fatted!—Ed.)

BOLSOVER MAJOR.—Reckoning up how much money I should be worth if a certain fat porpise paid back all he owes me!

GEORGE BULSTRODE.—Making plans as to what I shall do when I am elected captain of the Remove. (Y're rife off the mark, Bulstrode! I'm the necks captain of the Remove.—Ed.)

MR. QUELCH.—I do wish you would not persist in asking me such silly questions, Bunter. If you must know, my favourite hobby is preparing a history of Greyfriars. But, as I have so many particularly desirable in my Form, I fear the history will never be completed. They take up too much of my time. (Quechly must be referring to Wharton and others of the same kinkness.)

HARRY WHARTON.—Editing the "Greyfriars Herald." (You mean mucking it up, don't you, Wharton!—Ed.)

Billy Bunter's Smugglers!

(Continued from page 8.)

on a biscuit and handed it to his host. Then he resumed his attack on the remainder of the tuck.

As he proceeded beads of perspiration mounted his brow, and he shifted uncomfortably in his seat.

"It's a bit sultry in here, isn't it?" murmured the Midget. "You'll feel more easy with your coat off, maybe."

"That's not a bad idea," said Bunter. "He divested himself of his jacket, and stung it with his overcoat on a couch at the back of him."

"Resting said I could hold myself to his tea," said Gilbert, "so I'll make you a cup if you like. You'll find it'll just fill the 'Bill.'"

Bunter's eyes sparkled. "Ha, ha, ha! Good joke of yours, Midget, old chap, and you're entitled to full marks for the suggestion. Go ahead!"

While the great William George renewed his onslaught on the chicken the new boy went behind him to the cupboard situated by the side of the couch. By means of a little kettle he soon had boiling water, and the fire Bunter looked up with the last morsel of jellied chicken in his mouth to see the Midget stooping down to the kettle with steam spurting in a cloud about his shoulders.

"Isn't the tea ready yet, old chap?" The Midget rose up with a start, kettle in hand, and busied himself preparing the fragrant brew.

Three minutes later, feeling very expansive and comfortable, Billy Bunter took leave of his host, and rolled out of the study. The thought of another feed in store in Study No. 3 with the tuck he had purchased at Uncle Clegg's, in Friar-dale, made him positively glow with satisfaction.

His smile threatened to engulf his ears as he entered the room, to find that Digory Dart was alone. Both Robert Smith and Fisher T. Fish had gone to the Common-room, where a banderkin, row between Harold Skinner and Percy Holzover had developed, to the great delight of the rest of the juniors.

"Say, you've been a dickens of a time!" growled Dart, looking up from the book he had been reading.

Billy Bunter laid his purchases on the table.

"I came a cropper in a ditch," he explained. "And that reminds me, a rough-looking chap with a sort of Yankee accent came up and gave me a letter to give you."

There was an uneasy look on the American junior's face as the Owl drew the missive from his jacket pocket and handed it over. Dart examined the envelope suspiciously, opened it, and perused the contents. Then he looked up with flaming eyes.

"You great fat worm!" he hissed. "You've been tampering with this!" "I—tampering with it?" stammered Bunter, in amazement. "Why, I didn't even take it from my pocket till now!"

"Don't lie to me, you rotter!" snarled the new boy fiercely. "Look at this!" He indicated the gummed flap of the envelope. "This has been steamed open—as any galoot with a dime's worth of savvy can see!"

Bunter leaned forward and gazed in stupefied silence at the evidence pointed out by the other. There was no doubt that the envelope had been steamed open,

as the dampness of the gum amply testified. The Owl's amazement was so obviously genuine that Dart was visibly impressed.

"How do you explain it?" "M-my hat! It must have been the Midget!" gulped Bunter. "I noticed he was a jolly long time over that kettle of boiling water."

The eyes of Digory Dart nearly started from their sockets. He made a threatening step forward.

"D'you mean to say you let this letter get into Gilbert's hands?"

Billy Bunter hastily retreated round the table.

"Really, I say, old chap," he whined, "it wasn't my fault, you know! I just went along to Study No. 4 to do him a favour—I'm a generous sort of chap—when he must have—"

"I'll burst him for this!" shrieked Diggy. "The prying spy!"

In a furious rage, he crumpled up the note and hurled it into the fire, whence it dropped back on to the fender. A moment later he was out of the room, and stamping down the passage in search of his study-mate.

Billy Bunter gazed blandly after him, and then towards the fireplace. The crumpled ball of paper riveted his eye, and he stooped and retrieved the letter. Having smoothed out the missive, he adjusted his spectacles and read the message:

"Take heed, kid! All three of us have arrived. Leave a cheque for a thousand pounds in the hollow tree a hundred yards from the school gates down the Friar-dale Road before twelve o'clock to-night, and we will let up on you. We have other fish to fry. Fail in this, and look out for squalls."

—THE SMUGGLER.

"My aum!" muttered Bunter. "What the thump! It all about, anyway! I know there was some mystery about that new kid. Maybe he's been a member of a crew of smugglers, and he's been double-crossing the gang."

The idea of this picturesque explanation being true, and a mental picture of himself in the role of detective, tearing the cloak from the machinations of a dangerous gang of rogues, completely caused Bunter to forget the tuck that rested unattended on the study table. That there would be a scrap worth seeing when Diggy met the Midget seemed as-

sured, so the Owl hastily slipped the letter in his pocket, and rolled out of the room to track down the new junior. In the passage he ran into Monty Newland.

"Did you see Dart go this way, Monty?" he asked eagerly. "Yes," said Newland. "He was heading for the Common-room."

Bunter lumbered along as fast as his short, fat legs would carry him, and was just in time to see Diggy enter the Common-room. Bunter entered swiftly in his wake.

The Common-room was packed with chattering juniors, most of whom were arguing loudly on some topic started by Skinner. The Midget was standing with Harry Wharton & Co., listening to the shindy with amused interest. Into this assembly dashed the new American junior, with flaming face and flashing eye. He grasped the Midget by the shoulder and roughly swung the little fellow round.

