

THE SECRET OF THE CARAVAN!

Another Grand, New, Long, Complete Tale of the Greyfriars Caravanners.



No. 705. Vol. XX.

ANOTHER SPECIAL NUMBER OF THE GREYFRIARS HERALD.

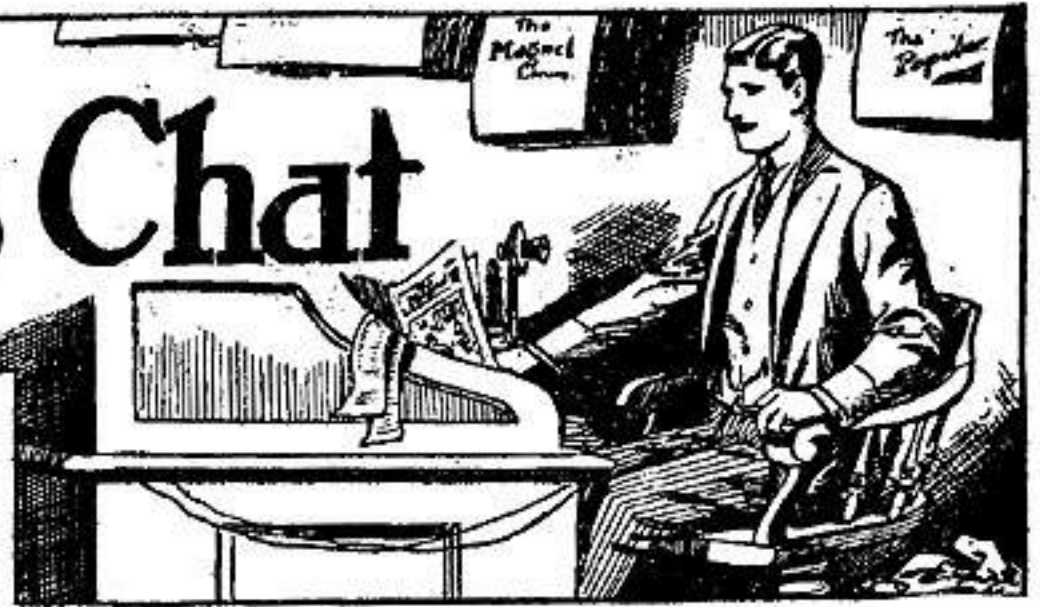
August 13th, 1921.



BILLY BUNTER IS INTERRUPTED WHEN SOLVING THE SECRET OF THE CARAVAN!

(An amusing incident from the splendid Greyfriars Story inside.)

The Editor's Chat



Address all your letters to:
The Editor, "The Magnet Library,"
The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.
I am always pleased to hear from my chums.

FOR NEXT MONDAY.

"MAULY AND THE CARAVANNERS!"

By Frank Richards.

This story deals with the further adventures of the chums of Greyfriars on their holiday tour. Mauleverer, the slacker of the Remove, joins the caravanners, and from that time onwards events move fast.

Maully falls into the hands of Ponsonby & Co., and a Captain Gadsby, who, knowing that the junior is possessed of plenty of money, set themselves the task of relieving him of some. They do not quite succeed, but they make things decidedly unpleasant for the noble lord.

The story is packed full of incident—fun and thrills, and I am sure every one of my chums will fully enjoy reading the story of

"MAULY AND THE CARAVANNERS!"

which will appear in our next issue. Place your order now, if you have not already done so.

THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."

Harry Wharton's next supplement will deal with the all-important subject of

holidays. True, some of the juniors have gone caravanning, but as the supplements were put together before they started out, he has managed to gather some very interesting and amusing stories and articles.

The mere mention of holidays rouses the boys and girls at this time of the year. Like their chums, the Greyfriars fellows want to go away. Some of the views of Greyfriars fellows concerning the right and wrong way of spending holidays will most assuredly amuse all readers of the MAGNET.

I hope you will make certain of this supplement by ordering a copy of next Monday's issue of the MAGNET LIBRARY.

Special Announcements.

I have two very special announcements to make this week.

The first concerns the new serial in the POPULAR. Most readers of this paper are very well aware of the splendid stories written by Mr. Sidney Drew, and they will be glad to hear that Friday next will see the publication of the first instalment of a splendid story of Ferrers Lord, Gan Waga, Ching Lung, Rupert Thurston, Prout & Co., and Hal Honour, and it will be found in the POPULAR.

Some of my new chums will probably not know Gan Waga, the funniest Eskimo who ever lived. They can make his acquaintance in the story of

"THE INVISIBLE RAIDER,"

which commences in Friday's issue of the POPULAR. Now, don't make any mistake about your copy—hurry away and order it at the very first opportunity. When the boys see the cover of the POPULAR on Friday, illustrating a thrilling incident in the first instalment of SIDNEY DREW'S new serial—well, I can tell you there is going to be a rush.

Please don't miss your copy!

The second announcement I have to make is really an answer to many, many letters I have received, asking when the next Holiday Annual will be on sale.

September the First is the day, boys and girls. On that day the HOLIDAY ANNUAL will be on sale—well over three hundred pages packed full of stories, articles, plates, diagrams, character sketches, poems—all about all your chums—Jimmy Silver & Co., Tom Merry & Co., Harry Wharton & Co., Robin Hood, with a grand cricket story of Greyfriars a special feature.

I am reproducing on the back page a picture of the cover of this, the finest Annual for boys and girls ever published. Have a look at it, order your copy now, and then you are certain to have it.

REMEMBER THE DATE.—The First day of September will see the publication of the GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUAL.

NOTICES.

Correspondence.

Morris Antick, 73, Cambridge Road, Mile End, E. 1, wants place in league team.

Pte. W. Brown, 2745638, 11th Platoon, C Company, 1st Battalion Black Watch (R. H.), Allahabad, India, writes to say that the men of the 11th Platoon would be glad to receive any kinds of books, papers, and magazines to help pass away the dreary days of the summer.

John Baird, 307, Westmoreland Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, wishes to hear from readers, 15-18, in the British Empire; subject, stamp collecting.

Leonard Dilcock, 70, Hiawatha Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, wishes to correspond with stamp collectors in South Africa, India, New Zealand, etc., ages 15-18.

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LONG, COMPLETE TALE OF THE CHUMS OF GREYFRIARS EVERY WEEK.

The Magnet Library

The Editor will be obliged if you will hand this copy, when finished with, to a friend.



A Magnificent, New, Long, Complete Story of Harry Wharton & Co., dealing with their Adventures on a Holiday Tour with a Caravan.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Caravanners!

“ANY more cake, you fellows?”

“No.”

“Any more tarts?”

“No.”

“Any more cream-puffs?”

“No.”

“Then I think I’ll turn in,” said Billy Bunter thoughtfully.

How Billy Bunter could have found room for any more cake, tarts, or cream-puffs, if the supply had been unlimited, was a mystery.

For half an hour at least Bunter’s jaws had been champing steadily. Harry Wharton & Co. were accustomed to his wonderful performances in the gastro-nomic line. But the Owl of the Remove had succeeded in surprising even the Famous Five.

For once Bunter was satisfied. He could have managed a few more tarts, and another cream-puff or two. But upon the whole he was fairly well satisfied. He leaned back on the grassy bank and blinked in the moonlight, and yawned.

“I’m sleepy!” he remarked.

Harry Wharton & Co. were all sleepy. It was one o’clock in the morning, a very unusual hour for the heroes of the Remove to be awake. It had been an adventurous night for the Greyfriars caravanners, and supper had been very late indeed.

“How jolly lucky we got into camp!” said Billy Bunter. “I was awfully hungry! Might have had to go without supper!”

He shuddered.

“Well, here we are!” remarked Bob Cherry. “Now about sleeping quarters. There’s only two bunks in the van, you chaps—”

“I don’t mind who has the other one,” said Bunter generously. It was apparently settled in Bunter’s mind that he was going to have one.

The fat junior rose, with some difficulty. He had taken so considerable a cargo on board that the law of gravita-

tion seemed to exercise more influence upon him than usual. He gasped as he got on his feet at last. There was a slight pallor in his fat face.

He rolled away hurriedly towards the caravan.

Harry Wharton yawned and rose.

“Time we turned in,” he remarked.

“It was a jolly good supper, thanks to Coker.”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Vote of thanks to the founder of the feast!” suggested Bob.

The chums of the Remove chortled.

Coker of the Fifth undoubtedly was the founder of the feast, but it had been quite unintentional on his part.

The goodly supply of tuck in the caravan had been intended for Coker, Potter, and Greene. It had fallen to the lot of the chums of the Remove. It was, as Bob had observed, a case of “to the victor the spoils.”

Near at hand Coker and Potter and Greene, of the Greyfriars Fifth, sat in the grass.

The looks on their faces could only be described as Hunnish.

Coker & Co. were yearning to lay violent hands upon the merry juniors; but that was quite out of the question as their hands were tied behind their backs.