"You sneaking galoot!" he rapped out. "Haven't I warned you enough times not to poke your nose into my affairs? 'Tis that!"

His fist shot out like a piston-rod, and, in the silence that had suddenly fallen, the crack of his knuckles against the Midget's chin sounded like the snap of a whip-thong.

Gilbert seemed to absorb the shock without blinking an inch, and then, to the astonishment of all, a slow smile spread over his face.

"Go for him, Midget!"

It was Billy Bunter's fat voice that gave that advice.

A sudden stir near the doorway took place.

"Look out! Here's Loder!" The unpopular Sixth-Former pushed the door open violently and glared in.

"It's time for you kids to go to bed!" he announced. "Beat it, and let's have no more row, mind!"

And Gerald Loder moved away. At once Diggyvort Dart put up his fists again. The Midget promptly ducked, grasped Dart's right hand with his own left, and Diggy's right leg with his other hand. Then, with hardly an effort, he fessed his obstreperous study-mate across his back like a sack of coal.

Followed by the throng of laughing juniors, the little Cockney carried his burden to the Remove dormitory, where, with a sudden heave, he sent the American flying on to a bed. To the accompaniment of roars of laughter, Dart crawled away and began to disrobe in silence.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Night Intruders!

LONG after "lights out" that night there were at least two juniors in the Remove dormitory who remained awake and watchful.

Tired though Billy Bunter was, the hope of catching the new American boy breaking bounds for the purpose of keeping the appointment made in the mysterious missive kept him alert. Even in the darkness he knew instinctively that the Midget was also on the qui vive.

But Bunter's dream of developing into a hero, and earning the gratitude of the nation by exposing a horde of smugglers, was intermingled with less pleasant thoughts. He was very annoyed with the Midget. Through the little Cockney, Bunter had fallen into disfavour with Diggy, and had missed a feed. Now the Porpoise was feeling very hungry.

"I ought to have laughed that cheeky fag in the Common-room!" he

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musad. But then he remembered how the Midget had treated Diggy, and a serious doubt possessed his mind as to whether that would have been the wise course, after all.

It was hard work keeping awake. But Bunter heard the hours as they were tolled off in the old clock-tower—ten, eleven, twelve. Even before the hour of midnight struck it was evident that Dart had no intention of visiting the hollow tree on the Friarale road.

The countenance on the bed of the Yankee boy rose and fell rhythmically as he breathed easily in slumber. It was obvious that to remain on watch longer was useless. Yet Bunter remained with his eyes blinking in the darkness trying to work matters out. But before he dropped off to sleep he had fully decided that Diggy Dart had been mixed up with an American band of professional smugglers, whom he had gone back upon. Secondly, that the new boy was in the possession of a great deal of wealth in the form of ill-gotten gains, which the other members of the gang were now demanding as a penalty for his perfidy.

It was about two o'clock in the morning, while Bunter's grampus-like snores were causing the dormitory windows to rattle eerily, that Harry Wharton sat up in bed with a start. Not the snores of the Remove corpse, but snores, even more terrifying sound, had awakened him as that sneaky honor. It was the sudden though faint shattering of a pane of glass!

Like a statue carved in stone Wharton sat motionless, listening. It seemed as though the noise had proceeded from downstairs. But save the chorus of sleeping juniors nothing now disturbed the silence of the night house.

But Harry Wharton was thoroughly messy in his mind. The possibility that burglars had broken into Greyfriars would not let him settle again. With swift resolution, he clambered out of bed and threw a coat over his pyjamas. As he did so Bob Cherry, in the next bed, moved restlessly.

"Whizzer matter?"

"Shh!" whispered Wharton. "Get up quick, Bob, but don't wake the others. I think there are burglars about."

At the word "burglars" Bob Cherry shot up like a jack-in-the-box.

"Burglars! Where?"

"Downstairs. Pull your jacket on and come with me."

Harry Wharton turned to lead the way, and bumped heavily against the first bed post his own.

"What the thump?" muttered a sleepy voice.

Wharton hastily felt his way along the bed and stooped over the recumbent form therein.

"Don't make a row, Franky!" he whispered. "Bob and I are just going on a tour of inspection."

And in a few words he communicated his suspicions to Frank Nugent.

"My hat! I'm in on this, you fellows!"

Next moment the bedclothes were thrown off, and Nugent was at the side of the two other members of the Famous Five.

Together the three chumps picked their way carefully out of the dark dormitory and made their way down the stairs. In the passage at the foot of the staircase they listened intently for a few moments. In the stillness their ears detected the rustling of papers.

"M-my aunt!" muttered Cherry. THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 677.

"There's somebody in Dr. Locke's study!"

With their hearts thumping against their ribs in the excitement of this discovery, they cautiously crept down the passage. They had little fear that their presence would be detected, for their bare feet made no sound on the thin carpet. The Head's study-door was wide open. They halted and peered in.

It was with difficulty that Wharton & Co. could restrain exclamations of surprise having their lips at the sight which met their eyes. Peering through the pitch-darkness, their gaze encountered the piercing white ray of a small electric torch picking out relief a large human hand, which roamed among the letters and papers on the Head's desk. Then their eyes were able to make out the forms of two men.

Bob Cherry drew back a little.

"What the dickens shall we do?" he whispered. "Shall we give the alarm and then tackle them?"

"Supposing they're armed?" said Nugent.

"We must risk that," said Harry Wharton. "If we don't act quickly they may beat it out of the window. The best way, I think, is to creep up behind the chairs and suddenly jump on them. Then we can let out a wild war-whoop to rouse the school, without giving them previous warning of our presence. Now keep near me!"

With that Harry Wharton turned and swiftly slid into the Head's study. Next moment a surprised exclamation escaped him as he crashed to the floor over some bulky object lying just inside the room.

The two intruders, surprised in their work of examining the papers on the desk, whirled round with alarmed cries. At the same time the ray of the electric torch veered round, like a miniature searchlight, full on to the other two juniors as they darted into the room.