Harry Wharton came over to the glowering three.

He nodded, with a cheery smile, to Horace Coker, who gave him a glare in return that was intended to wither him almost to dust. But it did not wither the captain of the Remove. He only smiled brightly.

“Well, Coker, old bean,” he remarked genially, “this isn’t your lucky day out, is it?”

Coker gasped.

“If I had my hands loose—” he breathed.

“My dear man, you’re much safer as you are!”

“Let me loose at once!” howled Coker. “I’m going to smash you! I’m going to kick out the whole gang of you! Let me loose!”

“Ha, ha, ha!” roared the Removites.

Coker’s request was rather cool, considering his statement of his intentions.

“You cheeky young sweeps!” gasped Coker. “Oh, you just wait a bit! I’ll make an example of you!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“I say, you might let us loose, you kids,” said Potter. “Never mind Coker. He can’t help being a silly owl.”

“He was born an idiot,” said Greene, “and he grows a bigger idiot every day. He can’t help it. Never mind him.”

Coker turned his glare upon his comrades.

“So this is how you back me up, is it?” he said. “This is your thanks for bringing you out on a caravanning trip?”

“You potty ass!” said Greene. “Nice thing you’ve landed us in, haven’t you? First we’re rushed by tramps and tied up like turkeys, and then these cheeky fags come cackling over us. Might have expected it, though, with you.”

“Just what we ought to have expected of Coker,” assented Potter. “It’s quite in his style.”

“Serve you jolly well right!” said Bob Cherry. “You bagged our caravan, and walked off with it. We’ve fagged ourselves out tracking you down. We ought really give you a jolly good hiding all round.”

“Let’s!” suggested Johnny Bull.

“Will you untie me?” hissed Coker.

“So that you can kick us all out!” chuckled Bob. “Sort of likely, isn’t it, old top?”

“The likeness is terrific!” chuckled Hurree Singh. “I suggest that the esteemed Coker be left tied up turkeyfully till morning.”

“Yes, rather!”

“You cheeky young brutes!” roared Coker.

“Shush!” said Bob soothingly. “You ought to be grateful. We found you tied up, and the van in the hands of a pair of tramps. You bagged our van, and you couldn’t even keep it. You were done brown by the first tramps you happened

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on. They'd have cleared out your pockets if we hadn't come up. The least you can do is to thank us kindly."

Coker did not look thankful.

And the Removites kindly loosened the bonds of Coker & Co. to give them more ease, taking great care that they did not loosen the cords sufficiently to allow the Fifth-Formers to get free. Then they threw a few blankets over to them.

"You can turn in," said Wharton. "We'll hold a court-martial on you in the morning—too jolly sleepy now."

"I—" began Coker furiously.

"Shut up, old fellow! You talk too much!" said Bob.

Coker spluttered into silence. And the Famous Five, very sleepy but very cheerful, turned to their camping arrangements.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

In Camp!

THERE was already a deep and unmusical snore from the caravan. Billy Bunter had turned in, without troubling to undress, only jerking some blankets into the bunk after him. Bunter, in the course of his fat career, had discovered two inexhaustible pleasures—feeding and sleeping. Having fed to the limit of his great capacity, he was now enjoying himself in the arms of Morpheus. And his deep snore rumbled through the caravan, and for some distance along the moonlit pasture-land where the caravanners were camped.

Nobody was very keen on the other bunk. Bunter's snore did not make the caravan a desirable sleeping quarter.

"There's a tent here," said Bob. "Lots of blankets and ground-sheets; Coker's laid in plenty of stuff."

"All the better for little us!" chuckled Nugent.

"Yes, rather!"

"To the victor, the spoils!" grinned Bob Cherry. "This will save us a lot of

outlay. We'll borrow all Coker's props till the end of the vacation."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"That's only fair," agreed Wharton. "Sort the things out. We won't bother about putting up the tent to-night as it's so late: it's fine, and we can manage with the ground-sheets and blankets."

"Good egg!"

Coker & Co., resigning themselves to their fate, as there was evidently no help for it, turned over in their blankets to sleep. Harry Wharton and his chums were not long in doing the same.

But it was agreed that a watch should be kept.

The situation was a rather curious one, and all the juniors realised that it behoved them to be on their guard.

They had hired that caravan from Mr. Lazarus at Courtfield, and undoubtedly it was theirs for the length of the summer vacation. Coker had wanted it, too; but he had been too late.

But Horace Coker was not the fellow to give up anything he wanted on account of mere fags. It was not likely.

Coker & Co. had coolly raided the van in Courtfield before the juniors arrived to take possession, and cleared off with it. Coker had laid out cash with a lavish hand on supplies for the trip. There was a tent, there were ground-sheets, there were blankets; there was a spirit-stove, there was ample tuck, there were supplies of all kinds. In that respect, at least, Coker had done well.

As Harry Wharton & Co. had started at once in pursuit of the raiders, they had had no time or opportunity for laying in the requisites for the caravaning trip. Even their bags had been left behind at Courtfield, at the station. In the circumstances, they felt fully justified in annexing Coker's supplies.

It was a case of *væ victis*—woe to the vanquished.

Exactly what had happened to Coker

& Co. in their brief career as caravanners, the chums of the Remove did not know. They had arrived on the scene to find the Fifth-Formers tied up in the grass, and the van in the possession of a couple of ruffians.

Naturally, a "scrap" had followed; one of the hooligans had fled and escaped; the other had been captured, and was now tied securely to the wheel of the caravan.

What they were going to do with him the juniors had not decided; for the present they were satisfied with keeping him safe.

And there was no doubt that Mr. Stokes was safe. His rough wrists were tied together, his ankles were tied, and his knees were tied. And a rope attached him to the caravan wheel.

He sat in the grass and glared at the juniors, and muttered curses, which fell upon unheeding ears.

Perhaps the ruffian nourished a faint hope that his fleeing comrade might return, and turn the table on the schoolboys, for he glanced often and anxiously at the dim woods and the moonlit fields.

But there was no sign of him.

And as the juniors sagely took it in turn to watch through the remainder of the night, Rabbit could certainly not have helped Mr. Stokes, even if he had ventured to return.

While Harry Wharton & Co. slept the sleep of the just, and Coker & Co. slept more or less comfortably, Stokes sat by the wheel, wide awake, far too uncomfortable to think of sleep. Also, he had apprehensions of the morrow to trouble him, fully expecting to be handed over to the police.

He spent most of the moonlit hours wriggling in his bonds, in the vain endeavour to get loose. But the juniors had been too careful for that. They had learned as Boy Scouts to tie knots; and the knots they had tied all over Mr. Stokes were too much for him.

Although he looked forward to the morrow with apprehension, Mr. Stokes was glad when the moonlight paled, and the glimmer of dawn appeared in the eastern sky.

He was quite tired of being tied to the caravan wheel.

But the Greyfriars juniors were not early risers that morning. At six o'clock Bob Cherry shook Wharton.

The captain of the Remove opened his eyes and yawned.

"Wharrer marrer?" he murmured.

"Six!" said Bob. "Getting up, or taking your turn at watching?"

Wharton rubbed his eyes.

"I'll take my turn," he said. "You turn in, Bob. No need to get up early to-day."

"Right-ho!"

And Bob Cherry gladly plunged into a blanket.

Harry Wharton sat on a camp-stool, and did his sentry-duty, while his comrades slumbered, and Bunter's snore came from the caravan.

The sun rose higher in the sky; it was the dawn of a beautiful summer's morning.

Wharton was still sleepy; but he did not allow his eyes to close. It was as well that he did not.

In the dawning light he caught sight suddenly of a figure lurking on the edge of the wood, evidently watching the camp.

It was the figure of a little man, with a pock-marked face and only one eye. After the first glance, Wharton recog-



In the dawning light Harry Wharton saw the figure of a man lurking on the edge of the woods, evidently watching the camp. At first glance the captain of the Remove recognised the figure of the Rabbit. He jumped to his feet and grasped his stick and waited. (See Chapter 2.)

nised him—it was Rabbit, the comrade of Mr. Stokes, who had fled for his life. Evidently he had not fled far.

Wharton jumped up and grasped his stick.

But there was no need for alarm. At the sight of movement in the camp, the Rabbit's lurking figure disappeared at once into the wood.

At eight o'clock, Harry Wharton roused his comrades, and the chums of the Remove turned out to face a new day. Bunter was still snoring in the caravan, and Bob Cherry kindly looked in to wake him. The fat junior grunted as he was shaken.

"Groogh! Gerrout! 'Tain't rising-bell!"

Shake! Shake!

Billy Bunter opened his eyes wide, with an angry howl.

"Leggo! Gerraway!"

"Eight o'clock!" roared Bob.

"I'll get up at ten—"

"You'll get up now!" chuckled Bob Cherry.

Bump!

"Yaroooh!" roared Bunter, as he landed on the floor of the caravan.