Dazzled by the sudden glare, and unaware of the cause of their chum's stumble, Cherry and Nugent dashed forward, giving vent to loud yells for the purpose of raising the alarm. But the same bulky object on the floor which had brought down Wharton proved to be their undoing. Their feet knocked against something soft and yielding, and they sprawled headlong into the study.

With the yells of the boys still reverberating in their ears, the two men did not hesitate a second. The lower part of the study window was wide open, and one after the other they tumbled through and dropped to the ground outside.

Now that the illumination afforded by the electric torch had vanished the room was in total blackness. Nevertheless, Wharton, who was the first to his feet, managed to grope his way to the window. No sign of the men were to be seen. Without hesitation he clambered out and dropped to the ground outside.

But precious time had been lost, and not a sound of the night marauders was to be heard. In spite of being clad only in his pyjamas, and being barefooted, Harry Wharton sped across the cold stones of the quad to the nearest portion of the school wall. He had no idea what he should do even if he came up with the men, but as a matter of fact he discovered no sign of them. This was perhaps fortunate for him. Realizing the futility of proceeding with the search in the darkness, he reluctantly retraced his steps to the school.

"Well, anyway, let's hope we stopped the rogues from robbing the Head of anything!" he murmured. Meanwhile, Bob Cherry had gone to

the assistance of Frank Nugent, who had hurt his knee rather badly in his fall. He helped his chum to his feet, and then, stooping down, felt for the object which had proved such an upsetting factor in their little scheme. His hand groped in the darkness, and encountered—a stocking-foot!

"Great Scott!" he exclaimed, starting back as though stung. "There's a body here!"

"A b-body!"

"Seems like it! See if you can find the electric switch, Franky."

As the two groped in the darkness near the door, pattering footsteps sounded on the stairs, and a babble of querulous voices broke out. It was evident that their shouts had succeeded pretty thoroughly in rousing Greyfriars.

By great good luck Bob Cherry found the electric switch, and, with a quick movement, he flooded the study with light. Next instant the two juniors found themselves gazing down into the white, motionless, upturned face of the Midget!

"My hat! One of the new boys!"

As they stood that second in petrified amazement several prefects and juniors reached the room, to meet up short before the strange sight that met their gaze.

"What's happening here?"

It was George Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, who asked the question, as he pushed his way into the room. Then he, too, saw the Midget, and his eyes nearly started from his head.

"Good gracious! What's happened to this kid?"

He dropped on his knees beside Cherry and Nugent, who were already making a hasty examination of the new boy. In a few words he explained the whole situation to the prefect, who turned sharply, and sent one of the gaping fags in the doorway for a glass of cold water.

"I don't think there's anything serious the matter with the kid," murmured the Greyfriars captain, as he raised the Midget's head. "It looks as though he's had a knock-out blow of some kind."

Certainly there was no mark on the body of the unconscious junior, and he was breathing easily enough.

Just then a low whistle sounded outside the study window, and Harry Wharton's voice was heard demanding that he might be helped in. Willing hands hauled the Remove captain into the room, and eager voices fired a volley of questions at him. In a few words Harry Wharton told of his failure to discover the direction the men had taken, and then he sought out Frank Nugent.

"So it was the Midget we tripped over, Franky?" he said.

"Yes. Those scoundrels must have laid him out. Though how he came to be down here before us is an absolute mystery."

Before Wharton could reply there was a stir among the group of schoolboys in the doorway, and there entered the headmaster himself, followed by Mr. Quetch and Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth Form. All were garbed in dressing-gowns, and the last-named held in his hands a dangerous-looking shot-gun.

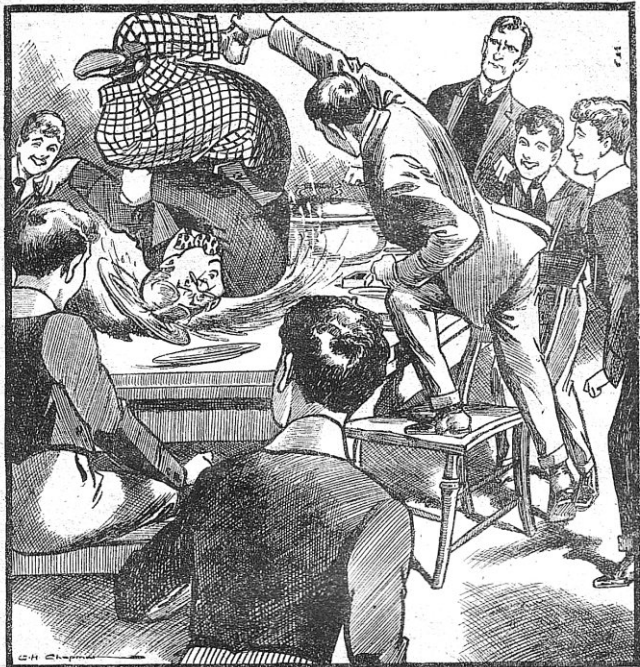
"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Dr. Locke. "What is the meaning of this commotion?"

A score of voices hastened to enlighten him.

"One at a time, boys! Wingate, what is this all about?"

"Apparently burglars have broken into your study, sir," explained the captain of Greyfriars. "The new boy, Gilbert, was found unconscious just inside the room."

Wingate accepted the glass of water a junior handed him, and poured some of the liquid between the Midget's lips.



The little Cockney gave a mighty heave, and sent Billy Bunter head first into a plate of steaming hot soup. "Ouch!" spluttered Bunter. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. "Bravo, the Midget!" (See Chapter 6.)

"Good gracious!" cried the Head. "Run for the doctor, Coker! You, Loder, help Wingate to lift this poor boy into my armchair."

While these orders were being carried out, Dr. Locke hastily elicited the facts of the affair from Harry Wharton. Having gathered these, he crossed to the telephone on his desk and rang up the police.