"Feel better now?" asked Bob.

"Groogh! Gerrout! I'm going back to bed!" yelled Bunter.

"You're going down the steps!" chortled Bob Cherry. "Now, see how many times I can land you with my boot before you jump out of the van or—"

"Look here——" spluttered Bunter.

"One!" said Bob.

"Yaroooh!"

"Two!"

"Yoooooop!"

Billy Bunter jumped out of the van without waiting for three.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Court-martial!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. were busy, as the summer sun rose higher over the downs. From the edge of the woodland they gathered firewood in great armfuls, and a camp-fire soon blazed away merrily. Bob Cherry greased a large shining frying-pan with best fresh butter from Coker's ample stores, and half-filled it with rashers of bacon. Over the fire three sticks were set up, gipsy fashion, for the kettle and the egg-saucepan. And then there cropped up the question of water. Coker had selected that spot for camping the previous evening, and Coker had overlooked the little question of a water-supply. There was no water in sight. Here and there, among the fields that stretched for miles to the view, a ditch could be traced among the hedges, but nobody felt a taste for ditch-water. The chums had started debating the question of coffee or tea for breakfast. Both suggestions were now dismissed, and they decided on ginger-beer. Fortunately, Coker had included plenty of that refreshing beverage in his lavish supplies.

"Cheerful sort of idiot, to camp where there isn't any water!" Bob Cherry remarked. "Just like Coker!"

"Just!" agreed Wharton.

"We'll find a place for bathing somewhere later," said Nugent. "Bunter will be happy to miss a morning wash, anyhow."

"Oh, really, Nugent——"

"It was thoughtful of Coker to lay in such a supply of tommy, anyhow," grinned Johnny Bull. "There's about



The Famous Five came scrambling out of the water. "Look out, you chaps, there he is!" The Rabbit jumped from the back of the van and ran for it. "Collar him!" shouted Bob Cherry. After the intruder went the juniors at top speed—clad only in their bathing costumes. (See Chapter 4.)

six pounds of bacon, and two or three dozen eggs—if there was any way of boiling 'em. And a dozen jars of jam, at least."

"That's good!" said Bunter, with deep appreciation.

"Under the circumstances, I think we ought to let Coker have some breakfast," added Johnny Bull.

"Hear, hear!"

Johnny's generous suggestion was generally approved.

Coker's face brightened up—not so much at the thought of breakfast, though he was hungry, as at the prospect of being released for the purpose. But the chums of the Remove were not taking any risks with Coker. Horace was rather too hefty and heavy-handed to be taken any chances with. They released only the right hands of the prisoners, to let them feed.

And they wisely kept out of the reach of Coker's right hand when they gave him his breakfast. Coker had not awakened in a good temper, to judge by his looks.

Even Mr. Stokes was not forgotten, though his hands were not released. He was too dangerous for that. But Bob Cherry kindly fed him with a big sandwich, which Mr. Stokes ate, glaring savagely the while.

The Co. enjoyed their breakfast immensely, all the more because Coker was unintentionally standing the feed.

When breakfast was over the programme for the day had to be decided upon, and the first business on the agenda, as Wharton said, was the disposal of the prisoners.

"Camp court-martial!" said Bob Cherry.

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll give them a fair trial, and punishment accordingly," said Bob. "They're guilty of bagging our van and checking the Remove. But we'll hear what they have to say."

The court-martial was quickly constituted.

"Step up, you Fifth-Form chaps!"

called out Wharton, when the court was seated in a row on a grassy bank.

"Oh, I say, you know——" murmured Potter feebly.

"Yank them over if they won't come!"

"I'll smash you!" roared Coker.

"We can't come when our feet are tied, can we?" wailed Greene.

"Wriggle over."

"I—I can't!"

"Try," said Bob. "I'm going to stir you up with this stick until you can try hard."

"Yaroooh!"

Coker & Co. found that they could wriggle into court, and they did. Greene and Potter gasping, and Horace Coker foaming. It seemed something like an awful dream to Coker of the Fifth. Such cheek towards the Fifth was almost incredible. At Greyfriars, the fags had never treated Coker of the Fifth with the respect that he felt was his due. Now they were on holiday they seemed more lacking in proper respect than ever. From Coker's point of view, it was incredible—unheard of. It was time for the skies to fall, or for the universe to go off with a bang. But the skies smiled down blue and placid; the universe rolled on its way unheeding. And Coker of the Fifth sprawled, foaming, in the grass, waiting for judgment to be passed on him—by cheeky fags of the Lower Fourth!

"Now the other brute!" said Wharton.

Mr. Stokes was released from the wheel, but not from his bonds, and rolled into court. He bumped on Coker, and sat up dazedly and swore.

"Silence in court!" said Harry Wharton.

"Groogh!"

"Oh! Ow!"

"You cheeky young rotter!"

"Gentlemen," said the president of the court-martial, "three of the prisoners are accused of getting hold of this van by a trick and bagging it, and walking off with it. We had about seven hours' tramp hunting them down. Prisoners at the bar, what have you to say in



"So you are thinking of deserting me, are you?" said Coker, advancing on his two chums and pushing back his cuffs, with a business-like air. "Well, you understand this—you won't be allowed to. You're coming with me to hunt those cheeky Remove rotters, understand!" (See Chapter 6.)

defence of your unlawful and heinous conduct?"

"Oh, I say—" mumbled Potter.

"Have you anything to say in your defence?" demanded Wharton.

"I'll smash you!"

"That isn't a defence. Have you anything to say, Potter?"

"It—it was only a lark, you know," groaned Potter. "We—we just backed up Coker. Nice thing it's landed us in! Oh, dear!"

"You admit bagging the van?"

"It's my van!" roared Coker. "I told you at Greyfriars I was going to have it! I ordered you to leave it alone!"

"Is that all?"

"Gentlemen," said the president, "guilty or not guilty?"

"Guilty!"

"Prisoners in the grass, you are found guilty. It remains to sentence you," said Wharton severely. "You deserve boiling in oil, or at least walloping with a cricket-stump."

"You—you—"

"But I think a fine will meet the case," continued the president. "You will be fined all the tuck in the van—"

"Hear, hear!" said the whole court, with great unanimity.

"And you will agree to lend us all the things—tents, and blankets and things—that you have laid in, for the vacation, the same to be returned to you when we wind up caravanning, in whatever state they may happen to be."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We agree!" gasped Potter and Greene together.

"Why, you rotters, the things ain't yours!" howled Coker.

"Perhaps that's why they agree!" chuckled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't agree!" raved Coker. "I'm going to smash you as soon as I get loose! I'm going to—"

"Sentence has now been passed, and will be duly executed. The prisoners will now shut up!"

"I—I—I'll smash you! I—"

"Silence in court!"

"You cheeky young scoundrels, I'll—"

"Shut Coker up, somebody," said the president of the court-martial.

"Certainly!" said Bob Cherry. Coker's mouth was open for further eloquence, and Bob jammed the end of a stick into it. "Chew on that, old top. It will keep you busy!"

"Gurg—gurg—gug—gug—"

"Now for the other prisoner," said Wharton. "Bring him forward!"

And Mr. Stokes was taken by the ears and hitched forward—to an accompaniment of fiendish yells from Mr. Stokes.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

On The March!

"NAME?"

"Stokes, blow yer!" gasped the ruffian, quailing under the eye of the president of the improvised court-martial.

"You collared this van away from those chaps last night, and we found you rooting through it," said Wharton. "You were looking for something to steal, I suppose?"

"I—I wasn't—"

"What was your game, then?"

Mr. Stokes was silent.

"I can tell you that," said Potter.

"That's the man who tried to steal the van when Mr. Lazarus had it in his shed at Courtfield. He's admitted it."

"Oh, the giddy burglar!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"They followed us from Courtfield yesterday," continued Potter. "That idiot Coker insisted on camping in this lonely place to get out of the way of you chaps, so they had a chance to rush us in the middle of the night. They were searching the van for something when you fellows came up."

"Oh!" exclaimed Wharton.

"They asked us if we'd found a secret place in the van," continued Potter. "They think there's something hidden in it somewhere."

Harry Wharton & Co. were keenly interested now.

The fact that several attempts had been made to steal the caravan from Mr. Lazarus at Courtfield had puzzled them considerably. And the present circum-

stances left no doubt that the defeated burglars were, in fact, Mr. Stokes and his pal the Rabbit—now at large.

"It's a giddy mystery," said Bob Cherry. "I don't see how anything could be hidden in the van. Did they find anything, Potter?"

"No; they were still searching when you fellows came up."

"Stokes, what were you searching the van for?"

The ruffian gritted his teeth.

"I—I thought some of the gentlemen might 'ave dropped some money about it!" gasped Stokes.

"That's a lie," said Potter. "You hadn't even gone through our pockets, and that's where you'd have looked for money."

"There's a giddy mystery about that van," said Harry Wharton. "We'll jolly well search it ourselves presently. As the two rascals didn't find what they were looking for, whatever it was, there's no harm done. What are we going to do with this brute?"

"Have him locked up!" exclaimed Potter.

Wharton looked thoughtful.

"Well, he hasn't stolen anything," he said. "He was going to, I suppose, but he hasn't. He could only be charged with assault on you three duffers. You can charge him if you like. We only want to get shut of him."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! There's the other rotter!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

The juniors looked round.

In the distance, dodging on the edge of the wood, the one-eyed man appeared in view again, evidently watching the proceedings. He shook a knucky fist at the caravanners as he saw their eyes turn on him, and scuttled back into the wood like the animal from which he derived his nickname.

"He's hanging on to help his pal if he can," said Wharton. "Well, we'll take care of his pal for a bit. He's too jolly dangerous to let loose in this lonely place. We'll give him a lift in the van for the present."

"Good!"

"Chuck him in!"

Mr. Stokes, cursing volubly, was pitched into the caravan. Then the court-martial broke up.

The juniors prepared to take the road. The horse—Coker's horse—was harnessed to the van—Coker watching the proceeding with infuriated eyes.

"You're lending us this horse for the vac, Coker?" asked Wharton.

"No!" roared Coker.

The van was soon ready to start. The juniors released the legs of the Fifth-Formers to enable them to walk.

"You'll follow the van," said Wharton. "If you wander off, that fellow Rabbit might go for you, with your paws tied. Better stick to us till we come to a village."

"Let us loose!" hissed Coker.

"You're not safe, old pippin!"

Harry Wharton cracked the whip.

"Gee-up, old boss!"

The caravan started, and rumbled away by a rutty path. The Greyfriars caravanners were fairly going at last.

As they quitted the camp, Rabbit appeared in the offing again, and again a knucky fist was shaken. Then he was lost to sight in the hedges and bushes as the van rolled on.

The caravanners turned into a lane, which led them to a road. There the roofs of a village appeared in the distance. Coker & Co. had followed the van, and they stopped now as the van stopped.

“You can cut off, you fellows,” said Wharton, pointing to the village with his whip. “Somebody there will untie your paws for you.”

“If you don’t let us loose——” choked Coker.

“Start!” said Wharton.

He cracked his whip.

“Oh, come on!” said Potter desperately. “I’m fed up with this!”

And Potter tramped away towards the village, followed by Greene.

Coker hesitated, glaring at the juniors. The whip curled round his legs, and he decided to follow his comrades rather hurriedly. The caravan turned in the opposite direction, Bob Cherry leading the horse, and the rest of the party walking with the van. Billy Bunter stepped in to rest, and was promptly jerked out again. There were many ups and downs on the Kentish roads, and nobody considered it necessary for the horse to pull Bunter’s weight, excepting Bunter, and Bunter did not matter.

In spite of their fatigue of the previous evening, the caravanners stepped out briskly enough.

They looked back several times to ascertain whether Rabbit was following them, but did not catch sight of that dingy rascal. If he was tracking them, he was keeping out of sight. The juniors discussed the prisoner in the van as they marched. It was certain that Mr. Stokes was a dangerous character, and that he had some secret but powerful motive for wanting to keep in touch with Mr. Lazarus’ caravan. It was fairly certain, too, that he was responsible for the attempts to “burgle” the van while it was stored at Courtfield. But proof was wanting, and it was scarcely possible to hand him over to the police without any evidence. To let him loose was to risk the possibility of further trouble with him; but it was hardly feasible to keep him a prisoner in the van for long.

“After all, we shall soon be in another county, and the brute won’t be able to get on our track,” said Bob Cherry. “We can’t bother with him, anyhow. Let’s kick him out when we camp.”

Harry Wharton nodded.

“Best thing we can do,” he agreed.

The caravanners camped at noon, on the bank of a little stream on the open downs. There they were able to get their deferred morning “tubber”—in which Billy Bunter did not join them. Bunter declared that he would keep watch; but, as a matter of fact, as soon as the chums of the Remove were in the water, Bunter got busy with one of Coker’s jars of jam. But before he was half-way through the jar he dropped it, and jumped up with a yell of warning:

“Look out, you chaps! Here he is!”

“What——”

“That one-eyed tramp!” yelled Bunter.

The chums of the Remove came scrambling hurriedly out of the water. Billy Bunter, jam-spoon in hand, pointed to the slinking figure of the Rabbit, who had almost reached the back of the van when the short-sighted Owl of the Remove spotted him.

“Collar him!” shouted Bob Cherry.

The Rabbit jumped back, and ran for it.

After him went the Famous Five at top speed, clad only in their bathing garb, which was good trim for running. In that garb they would not have followed the Rabbit far; but it was not necessary. Too much tobacco and beer had deprived the Rabbit of his running powers; he was gasping stertorously in a few minutes,

and Harry Wharton’s hand dropped on his shoulder and jerked him round.

With a curse, the Rabbit closed with the captain of the Remove. But the rest of the juniors came up quickly, and the rascal was soon overpowered. And the juniors dragged him back in triumph to the camp.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Logging It!

“SIT on him, Bunter!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

The hapless Rabbit was pitched on his face, and Billy Bunter’s solid weight was deposited on the small of his back.

There was no danger of the rascal getting away then. The only danger was that he would be suffocated. He gasped spasmodically under Bunter’s crushing avoirdupois.

Harry Wharton & Co. dressed themselves at their leisure. They were very pleased with the capture of the Rabbit. The Rabbit did not look pleased; but in such circumstances it was impossible to please everybody.

“We’ll make the brute tell us what it is he wants with the van,” said Bob, as he hitched his braces. “He doesn’t look such a sulky brute as the other brute!”

“We’ll try!” said Wharton doubtfully.

It was clear to the juniors that there was some mystery connected with the green caravan, and that it was known to Mr. Stokes and his one-eyed pal. But it was not likely that they would succeed in extracting the truth from the two rascals.

“Roll off, Bunter!” said Wharton.

“Now, you rotter, you can sit up! Don’t get on your feet, or you’ll be knocked down again!”

The Rabbit sat up, gasping.

“Now, what have you followed us for?” demanded Wharton.

“I—I—I was only goin’ to ‘elp my pal Stokes to get away!” stammered the Rabbit. “I was, so ‘elp me!”

“What is there that you want in our caravan?”

“N-n-nothing!”

“What were you searching it for last night, then?”

The Rabbit blinked helplessly.

“I—I wasn’t!” he stammered.

“We saw you at it, you rascal!” said Wharton sternly.

“I—I ain’t got nothing to say!” muttered the Rabbit. “You jest let me go. I ain’t done nothing!”

“No getting anything out of him!” said Wharton. “He would only tell us lies, anyhow. We’ll let you go, Mr. Rabbit, and your precious pal, too. Your company isn’t very desirable. We’ll tie them leg to leg, you fellows, and let them hop it, when we start.”

“Good egg!”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Jerk the other rotter out!”

Mr. Stokes was jerked out of the caravan.

The fury in Mr. Stokes’ face was almost appalling. His experiences at the hands of the Greyfriars juniors had apparently had a most exasperating effect upon his temper—probably never equable. But his black and savage looks did not affect the chums of the Remove in any way.

They rolled Mr. Stokes alongside the Rabbit, and his left leg was firmly secured to the Rabbit’s right. The hands of both the rascals were tied; one leg each left free.

“Now you can start together,” said Wharton. “Hop it!”

Mr. Stokes answered with an oath, and the Rabbit mumbled.

“Ow are we going to get along like this ‘ere?”

“Oh, you’ll manage all right!” said Bob encouragingly. “You’re starting first, so that you won’t spot the direction we take. You see, we’ve had enough of you!”

“We can’t walk like this!” howled Stokes.

“Think not?”

“No, durn yer!”

“You never know what you can do till you try,” said Bob. “F’rinstance, I’m going to practice goal-kicks on you till you start! I’m sure you’ll find you’re able to get going sooner or later.”

“You young ‘ound—— Oh crumbs!”

Bob Cherry’s boot landed.

Mr. Stokes found that he could start. He started quite quickly.

The two ruffians plunged away, floundering, and rolled over. They picked themselves up and started again, with loud and ringing curses.

“Go it!” sang out Bob Cherry. “Put



They rolled Mr. Stokes alongside of the Rabbit and firmly secured his left leg to the Rabbit’s right. “Now you start together and hop it!” said Harry Wharton. “And if you don’t look sharp I’ll help you with the whip!” The two ruffians plunged away down the footpath over the downs. (See Chapter 5.)

it on, dear boys! I'm coming after you with the whip in a minute!"

Stokes and Rabbit "put it on" as hard as they could. Reeling and plunging wildly, they progressed along the foot-path over the downs, and a fold of the hill hid them from sight at last.

The Greyfriars caravanners chuckled gleefully.