"I'm afraid the police will find the case a difficult one," he remarked, as he hung up the receiver after making the report. "Perhaps, however, Gilbert will be able to give some description of the men when he comes to."

Patrick Wynn of the Sixth approached the headmaster respectfully.

"Will you give me permission to organise a search-party, sir?" he requested.

"No," said Dr. Locke. "For, in my

opinion, it would be useless." He examined the papers and letters on his desk. "The men, whoever they were, have stolen nothing. They seem to have taken an interest in these lists of the occupants of the studies and dormitories, though why I can't imagine."

By this time the Midget, with a dressing-gown thrown round him, was showing gratifying signs of a return to complete consciousness. But before joining Wingate and Loder, who were attending the injured lad, the headmaster ordered everybody back to their beds, with the exception of the masters and Sixth-Formers who were present.

"Please, sir, may I remain here for a while?" asked Harry Wharton, who was standing by the broken window of the study.

"No. You will catch your death of cold, boy, without a dressing-gown," said

Dr. Locke. "I have all the information necessary to give to the police on their arrival. If they wish to ask you any questions, they can do so to-morrow."

With that Harry Wharton had to be satisfied, and he joined the crowd of juniors who were trooping back to the dormitories.

Truth to tell, nobody was really sorry to return to the warm beds, for most of the schoolboys were feeling almost perished with the chill night air. Once the Remorites were ensconced between the blankets again, an excited babble of conversation broke out. Billy Bunter, propped up in bed, with a woollen coat thrown over his shoulders, and a thick scarf round his ample neck, constituted himself a kind of Sir Edward Marshall-Hall, and plied Harry Wharton with a searching cross-examination.

"I say, old chap," he wheezed, "how is it that you and Cherry and Nugent didn't notice that Gilbert's bed was empty when you left the dormitory? That strikes me as funny."

"Funny, you chump? Not half so funny as your face! Do you think we can see in the dark like cats?"

"You heard a pane of glass break. But the Midget went down before you and those other asses did. What did he hear?"

"How should I know, you fat freak?"

"That undoubtedly seems to be a matter that should be investigated, though," mused Alonzo Todd softly.

"What is?" said Bob Cherry.

"Whether Bunter is a fat freak?"

"No; the question as to what induced Gilbert to go wandering about the school early in the morning."

"Yes, that is the point," said Bunter, with a deep, mysterious air. "What was the new kid doing downstairs?"

"Chasing mice, I expect," said Wharton. He turned his back on the inquisitive Owl, and addressed Bob Cherry. "It certainly is a most extraordinary affair, Bob. I should judge that those two fellows who broke into the Owl's study were trying to raise the window-catch, when their brute, or whatever it was, slipped, and broke a pane of glass. Then they probably waited a minute or two to discover whether the row had awakened anybody, and, thinking it hadn't, they crawled into the room. But it is likely that they kicked up any shindy before they accidentally broke the window. Yet the Midget was downstairs before us. Could he have been on some night expedition on his own account?"

"It's a bit of a puzzle all right," admitted Bob Cherry. "But the Owl's Gilbert will provide us with a simple explanation in the morning. Good-night, old chap!"

But although he kept his ideas on the subject to himself, Billy Bunter had dropped upon a perfectly satisfactory explanation of the whole affair to his own mind. The fact that Dart had maintained a clam-like silence during the morning's episode confirmed his opinion. The two men who had forced an entry into the Head's study were members of the gang of smugglers. They had visited Greyfriars to wreak vengeance on Digory Dart for not delivering the cheque for a thousand pounds as ordered in the letter signed "The Smuggler."

Paul Gilbert was a tool of the gang, and he had been ordered to let in the rogues at a particular time. But the Midget had been late in carrying out his part in the programme, and, in consequence, the scoundrels had broken their way in. They were just trying to discover Dart's sleeping place by making an examination of the Head's papers and registers, when Gilbert entered the room. In a rage at the Midget's late appearance, one of the rogues struck the young Londoner down.

The whole thing was as clear as daylight in the fat and massive brain of the Remove porpoise. But although Bunter had worked things out so cleverly he had no intention yet of revealing his conclusions to anybody. Even the Owl saw that without proof to back up his deductions he might not be able to convince such mentally short-sighted people as he believed the headmaster and the local police representatives to be. Far better to lie low like Drer Rabbit, and say nothing for the time being.

With Digory Dart and the Midget unaware of his exclusive knowledge, he could safely keep an eye on both the juniors. Other developments were bound to occur shortly. When Bunter had

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obtained the proof he required he could denounce the whole smuggling gang and gain the plaudits of the public at large. With a fat sigh of satisfaction, Billy Bunter rolled into the arms of Morpheus.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Lands in the Soup!

"MY hat!"

"What a beastly shame!"

"Who did it?"

Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Johnny Bull are standing together in the bicycle shed. The object of their remarks was a muddy and broken bike that was propped between two sound machines.

Attracted by the exclamations, Frank Nugent and Hurree Singh, who were passing the place, joined the other members of the Famous Five.

"What's the row, my worthy chums?" asked the Nabob of Bhanipur.

Harry Wharton indicated the crooked machine.

"It's Vernon-Smith's," he said. "Some rotter has been using it."

"Missing it, my worthy chum," corrected Hurree Singh. "It appears almost as though the esteemed Bunter has been sitting reclining on it."

"My aunt!" exclaimed Wharton. "I wonder if it was that fat fraud? It's just the sort of thing he would do. Let's go and tackle him about it."

The Famous Five had not far to search, for, as they stepped outside the shed, they saw the ponderous Porpoise of the Remove in conversation with his minor not twenty yards away. Harry Wharton & Co. descended on the Owl with a swoop. Bob Cherry clutched the fat junior by the collar.

"So you've been riding Vernon-Smith's bike, you fat fraud?" he rapped out.

"M-m-me? Who told you? That is, I—I mean, I'm not the sort of fellow to borrow another chap's bike. I—"

"Don't trouble to make up any lies, Billy," said Wharton; "you've given yourself away. Bump him, you fellows!"

"Oh, really, you fellows, I say!"

"Get him firmly everyone? Then go!"

"Bump, bump, bump!"

"Ooooh! Yow-wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump, bump!"

"Yarough! Groogh!"

"Bump!"

"Wool!"

This last mighty bump had the effect of dislodging Bunter's spectacles. Harry Wharton & Co. relaxed their grasp of the unfortunate Porpoise.

"Ooer! Oh crumbs! You rotters have broken my new expensive specs; I know you have!"

Samuel Tuckless Bunter, who had been standing calmly by enjoying his brother's discomfiture, retrieved his major's round spectacles, and handed them over.

"They're quite O.K., Billy."

Without a word of thanks, Billy Bunter snatched at the glasses, and then rolled away to the School House as fast as his fat legs would carry him. Before disappearing from view inside the building he turned and emitted but one remark:

"Yah! Beasts!"

Billy Bunter landed morning school sore both in body and mind. He was angry with the Famous Five for inflicting the bumping on him, but he feared more physical injuries to come. It was not at all unlikely that Vernon-Smith would seek his blood when he returned from his enforced visit to the sanatorium. This gloomy foreboding of the Porpoise was amply justified a few days later.

"It was that sneak, the Midget, who told Bob Cherry I'd been riding Smithy's bike," muttered the Owl to himself. "He must have seen me take the beastly thing into the shed last night. Then to think he should have the cheek to ask me to give him a hand out with that sickle! Well, I'll never do another thing to help the rotter! I expect he only invited me to Redwing's study for the feed just so he could get hold of that letter addressed to Diggy. He made me take off my coat by a mean trick."

The juniors had seen nothing of the Midget since the disturbance in the night, but while lessons were on in the Remove, the little Cockney turned up, smiling, and without showing any trace of his recent experience. The sight of him made Billy Bunter gnash his teeth. He vowed to himself that he would pulverise the new boy after morning school.

But no opportunity occurred then, for when the Remove Form was dismissed at twelve o'clock, Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent took the Midget along to Study No. 1.

"We want to hear your version of what occurred last night, Midget," said Wharton. "How was it you found your way to the Head's study?"

The Midget smiled easily.

"Why," he said, "I was lying wide awake when I heard some curious scratching sounds proceeding from somewhere downstairs, and so I went to investigate. Then, hearing a crash of glass, I headed for Dr. Locke's room. By this time two men had climbed into the study. They must have heard me coming, for, as I entered the door, one of them hit me a wallop over the head with what must have been a small sand-bag. It was lucky I wasn't killed."

"It was," said Harry Wharton dryly. "Did you see the faces of the men?"

"No, the room was in total darkness.

So, you see, I can't throw any light on the affair for you. I've been having a long talk with Dr. Locke and some of the police. Even the astute local cops can't fathom the business."

More than this the Midget either could not, or would not, say. The impression left on the minds of his hearers was that he knew rather more about the mysterious business than he cared to reveal.

When the Midget went into dinner with the other juniors at 1 o'clock, Billy Bunter followed on his heels like

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a great fat shadow. When the new boy took his seat, the Owl dropped into the chair next to him. Mr. Quech at the head of the table said a brief grace, and started his task of serving the soup from the large tureen before him into the plates of the juniors.

While the plates containing the steaming soup were being passed down the table, Bunter gave the Midget a sharp dig in the ribs with his podgy fist.

"That's for being a sneak and opening Diggy's letter," he hissed.

A pang of pain shot across the face of the new boy. But it was quickly erased by a smile.

"I shouldn't advise you to do that again, my prize porker," he said quietly, "it might be dangerous."

"Oh, I shan't break your ribs," said Bunter loftily. "Only you must be taught that sneaking doesn't pay at this school."

"I wasn't of myself I was thinking," said the Midget easily. "It was you."

"M-me! Why, you cheeky rotter!" stammered Bunter. "I'd—I'd slaughter you if old Quech wasn't here. I owe you something on my own account for telling Cherry I borrowed Smithy's bike."

"I wasn't aware you'd borrowed anything," said the Midget. "If you did I suppose it's worth the price of any other first-class scrap of old iron now. Next time you want to go for a ride, I advise you to borrow a steam-roller."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Bunter glared at the two or three laughing juniors who had caught the remark, and then at Gilbert again.

"You're too cheeky by far for a new kid," he grunted.

And for the second time his fat fist pounded itself against the Midget's ribs.

What quite happened after that nobody could describe very accurately afterwards except the old Billy Bunter. To the Owl it seemed as though a violent tornado had suddenly been let loose in the dining-room. His left arm was gripped as in a vice, and twisted backwards, and his head forced over the table. Like lightning the Midget transferred his right hand to Bunter's left knee. Then, placing his own right foot on his chair to assist him, the little Cockney gave a mighty heave and twist, and sent the unfortunate Owl turning a somersault. Billy Bunter landed headfirst into a plate full of soup, and a wild howl escaped his lips.

"Oooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, bravo, the Midget!"

Wild shrieks of laughter and applause broke from the juniors at the little Cockney's astounding feat. Never in the experience of any of them had they ever seen such a specimen of force in judo-jitsu—that scientific form of Japanese wrestling which enables an exponent with expert knowledge to throw a man twice his weight with seemingly the most ridiculous ease. But not only had the Midget exhibited exceptional skill, but also strength out of all proportion to that possessed by the average schoolboy.

As the Cockney junior released his hold and allowed the discomfited Bunter to roll from the table, Mr. Quech's tongue found expression. So astounded had the Form-master been that he had leapt up from his seat, soup-ladle in hand, absolutely tongue-tied for a moment or two by the amazing incident. When he did speak, his voice was like unto that of Jove the Thunderer.

"Silence!" A hush fell over the assembly. Then in tones vibrant with outraged dignity, Mr. Quech continued: "Never in my whole experience as a master have I ever witnessed such a dis-

graceful scene! Bunter, you will wash that tomato-soup out of your hair at once, and, together with Gilbert, report in my study after dinner. I shall deal very severely with both of you!"