"Now those rotters have had a lesson!" said Bob. "If they bother us any more, we'll give them something harder next time. But they won't get out of that scrape in a hurry."

"The scrapefulness of the esteemed rotters is terrific!" chuckled Hurree Singh. "Now for the marchfulness, my worthy chums!"

The van took the downward road, and the hill interposed between the Greyfriars caravanners and their late enemies. And Harry Wharton & Co. hoped that they had seen the last of the two ruffians—a hope that was destined to prove ill-founded.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Parting of the Ways!

"THIS is better."

"Much!"

Potter and Greene agreed upon that.

The two Fifth-Formers of Greyfriars were seated under an apple-tree in the garden of the Farmer's Rest. It was an old-fashioned inn, but the old-fashioned innkeeper had been able to provide a tip-top luncheon. Perhaps the sight of Coker's pocket-book, which was lined with notes, had helped mine host to turn out his very best provender.

Be that as it may, undoubtedly Coker & Co. had lunched sumptuously and well. They had arrived in the village wriggling with the bonds on their wrists, and a grinning stableman had released them. Mine host had been inclined to be suspicious of them at first, until reassured by a glimpse of the aforesaid pocket-book.

Potter and Green had, as their first thought, the idea of seizing Coker and slaying him—or not far short of slaying him. They yearned to slay Coker, with a deep yearning. To Coker they attributed all the troubles that had fallen upon them—the long tramp with the van the previous day, the attack on them by the ruffians in the night, the tying-up and the court-martial by the Remove fags, and the rest of it. Potter and Greene agreed that it was all Coker's fault, and that Coker ought to be slain, emphatically, on the spot, without delay.

But they relented.

Coker, now he was loose again, was rather a hefty fellow to slay; and, as a matter of fact, Coker actually was meditating, at the moment, taking on his two chums together, and giving them a terrific hiding to go on with. For Coker attributed all the misadventures and misfortunes to the fact that his comrades hadn't properly backed him up. With proper backing, according to Coker, he would have come through with flying colours. He was a patient chap, he felt; but there was a limit to patience, and Potter and Greene really had asked for it!

But Coker relented.

The fact was, that all three were ravenously hungry and very tired. So recriminations and vengeance were postponed till after "grub," and the lavish lunch had the effect of ameliorating their tempers. Coker, of course, stood the lunch; and after that his chums felt that they couldn't very well slay him. And

Coker, under the genial influence of a hearty meal and a good rest, told himself that Potter and Greene were asses, but couldn't help being asses, and that it was up to a fellow of his superior intellectual powers to "suffer fools gladly."

So there was peace—at least temporarily.

Under the apple-tree, Potter and Greene reclined in garden-chairs, and helped themselves to cake and lemonade from a little table. It was really a blissful repose after what they had been through. Coker was not sitting down. He was too strenuous to want much repose; he was walking to and fro, his brows wrinkled in thought. The great Horace was thinking deeply, and Potter and Greene were supremely indifferent to his meditations—only hoping that he wouldn't communicate them.

"We can get a jolly good rest here, and then walk to the station!" said Potter. "A jolly good rest first! The station's only a mile, and the innkeeper's told us the way. You come home with me Greeney, and later on I'll come to your show. We've had enough Coker—what?"

"Enough!" said Green eloquently.

"Too much, in fact," smiled Potter. "He did us all right at his place, but his dashed domineering ways get on a fellow's nerves. As for this stunt of caravanning, if Coker wants to go caravanning, he can go on his merry own."

"Yes, rather!" said Greene. "We'll catch that train."

Coker came to a halt at last. The mighty processes of his intellect had evidently arrived at some important conclusion. He stopped before his chums and fixed them with a stern eye.

"You chaps done slacking and guzzling?" he inquired politely.

He did not wait for an answer.

"I've thought it out. We're fairly off the track of those young cads. But, of course, we're not giving up our van."

"Their van, you mean," said Potter.

"Our van!" roared Coker.

"Well, what's the programme?" asked Greene, in a tired voice.

"My idea is to scud off to the nearest town and get some bikes," said Coker. "We'll hire three bikes—buy 'em, if necessary. Then we'll jolly well scour the whole county, hunting for those young rascals."

"I can see us doing it!" murmured Potter.

Greene grinned at the vision of three dusty, perspiring cyclists scudding over the length and breadth of the county of Kent, hunting for an elusive caravan. And the reward of Potter and Greene, in the doubtful event of success, was to go caravanning—with Coker!

"That's the plan!" said Horace Coker impressively. "You fellows might think for a month, and never hit on a scheme. Leave that to me. This is where my strategy comes in again."

Potter closed one eye at Greene.

"Suppose we don't find them?" he asked.

"We go on hunting till we do."

"Well, then, suppose we do find them?"

"First of all," said Coker, "we thrash 'em—thrash 'em all round! I insist on that to begin with. Then we kick 'em out, and bag the van. Then we go caravanning, and enjoy ourselves."

"Enjoy ourselves?" said Greene.

"That's it. I shall take the lead, and see that you fellows don't run into any more trouble," said Coker. "I'm going to try to be patient with your silly fat-

headedness. Only don't try me too hard. I came near giving you a jolly good hiding each to-day."

"Oh!" gasped Potter. "You came near that, did you, Coker?"

"Jolly near!" said Coker.

"And we came near—"

"Don't interrupt me, Potter. You talk too much, old chap. You mustn't mind my mentioning it, but you're an awful fellow for letting your chin wag. Now, we've had a feed and a rest, and we're going for those bikes. The town's only a mile or so away. You fellows were asking the innkeeper about a railway-station there—"

"We were!" murmured Greene.

"We don't want any railway-station," said Coker. "It's bikes we want. I've decided. Now get a move on!"

Potter and Greene exchanged glances.

"The fact is, Coker—"

"Nuff said! Come on!"

"The fact is!" shouted Potter.

"We're fed up! We're going home!"

"By the next train!" added Greene.

Coker eyed them.

"So you're thinking of deserting, are you?" he said. "Well, just understand this—you won't be allowed to. You're coming with me to hunt for those cheeky Remove rotters. Any more talk about going home, and I shall deal with you in a way you won't like. Now, get a move on!"

"Look here—" roared Potter indignantly. The lordly Horace was really exceeding the limit.

Coker pushed back his cuffs with a business-like air.

"Where will you have it, George Potter?" he inquired.

Potter jumped up, and backed away. He didn't want a fight with Coker, especially so soon after that plentiful lunch.

"You want to argue, Greeney?"

"I—I say, Coker—" said Greene feebly.

"Don't say anything. Just come on and follow your leader. Back me up and not so much of your slacking, and you'll be all right."

Potter and Greene exchanged another look, hopeless this time, and followed Coker into the inn. There Horace paid the bill—quite a considerable one—and received a few further directions from the landlord. While he was doing so, Potter and Greene consulted in whispers.

"Now we're ready!" said Coker.

"Come on!"

He started with his long strides, and Potter and Greene followed him meekly. The three Fifth-Formers covered the ground at a good rate, and ere long they entered the town. They stopped at the first bicycle-shop.

"You'd better select the machines, Coker," said Potter. "You're more likely to get just what we want—"

Coker nodded, condescending to be pleased with that tribute.

"Right-ho!" he said. "Just wait for me, or come in if you like. If you come in, though, don't butt in!"

"Oh, we'll take a stroll round!"

"Don't get lost, then," said Coker.

"You know what you are!"

He strode into the cycle-shop to negotiate for the hire of three bicycles. Potter and Greene strolled on—keeping up that easy stroll till they were past the shop-window.

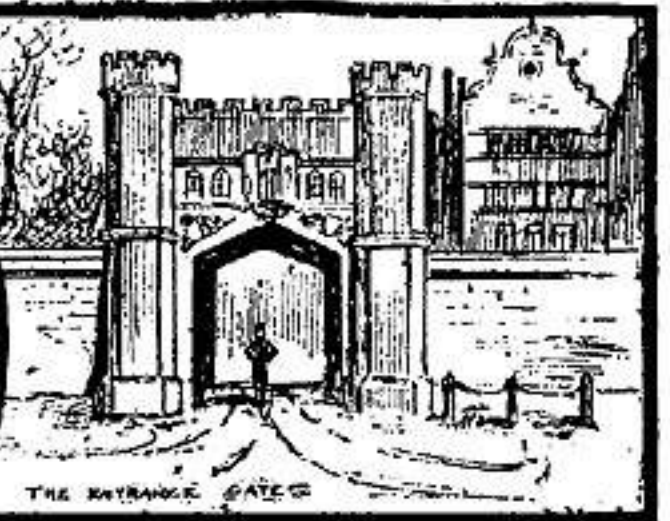
Then that easy stroll became a hurried walk. Potter glanced anxiously at his watch.

"Five minutes for the train," he said.

(Continued on page 13.)