Mr. Quech suddenly remembered the Head's injunction to deal leniently with the new boy.

"On second thoughts," said the master, "I shall leave Dr. Locke to deal with you, Gilbert."

Half an hour later Billy Bunter emerged from Mr. Quech's study with his hands clasped affectionately together and writhing with pain. Then the Form-master escorted the Midget to the head-master's private room. When they entered, Mr. Quech was wearing a pained expression. The Midget was smiling cheerfully.

No sooner had the Form-master disappeared from view than a crowd of juniors thronged round the Cockney.

"What did the Head give you, Midget?" they demanded eagerly.

"A word of advice," answered the Midget. "He told me not to do it again."

And leaving his flabbergasted school-fellows gasping, he strode away to the Form-room.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Kidnapped!

BILLY BUNTER had a cold in the ear. A keen wind blowing through a keyhole had been responsible for his affliction. But, in spite of this, the Owl was stooping in the Remova studios passage with his ear glued to the keyhole of Diggy Dart's door.

Several days had passed since the night raid on the Head's study. In that time, instead of the mystery of the nocturnal visit and the many strange circumstances that were connected with the two new juniors being cleared up, they had become all the more puzzling to most of those at Greyfriars. During that short period, too, Bunter had entirely fallen out of favour with Dart, who had taken a marked liking for his fellow-countryman, Fisher T. Fish. It was because Diggy and Fisher T. Fish were engaging in an earnest conversation alone in Study No. 8 that Billy Bunter was heroically risking making the cold in his ear worse.

That he might be laying himself open to a charge of eavesdropping didn't occur to the Owl. In his own opinion he was engaged on important detective work which would culminate in the exposure of a dangerous band of smugglers. Unfortunately, the two juniors in the study were talking almost in whispers, and therefore Bunter was unable to catch the drift of their remarks. Finally, however, in a fit of exasperation, Diggy raised his voice.

"I tell you, Fishy, the crooks'll give me no peace," he said. "I'm going to keep that appointment in Gaunt's Cavern at two o'clock. You can come, or not, as you like. I guess it's a mighty good wheeze for raising some money. I've got to get some from somewhere. I've spent all that the old man gave me before I left the Yewnited States, and the mean old mugwump won't send me a cent now for another month."

Bunter heard the speaker rise from his chair and take a step across the room. Fearful lest Diggy might come to the door and discover him, the amateur detective rolled hastily away.

Highly elated with what he had heard, Billy Bunter believed himself to be on the verge of great discoveries. He knew Gaunt's Cavern down at Pegg Bay well, and it was just the very place for a meet-

ing of smugglers. That Dart should desire to introduce Fish to the gang was not unreasonable, but why Diggy was not more friendly inclined towards his fellow-member of the gang, the Midget, he could not imagine. He wondered if the Midget would attend the meeting in the cavern.

Suspecting that the appointment might be for two o'clock in the morning, Billy Bunter lost a lot of sleep needlessly that night. But on the next day, Saturday, which was a half-holiday, he had the satisfaction of seeing Fish and Dart sink away from the school directly after dinner. Bunter followed a long way off, and it was soon evident that his quarries were bound for Pegg Bay.

The sea-coast was deserted save for a flock of squealing sea-gulls, and the Owl tracked his fellow-Removites to Gaunt's Cavern unobserved. As the other two cautiously picked their way by the light of matches, through the dark, narrow passages in the earth's surface that led to the principal cave, Bunter crept after them. At least, he was able to take up a good listening position near the entrance to the principal cave itself.

Blissfully unaware that they had been shadowed, Diggy Dart and Fisher T. Fish entered the cave boldly. A lantern was burning inside the place, and by its dim light they were able to discern three men sitting on the ground huddled up in thick conversation. All three rose as the two schoolboys walked in.

"Hallo! Who's this?" growled the tallest of the three, indicating Fish. It was the man who had stopped Bunter on the Friaride road.

"A fellow-countryman," answered Dart — "a word of mine."

"What, what in the name o' George Washington did you bring him along for?"

"For company," replied Diggy. "But, see here, I've come to talk business. I've a little proposition to make to you, and my pal Fishy'll keep his mouth closed about anything that transpires."

"Waal, he's hyer now, so he'd better stay, I suppose," said the ringleader of the men present. "Further, get some of them blankets from the pile in over there an' make the kids a seat. Boster, give him a hand."

The two men addressed quickly performed their task, and then the whole company sat down on the hard ground. No sooner had they done so than Diggy Dart, like a true American, went straight to the point, and set forth his proposition. Billy Bunter, in the darkness of the natural stone passage outside, strained his ears to catch the words.

"Now, see hyer, gentlemen," said Dart. "I'm just about fed up with having you on my trail! Just because my pater happens to be Hyram P. Yonk, the American Margarine King, you tried for months in the States to pry and kidnap me. It's through you the old man sent me to this out-of-the-way place under an assumed name. You've been mighty persistent, I'll allow, in coming over on the very next boat, but unless I had sneaked away to-day you'd never have had a dog's chance to lay hands on me. I'm too well watched for that. The old man has been employing one of the smartest private detectives in the country to keep an eye on me. His real name's Kirby Keen though up at the school they call him the Midget."

Billy Bunter from his position of vantage outside the cave, gave a gasp of astonishment.

The ringleader of the gang of kidnapers known as the Smuggler—going to his old profession of smuggling liquor

into the "dry" United States—looked round suspiciously.

"What was that?"

"A gust of wind blowing in from the beach, that's all," said Diggy. "But to come to my proposition. My paper, the millionaire magazine manufacturer, has let me know mighty plainly that he's going to keep my allowance down to ten dollars a month. I'm fed up with being short of cash already, so I'm willing to let you kidnap me providing you give me twenty per cent. of what the old boy pays you for my ransom."

A slow smile spread over the Smuggler's face.

"Gee, I like that, kid!" he murmured. "What's to prevent us, now you've walked into our lil' parlour, from keepin' both you an' this other guy prisoners?"

"Here, I say, you crazy galoots—" began Fisher T. Fish, when Diggy interrupted.

"Simply because I've told one of the other boys up at the school that we intend to come here," he said. "If we're not back to-day he'll tell the Midget, who'll be on your track in no time."

"We shouldn't keep you hyer, young smartie," said the leader of the gang; "we've got a place prepared for you that all the 'cces in the British Isles wouldn't light upon." However, I guess I'll talk the matter over quietly with my pard's."

He beckoned Furber and Boulter to one side, and for some moments held an earnest conversation with them. Then they came to a decision, and, like one man, they hurled themselves on the two unprepared schoolboys.

"Quick! Get some rope, Boulter!"

Fish and Dart strove to cry out, but heavy hands were clapped over their mouths.

Billy Bunter, just outside the cave, fairly danced with excitement. Then he performed what was perhaps the most unselfish and heroic action of his career. He forgot all the kudos that might be his by revealing the result of his detective work to the proper authorities—everything, in fact, save that two fellows wearing the cap-colours of the old school, were in need of help. With a loud yell, the gallant Bunter dashed to the rescue.

"Gee whiz! Look out!"

The man Boulter, who had turned to fetch the rope, swung round, to see the fat boy of the Remove charging like an enraged rhinoceros into the cave. He dodged, and shot his foot out with a lightning movement. Unable to save himself, the noble Bunter crashed to the hard stone ground.

"Oooch!"

"Gah him!" howled the Smuggler.

It was apparent that there was nobody else following Bunter, so Boulter threw himself on top of the injured Owl. Diggy Dart and Fisher T. Fish struggled desperately, but the men were far too powerful for them, and in less than five minutes all three juniors were securely trussed up and gagged.

The three men revivified their handiwork while they regained their breath after the struggle.

"Now let's take 'em one at a time to that secret cave you discovered, Boulter," said the Smuggler, at length.

"What'll be the good o' that, boss?" queried the man addressed. "If that young brat did tell one o' his pals up at the school that he was comin' down here we shall soon have a hornet's nest about our ears."

"Spaw!" ejaculated the leader of the gang. "I don't believe a word o' that

yarn. If he did, the secret cave'll be our safest hiding-place. No one will dream that we are staying right here in this neighbourhood. Besides, all the grub's stored there; enough to last for a couple o' months."

"It'll only last six weeks, with two extra mouths to feed," put in Furber. "I'm real sorry we've got to hang on to these other kids, too. There'll be the very mischief of a hue-and-cry!"

"Well, it can't be helped now," said the Smuggler irritably. "After you've helped to get these kids and the blankets into the other cave, you'll have to beat it post haste for London, Furber. Old Hyram P. Yonk will be over on the Olympic in a week's time, and then you must tackle him for the ransom accordin' to the plan already agreed on."

He picked up the lantern, and took it to a far-cornor of the cave where there existed a high ledge in the rock. To the astonishment of Bunter and Fish, who knew the system of caves well, there was a rope hanging from the place. Their astonishment was even greater when the Smuggler and Boulter shinned up the rope and pushed a great jutting rock aside, revealing a passage-way. By some means these men had stumbled upon a secret part of the cave system that no one at Greyfriars had ever dreamt of.

Boulter and the Smuggler handed Fish and Dart up, and carried them into the tunnel with ease, but it took the combined efforts of all three men to deal with Billy Bunter. Half an hour's hard work was needed to get the porpoise of the Remove on to the ledge and carry him through the long, natural tunnel to the small cave into which it led.

The kidnapped schoolboys, huddled like trussed chickens on the stone floor, looked about them in amazement. The cave was packed with stores of all sorts, though chiefly tinned stuffs. A gas-stove gave a pleasant warmth to the place, and ventilation was secured through a small cutting in the rocky roof.

The three men, their task completed, crept through the tunnel again. Furber took farewell of his comrades, and stinned down the rope into Gaunt's Cavern. When he had disappeared, the other two drew the rope up and rolled the rock into place.

Arriving back in the innermost cave, the Smuggler removed the gags and bonds from the three Greyfriars juniors.

"You can yell as much as you like hyer," he said; "nobody'll hear you. Both me and my pard are armed, and if you try any monkey-flicks, you'll be giving a severe dose o' lead-poison!"

He reached back to his hip-pocket, and revealed the butt of a deadly-looking little automatic pistol to them.

When the gags had been removed, Billy Bunter was the first to find his tongue.

"You—you beastly criminals!" he spluttered. "Lemme go at once! The tea-bell will have gone long ago, and I'm nearly starving!"

Scared though they were, both Fish and Dart had to laugh at this characteristic remark of the Owl of the Remove.

"I guess there's plenty to eat here," said the Smuggler easily. "But don't use no hard words such as 'criminal.' We're jest a couple o' honest gags tryin' to earn an honest penny by restoring a lost son to his poor old dad. Haw, haw, haw!"

Both the rogues chuckled at this sally, but, in spite of the reminder of the ample store of food in the cave, Bunter only scowled.

"You're a couple of beastly burglars!" he said. "Didn't you break into the school the other night?"

"We didn't want to steal anythin' from a poor guy like your headmaster, kid," said the kidnapper. "We're out after bigger game than that. Bill Furber and I only wanted to find out all the information we could about this hyer young Buddy Yonk—or Diggy Dart, as you call him."

Two days passed without any signs of a rescue. The Smuggler and Boulter took it in turns to keep watch, and all the juniors could do was to eat and sleep, and talk with each other.

On the morning of the third day Billy Bunter did not rise from his couch.

"Now then, kid, aren't you goin' to get up?" demanded the Smuggler.

"Ooo-groogh!" groaned Bunter. "I'm afraid I'm ill."

A look of alarm crossed the faces of all present.

"Come, pull yourself together," said Boulter. "A bit o' exercise would do you good."