The Greyfriars HERALD

SUPPLEMENT No. 35.
Week Ending August 13th, 1921



Assisted by BOB CHERRY (Fighting Editor), VERNON-SMITH (Sports Editor), MARK LINLEY, TOM BROWN, and FRANK NUGENT.

Address all letters to HARRY WHARTON, c/o The Magnet Library, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.

Useful Hints to Bathers!

By ALONZO TODD.

Never bathe until you can swim. That is a golden rule, and it explains why I never go near the water. Those who do indulge in sea-bathing should carefully observe the following precautions. At the present moment, there are no less than six fellows in the school sanny. Why? Because of their own recklessness and carelessness. Nugent minor is one of the six. He is suffering from a compound fracture of the right heel. The injury was contracted while bathing. If only Nugent minor had taken the precaution of wearing sandals, all would have been well. Another of the victims is Desmond of the Remove. He wore a bathing-costume which was much too thin, and consequently he caught a bad chill. Moral: Always wear fur-lined bathing-costumes. Temple of the Upper Fourth is also in the sanny. He contracted influenza, pneumonia, pleurisy, and muscular rheumatism through staying in the water too long. Always restrict your bathe to thirty seconds. If you stay in for five minutes, like Temple did, you will assuredly rue it. Yet another of the victims is Potter of the Fifth. He was foolish enough to immerse his whole body in the water, with the result that he got wet through. When bathing always see that the water does not rise above your ankles. Ogilvy of the Remove is also in the sanny. He broke a bloodvessel in attempting to blow up a pair of water-wings. Water-wings should always be blown up in a scientific manner—with a bicycle-pump. Ogilvy tried to do it with his mouth, and he is now paying the penalty. The sixth inmate of the sanny is Bolsover minor, who was bitten by a crab. He should have tied a patent crab-catcher to each of his ankles, and then he would have been safe. As it is, his big toe is in splints. I have no sympathy with anybody who fails to observe these simple precautions. The only way to thoroughly enjoy a bathe is to carry out the advice contained in this article, for which the Editor intends to pay me half-a-guinea.

(Some hopes!—Ed.)
Supplement 1.]

EDITORIAL.

By Harry Wharton.

I am inclined to agree with the gentleman who said:

"I do like to be beside the seaside,
I do like to be beside the sea!"

I often think how lucky we are to be at a school which is situated practically on the coast.

St. Jim's is in the heart of Sussex; Rookwood is in the heart of Hampshire. If the Saints or Rookwooders wish to go swimming or fishing or boating, they've only got the river. But at Greyfriars we have access to the "briny," as well as to the fresh water.

There is something awfully fascinating in the roar of the sea. I often lie awake in the Remove dormitory listening to the breakers. And how glorious it is to get up before rising-bell, and sample the delights of the early-morning dip! Dick Penfold has something to say about this in the adjoining column.

I make no excuse for presenting my reader-friends with a Special Seaside Number of the "Greyfriars Herald." No excuse is necessary. At this time of the year the thoughts of thousands of people turn to the mighty sea with its myriad attractions.

Even at this moment Bob Cherry, having upset a bottle of blue-black ink on the floor of the editorial sanctum, is declaiming Byron's well-known line:

"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean,
roll!"

Most of the contributions in this issue deal directly or indirectly with the sea. One of these days we may have a special number dealing with the delights of the river, but for the present the sea will take pride of place.

I should like to thank all my reader-chums at this stage for the loyal way in which they support our little supplement week by week. If any proof were needed that the "Greyfriars Herald" is growing in popularity, I have it every day in the form of hundreds of appreciative letters.

Let the good work go on!

HARRY WHARTON.

The Early Morning Dip!

By DICK PENFOLD.

Tumble from bed and hurry along—
Who's for the morning dip?
Making the air resound with song,
Letting your voices rip!
Carelessly roam along the beach,
Follow each wayward whim;
List to the seagulls as they screech—
Who's for the morning swim?

The nippy air your bones may freeze—
It's all in the morning dip!
Give not a thought to the gentle breeze,
Carossing you while you strip.
Unite yourself with a merry dash,
To the waters grey and grim.
Hark! to the breakers' roar and crash—
Who's for the morning swim?

Rise on the silver-crested wave—
How grand is this morning dip!
You almost envy a watery grave
As the cup of delight you sip!
Turn on your back, gaze up to the skies,
Where the lark is singing his hymn,
And flatter yourself on your pluck to rise
For an early-morning swim!

If a stalwart man you'd fain become,
Then stick to the morning dip!
And treat the sea as a cheerful chum
Whose hand you'd love to grip!
Patronise freely the sandy shore,
Keep body and brain in trim,
And blend your voice with the breakers
roar—
Here's to the morning swim!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 705.



By TOM BROWN.

I'M very fond of a seaside holiday. During the vac I spent a few days at the famous health resort known as Winklebeach.

When I arrived I saw that a competition was being held on the sands. It was open to boys and girls under fifteen.

I decided to enter the competition. You had to construct a lighthouse out of sand, and prizes of five quid, two-pounds-ten, and a quid respectively, were to be awarded. Competitors were allowed three days to construct their lighthouses, and the Mayor of Winklebeach was to select the winners.

Now, I had always been very good at building castles in the air, and I imagined that building lighthouses in the sand was just as easy.

There were scores and scores of infants, of both sexes, going in for the competition. They were as plentiful as flies round a honey-pot. Many of them had already started to construct their lighthouses.

"I'll beat the lot of them!" I told myself. "I'll build the finest lighthouse ever, and bag a fiver for my trouble. Won't it be ripping to take a fiver back to Greyfriars with me!"

I selected a clear stretch of sand which the incoming tide did not encroach upon.

Some of the kids were building their lighthouses close to the water's edge, and I chuckled to myself as I pictured what would happen when the tide came in. The lighthouses would be swept away by the waves.

I did not make the same mistake as those thoughtless youngsters. My own "pitch" stood well back from the water's edge.

Having obtained a spade from a man who was selling them on the beach, I took off my coat and got busy.

It took me about an hour to construct the base of the lighthouse. It consisted of an enormous round slab of sand.

I had intended that my lighthouse should be a most elaborate one—not a puny little thing which a sudden gust of wind would knock out of existence.

By the time it got dark I had completed half a structure. It was about eighteen inches high, so far; and there were another eighteen inches to be added. Then I should have to construct a parapet round the top of the lighthouse.

I went home feeling highly satisfied with my first afternoon's work.

I was staying with a maiden aunt, and she rebuked me severely for not coming in to tea. But I explained to her that I had something more important than eating and drinking to think about.

I was up next morning with the lark. My first thoughts were of my lighthouse.

Hastily dressing, I ran down to the shore, to see if everything was all right. There had been a bit of a storm in the night, and I was anxious for the safety of my lighthouse.

To my delight, I found that the half which I had constructed was still intact.

Many of my rivals, however, were weeping and gnashing their teeth. The storm and tide had played havoc with their lighthouses, and they had to commence their tasks all over again.

All that morning I worked like a nigger, and by noon my lighthouse was completed.

I spent the afternoon in putting a few additions to my structure. I placed a neat border of stones and shells around it, and I built some steps leading up to the entrance.

Some of the passers-by surveyed my handiwork with interest.

"Is that the leaning tower of Pisa?" inquired one.

"Don't be rude!" I retorted. "It's a lighthouse."

"Oh!"

"This competition is for infants only,"

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 705.

said another interfering idiot. "What is your age, my boy?"

"Not fifteen yet," I replied. "You look older than that," said the man suspiciously.

"Ah, yes," I said. "My moustache makes me look older than I really am, you know." For the rest of that day I jealously guarded my lighthouse, lest some Goth or Vandal should come along and take a flying kick at it.

I spent a sleepless night, haunted by fears that something might have happened to my lighthouse, but on paying a visit to it early next morning I found that it had successfully weathered the elements.

That afternoon the judging took place. The other competitors cast envious glances at my lighthouse, before which I stood with an air of pride.

None of the other lighthouses was a patch on mine. I could already hear the rustling of the five-pound note which I should shortly win.

In the distance I could see the portly figure of the Mayor of Winklebeach as he waddled about on the sands, inspecting one lighthouse after another.

Presently he began to approach mine, and my heart thumped violently against my ribs.



I took a flying leap at the dead crab, which was lying near the lighthouse. But I missed it, and my boot went crashing through the lighthouse.

The supreme moment had come! I took a final glance at my lighthouse, to make sure that everything was in order. And then I noticed, for the first time, a dead crab lying a few inches away.

Instead of picking the thing up and hurling it into the sea, I took a flying kick at it.

Alas! Even as I write, the tears well to my eyes at the memory of what I did.

My boot went crashing into the lighthouse, and upset the whole box of tricks!

Then, to complete the wreckage, I lost my balance, and fell heavily on to the ruined lighthouse.

When I staggered to my feet no lighthouse was visible—nothing but scattered heaps of sand.

"Dash! Blow! Bother!" I exclaimed.

The mayor's voice cut short my flow of eloquence.