"It ain't exercise I want," moaned the Owl. "It's food!"

"Food? Why, you've had more'n any-one else!"

"I know," replied Bunter. "But I've got a very delicate constitution. I've got to eat much more than I have been getting. That's no good for a fellow like me—is it, Fishy?"

Fisher T. Fish thought he detected a slight fluttering of Bunter's left eyelid, and sudden light dawned on him.

"I guess it's no good at all," said the American junior. "Believe me, gentlemen, Bunter isn't used to this sort of low diet. It's positively dangerous to keep him on such short commons."

"I may die," murmured Billy Bunter pathetically. "I feel myself wasting away already. If I do snuff out, Fishy, promise to write to all my tilled relatives, and tell 'em I forgive these misguided chaps."

The Smuggler and Boulter looked at each other doubtfully. They suspected a jape, but it was decidedly upsetting to think that the fat junior might be unwell. They were not anxious to have trouble of that sort. Against their better judgment, they gave Bunter an extra large breakfast, which the Porpoise wolfed greedily.

For dinner they rationed Bunter again, and that afternoon the Owl's malady took a turn for the worse. Before night, so hollow did Bunter's groans become, that the kidnappers became positively alarmed.

"I can't stand this!" muttered Boulter. "Let's give him as much as he can stow away, and then perhaps he'll go to sleep."

"I believe the brat's swinging the lead!" snarled the Smuggler. "Still, if he goes on in this way, he'll make himself ill. The trouble is we can't go out and buy any more."

The upset was that Billy Bunter was given the feed of his life. Bread, corned beef, biscuits, cheese and cocoa disappeared in a manner to astonish even Fisher T. Fish, who had seen the Owl perform on many previous occasions.

Although on the following day Billy Bunter ate as much as any two of the others at meals, he wore a hungry, pathetic look at night. Boulter was on guard by the entrance of the tunnel, but he was half dozing, with his eyes fixed on the ground. Slowly the Porpoise wormed himself towards the store of provisions on the side of the cave nearest to him, and purloined a large ham and some other choice viands. In the morn-

ing a hanbone was found behind some salmon tins.

The Smuggler held it up in blank dismay.

"There must be some rats about," murmured Billy Bunter. "What have you chaps got for breakfast? I'm hungry!"

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

A Capture for Billy Bunter.

"I SAY, you fellows, have you heard the news?"

Harry Wharton burst excitedly into Study No. 13, where the rest of the Famous Five were sitting, with that question.

"No, we've heard nothing," said Bob Cherry. "What's the row, old top?"

"Why," said Wharton, "Bunter, Fishy, and the new kid, Diggy, are missing, and it's feared they've been kidnapped!"

"Kidnapped!" exclaimed Johnny Bull. "Is this a leg-pull?"

"No, it's true enough," said Harry Wharton, speaking very quickly. "I've heard all about it from the Midget. His name isn't Gilbert at all. He's none other than Kirkby Keene, the famous detective!"

"Phew!"

"My hat!"

"It's almost incredible, I know, but he's over thirty years of age. He's been at Greysfriars for the purpose of keeping an eye on Dart, who is really the son of Hyram P. Youk, the Margarine King. It seems that kidnapers have been on the trail of the kid. Well, this afternoon, while the Midget—Keene, I mean—was changing in his study, Diggy, Bunter, and Fish disappeared. How he did it I

don't know, but the Midget discovered they visited Peggy Bay, and even tracked 'em to Gaunt's Cavern, but there he lost the trail. He's organising search-parties now with the approval of Dr. Locke, and he wants all of us to join in!"

"Oh, good egg!"

For some hours that night parties of schoolboys and bodies of local police roamed the countryside, but without result.

The next day brought startling developments, for the detective picked up the trail of the man Furber, who had gone to London to meet the American Margarine King! Leaving the search for the missing juniors in the hands of others, he journeyed to the metropolis. Soon the news reached Greysfriars of Furber's arrest, but the mystery of the disappearance of the rest of the gang was as impenetrable as ever. Not a word could be obtained from the arrested kidnapper.

The days dragged on, and the whole country was talking about the strange affair, for the newspapers were full of "The Greysfriars Mystery," as it came to be known as. Time and again the Midget visited Gaunt's Cavern at Peggy Bay in the hope of picking up clues.

Early he discovered tiny marks on the wall of rock which had been made by the boots of the kidnapers as they had ascended and descended from the secret tunnel. But local fishermen assured the detective that the walls were of solid rock, so the detective was led to the faulty conclusion that the marks were made by the rocks being tapped with an instrument of some kind.

Still hopeful that there might be some slight clue which he had overlooked, he journeyed to the cave again ten days after the disappearance of Bunter & Co., together with the Famous Five. While

they searched the place with the aid of powerful acetylene hand-lamps, a shuffling sound occurred above their heads. A moment later the starting eyes of the searchers watched a rock move away up on the ledge. Then, to their astonishment, appeared a gaunt, white visage. It was the Smuggler!

As they stood, speechless with amazement, the man's lips quivered pathetically. Then he spoke in slow, sad tones. "We want to give ourselves up, kids," he said. "A fat freak from your school has eaten us out of house and home!"

How William George Bunter, the Porpoise of the Greysfriars Remove, was the means of bringing the kidnapers to book was not only a nice days wonder at Greysfriars, but it was also discussed in every home in England. Hyram P. Youk took his erring offspring back to the States with him, but before he went he presented the Owl with a fat cheque. Bunter stood ten fawns in the tuckshop with it.

Fisher T. Fish's part in the whole affair came out, but Dr. Locke was so relieved that no harm had come to his charges, that he awarded no punishment to the astute Yankee junior.

His work complete, the Midget—alias Kieble Kooze, the detective—returned to his agency. Percy Bolsover, for one, was not sorry to see him go. Thus ended one of the most astounding episodes in the varied history of Greysfriars School!

THE END.

(Another magnificent long complete story of the chums of Greysfriars next week, entitled "Scoring the School" By Frank Richards.)



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