"Aren't you taking part in this competition, my little man?"

"Brrrrr!" I growled. And, turning on my heel, I crawled limply away.

Three days' hard labour for nothing! I shall never construct a beastly lighthouse again!

Competitions of that sort are a snare and a delusion. Fight shy of them, O ye readers of the "Greyfriars Herald," lest thy labours share the tragic fate of Tom Brown's lighthouse!

THE END.

THE SERCH FOR BERRIED TREZZURE!



OUR HEROES STOOD WASTE-HIGH IN THE WATER!

The First (and last!) Instalment of a Magnificent Serial Story, dealing with Schoolboys, Smugglers, and other Lawbreakers. Specially contributed to the "Greyfriars Herald" by DICKY NUGENT.

Author of "Suns of the Spanish Main," "Skorned by the Skool," etc., etc.

Jack Jolly came rushing into his studdy in the 4th Form passidge at St. Timmerthy's. His hansom face, usually pail, was now flushed with eggitement.

"I've just maid a wonderful discovery, you felloes!" he cride.

Jack's loyal studdy maits, Tubby Tubbs and Billy Burke, left to there feat.

"A?"

"What did you say, Jack?"

Staring at his two chums, Jack Jolly repeated his observation.

"I've just bean in the skool libery," he said, "going threv sum old books which have bean their for donkey's yeers. And inside one of them I found this!"

So saying, Jack furrished a peace of paper in his hand.

"What is it?" asked Tubby Tubbs.

"An old and faded parchement," was the reply. "A dockument which has lain doormat for about a hundred yeers!"

"My hatt!"

"Great pipp!"

"It relates to a berried trezzure," said Jack Jolly, shaking from head to foot as if he had the agew. "It is ritten in rime. Lissen, and I will reed it allowed to you!"

Taking a deep breath, Jack started to resite the lines of doggrel which he had found.

They ran as folloes:

"He who seeketh heeps of trezzure
And a life of welth and lezzure
(Better than a pawper's grave)
Should seek 4th-with ye smugglers' cava.
If he diggeth their with aest
He will finde ye old oak chest,
It's been hid for menny moons,
Full of silver and doubloons.
Get him who finds this scrappe of paper
Get spade and pick-acks, and a taper,
And, whether seas be calm or ruff,
Go serching for the gold and stuff.
May he be happy in his quest
And of vast forchune be possessed!

(Sined) SILAS THE SMUGGLER.
The Yeer of Grace, 1791."

Their was a stony silense when Jack Jolly had finished reeding the doggrel.

Tubby Tubbs gave a woop of delite, and Billy Burke danced two and fro.

"This is grate news, and no mistaik!" said Tubby. "No longer shall we be stony and on the rox. We'll go and find this berried trezzure, and share the spoyles, and be rich for life!"

"Here, here!" cride Billy Burke.

"We will set 4th this very nite!" said Jack Jolly. "We can borro a spade and a pick-acks from the woodshed. We won't take a taper, as Silas the Smuggler suggests, bekwase it wood blow out. We'll take an elektric torch."

"Good!"

(Continued on page 12.)

[Supplement ii.]



By MARK LINLEY.

"L AY my tea!"
 "I won't!"
 "You jolly well will!"
 "I jolly well won't!"

This bright, snappy dialogue took place in Bolsover major's study in the Remove passage.

Bolsover, cricket-stump in hand, stood glaring at Tubb of the Third, and Tubb stood glaring at Bolsover.

There was a breathless pause. Then there was a further rapid fire of conversation.

"Lay my tea, I tell you!"

"Rats!"

"I'll give you one minute!"

"Yah! Go and fry your face!"

Now, it was very wrong of young Tubb to tell Bolsover major to damage his countenance in that way. Bolsover's face was far from handsome as it was. If he attempted to fry it, the result would be painful both for Bolsover and for anyone who chanced to look at him.

But if Tubb was in the wrong, Bolsover was doubly so. He had no right to command the fag to lay his tea. Members of the Remove Form are not entitled to fag anybody. It was like Bolsover's cheek to lay down the law in this way as if he were a Sixth-Former, and a prefect to boot.

The bully of the Remove glanced at his watch.

"Time's up!" he said grimly.

Tubb glanced wildly round the apartment. Bolsover major was standing with his back to the door, and the window was closed. There was no escape.

Then, almost before the fag could realise what was happening Bolsover seized him and swung him on to the table, face downwards.

The cricket-stump was then brought into play.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yow-ow-ow!" roared Tubb. "Drop it, you beastly bully!"

Bolsover continued to wield the cricket-stump with great vigour. He was in a towering rage, and he did not realise how hard he was hitting.

Tubb shouted for help, but none came. It was a half-holiday, and nearly everybody was out on the cricket-field.

Bolsover administered seven or eight strokes. Then he paused, with stump uplifted.

Tubb slipped down from the table, and rolled over on the carpet.

The fag's face was very white, and the sight of it brought Bolsover to his senses.

What had he done?

His anger melted away in an instant. He tossed the cricket-stump into a corner, and knelt down beside Tubb.

"I—I say, kid, I'm sorry! I—"

"Go away!" moaned Tubb.

"I—I forgot myself," muttered the bully of the Remove.

With an effort, Tubb tottered to his feet, and moved to the door.

Bolsover looked alarmed.

"Where are you going, kid? You're not going to tell one of the beaks that I lammed you?"

"It would serve you jolly well right if I did!" said Tubb. "But I sha'n't do that. I'm going away—right away! I'm going to clear out of this!"

The next instant the fag was gone!

Bolsover made no effort to stop him. He dropped into a chair, genuinely remorseful.

"What a brute I am!" he muttered. "I should never have lammed the kid like that in cold blood. But I was in such a paddy that I didn't know what I was doing. Hope he's not going to give me away. But he said he wouldn't, and he's not a sneak. What did he mean by saying he was going right away, I wonder?"

For half an hour Bolsover remained in his study. He was left to prepare his own tea;

Supplement iii.]

but after doing so, he found he had no appetite for it. He put on his cap, and decided to go for a stroll.

He set out without any fixed destination in view, and presently found himself wandering along the seashore at Pegg.

Bolsover sauntered along aimlessly, with his hands in his pockets, and with a frowning brow.

The affair of young Tubb preyed on his mind, and made him feel strangely uneasy. Somehow he felt that he had not heard the last of it.

Suddenly he came upon a heap of garments lying beside one of the rocks upon which the tide never encroached.

They were Eton clothes, and Bolsover glanced at them curiously.

There was a jacket, a pair of trousers, a shirt, a waistcoat, a collar and tie, a pair of shoes and socks, and a cap—a Greyfriars cap.

"Some kid having a dip, I suppose," murmured Bolsover.

He gazed out to sea, but there was no sign of a swimmer. He looked ahead of him and behind him, to the right and to the left. But there was no human being in sight.

Then a sudden fear laid hold of him, and he trembled from head to foot.

What had happened?

Had a tragedy occurred?



In the last pocket in the jacket, Bolsover came upon a letter. He glanced at the handwriting on the top of the sheet. It read: "The time has come for me to say good-bye!"

Had the owner of these clothes got out of his depth, and been carried away by the tide?

Bolsover stooped down, and picked up the cap, his hand shaking violently as he did so. Some initials appeared on the lining.

They were "G. T."

"George Tubb!"

Bolsover uttered the name in panic-stricken tones.

He remembered Tubb's words: "I'm going away, right away!" What did they portend?

Had the fag, in a fit of acute depression, waded into the sea and abandoned himself to the mercy of the waves?

Surely not! If that had been the case, why should he have removed his clothes?

Moved by a sudden impulse, Bolsover began to go through the pockets.

He brought to light a penknife, a slab of very sticky toffee, and a few coppers.

The knife, the toffee, and the coins were welded together in a lump.

The last pocket Bolsover came to was the breast-pocket of the jacket. Here he found a solitary sheet of paper.

There was some handwriting on the top of the sheet. Bolsover glanced at it, and then his head seemed to grow dizzy.

For this is what he read:

"The time has come for me to say good-bye!"

That was all.

The ominous sentence confirmed Bolsover's worst fears.

Tubb had gone into the sea, and had not come out of it!

Bolsover suffered agonies of mind as he stood there, with the sheet of paper clutched in his hand.

He was responsible for this—he, and no other. He had driven Tubb to take this terrible step.

The bully's feelings at that juncture could be better imagined than described. In that one moment he suffered unspeakable mental torture.

Again he scanned the sea, but there was no sign of a swimmer. He had arrived too late to frustrate Tubb's desperate scheme.

What was he to do now?

How could he go back to Greyfriars and face all the fellows? How could he explain that he, Percy Bolsover, was responsible for this tragedy?

No; he could not bear the thought of returning to the school—of being the bearer of such tragic tidings.

"I must bolt!" he muttered. "I can't face this out! Heaven help me! It was my beastly temper that led up to this!"

Suddenly a merry laugh rang out. Then came a whole chorus of boyish laughter.

Bolsover swung round.

Three figures had just emerged from one of the caves. Two of them were Paget and Bolsover minor. The third was George Tubb!

Bolsover drew a deep, sobbing breath of relief.

The worst had not happened, after all!

Tubb was attired in a bathing-costume, over which he wore a rainproof coat. The other two were in Etons.

"Where—where have you kids sprung from?" gasped Bolsover.

"We've been having a feed in one of the smugglers' caves," explained Paget. "We brought a spirit-stove with us, and brewed our own tea. It was ripping!"

"Here, what are you doing with my manuscript?" demanded Tubb, snatching the sheet of paper from Bolsover's grasp.

"Your—your manuscript?" echoed Bolsover faintly.

"Yes; that's the beginning of a short story I'm writing for 'Billy Bunter's Weekly.'"

"Oh, my hat!"

"It starts off with a fellow leaving school," said Tubb. "The opening sentence is awfully thrilling. 'The time has come for me to say good-bye!'"

Bolsover laughed aloud. He could afford to laugh now. He saw that he had been a prey to morbid imaginings. But the events of the afternoon had certainly taught him a lesson.

"I suppose you kids couldn't do with another feed?" said Bolsover suddenly.

"Eh? Not half!" said Bolsover minor. "But you're pullin' our legs, Percy, surely? It isn't like you to stand anybody a feed."

"I'm going to stand you one now, anyway," said Bolsover.

And he kept his word. He accompanied the three fags to the bunshop in the village, and stood them a right royal spread.

Tubb & Co. were amazed at this unexpected generosity. They could not understand it. But they would have understood had they known of the ghastly nightmare through which the bully of the Remove had passed only a short time since.

Bolsover had learnt his lesson. And it is extremely unlikely that he will interfere with Tubb of the Third in future!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 705.

THE SERCH FOR BERRIED TREZZURE!

(Continued from page 10.)

That nite, when the skool was rapped in slumber, the three chums set out on there quest.

The shades of nite were falling fast, as threw the skool quadrangle passed, a trio armed with pick and spade; and not a scrapp of noyse they maid! (You seem to have made a mistake, young Nugent. This isn't our Special Verse Number!—Ed.)

The tall, hansom figgers of our heroes were soon swallowed up in the darkness.

On there way to the shore they met a cuple of masters, a prefeckt, and the villidge constable. They laid out the whole jolly lot, and reeched there destination without misshap.

It was very dark and gloomy in the smugglers' cave. But Jack Jolly flashed on his cleektric torch, and flooded the plaice with lite.

"Now we will get bizzy," he said. "Tubby can digg, and you, Billy, can weeld the pick-acks. And I will hold the lite, and sooper-viso the proseedings."

Tubby Tubbs and Billy Burke took off there jackitts, rolled up there sleeves, and got to bizzy. They pug and dicked—I meen, they dug and picked, for an hour, but there labers met with no reward.

"Come and have a tern with the spade, Jack!" panted Tubby. "I'm fagged out! Karn't you see the inspiration streamng down my face?"

Jack Jolly larfed.

"Carry on with the good work, Tubby!" he said. "The eggsertion will remove sum of yore sooperfluuous fatt!"

Tubby kontinewed to dig, and prezently he gave a shout as his spade struck against sumthing hard, and maid a metallick clink.

"The old oak chest!" he cride, in toans of rapcher.

But it was nuthing of the sort. It terned out to be an empty biskitt-tin, which sum-boddy had berried in the sand.

Tubby Tubbs through down his spade with a snort of disgussed.

"I'm annished!" he eggscialmed. "I've been digging for a sollid hour, and all I find is a tin which wunce kontained patter-cake biskitts!"

"Carry on a bit longer!" erved Jack Jolly. "Go on digging till dorn, and your efforts will be rewarded."

Even as Jack spoke, a krushing kallamity occurred.

The water came rushing into the cave, untill our heroes stood waste-high in it.

"Oh crumms!" gasped Billy Burke. "We forgott all about the tide, you felloes! It's coming in fast, and we shall be drowned!"

"Help!" groned Tubby Tubbs. "I had a sort of sinking feeling before we started, owing to lack of nurrishment. But I've got a worse sort of sinking feeling now!"

For wunce in a way Jack Jolly's curridge failed him. He was shaken with horse sobbs, and started crying for his mother.

By this time the water was up to there nex. They were in a terribul preddicment.

Deth stared them in the face.

The water was up to there eyes now, and only there hare was visible.

"Help!" gergled Jack Jolly.

Wood help arrive in time, or wood our heroes be food for fishes?

Wood they ever live to tell the tail of there serch for berried trezzure?

These berring queschans, deer reeders, will be ausered in neckst weak's instalment. (They jolly well won't!—Ed.)

(NOT to be continued!)

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 705.



BY BOB CHERRY.

W HATEVER you happen to say to Alonzo Todd, he takes it literally. You know what I mean. Bol-sover major once told him, in a moment of wrath, to "Go and chop chips." Alonzo promptly went along to the woodshed, picked up a chopper, and got on with the job!

On another occasion, somebody requested Alonzo to "Go and eat coke!" We found him in the coal-ceilar half an hour later manfully endeavouring to masticate a large lump of coke! (That yarn is like the soup we get in hall, Bob. It takes some swallowng!—Ed.)

Well, to come to my story. The other afternoon Skinner of the Remove wanted to go over to Courtfield to see a theatre matinee. But he was stony broke. In despair, Skinner sent a note to Alonzo Todd.

"My dear Lonzy,—I am on the rocks! Come to my rescue quickly, there's a good chap!—Yours, HAROLD SKINNER."

Skinner knew that Alonzo was pretty flush, and he hoped the Duffer of the Remove would turn up trumps with half-a-crown.

On receipt of Skinner's note, Alonzo turned quite pale.

"Oh dear!" he exclaimed. "This is truly terrible! Poor Skinner is on the rocks. I must hasten to his assistance!"



Alonzo attempted to land, but the rocks were so slippery that he lost his foothold and toppled back into the sea.

Putting on his cap, Alonzo hurried from his study, and ran down to the school gates. "Whither bound, Louzy?" inquired Harry Wharton, who was chatting with his chums in the gateway.

"I am about to save poor Skinner from an untimely end!" said Alonzo dramatically. "Do not impede me, my dear fellows, or I may be too late!"

We stared at Alonzo in blank amazement. "My hat!" gasped Nugent. "What's happened to Skinner?"

"He is on the rocks! I must hurry, or the tide may come in and submerge him!"

Alonzo ran on at a speed which was most remarkable for an unathletic person like himself.

"There's going to be some fun!" chuckled Johnny Bull. "Let's follow him up!"

We sped off in Skinner's wake.

"I suppose Skinner isn't really in danger?" I panted, as we ran.

"Of course not!" said Wharton. "He's pulling Lonzy's leg. I expect."

Alonzo ran all the way to the shore. There he halted, pumping in breath, and anxiously scanning the distant ridge of rocks which rose above the water.

"I see no sign of Skinner!" he murmured. "But it is possible he is on the far side of the rocks, in which case he will be hidden from view."

There was a boat lying at the water's edge. Alonzo promptly pushed it off, and jumped in. He drenched his shoes, and the lower

portion of his "bags" in doing so, but he ignored this trivial detail.

Picking up the oars, Alonzo pulled out to sea.

He was a poor oarsman, and he sent up a torrent of water sufficient to drown a whale. (First time I knew that a whale could drown!—Ed.)

Alonzo's face was flushed with his exertions, and it was drenched with perspiration and salt spray.

The Duffer of the Remove fully believed that a human life was at stake, and he rowed his hardest. But Alonzo's hardest was not sufficient to make the boat leap through the water. It simply crawled along.

At last, after what seemed an age, Alonzo reached the ridge of rocks. He attempted to land, but the rocks afforded a very slippery foothold, with the result that Alonzo slid backwards, and toppled into the sea!

"Oh, my hat!" sobbed Frank Nugent. "This is the best entertainment I've seen for whole terms!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

As soon as he came to the surface, Alonzo grabbed hold of the side of the boat, and attempted to board her, but in vain. He remained clinging there, shouting frantically for help.

Fortunately, there was another boat available on the shore.

Harry Wharton jumped into it, and we pushed him off. He rowed vigorously to the assistance of the unfortunate Alonzo.

That guileless youth was nearly exhausted by the time Wharton got to him.

The captain of the Remove seized Alonzo and hauled him into the boat. Then he made the other boat fast to his own by means of a piece of rope, and started to row back to the shore.

"One moment, my dear fellow!" said Alonzo. "We have not found Skinner!"

"Skinner isn't here, you ass!"

"Then he must have fallen into the sea, and been drowned. He sent me an urgent message to the effect that he was on the rocks!"

Wharton was so overcome with merriment that he was obliged to rest on his oars.

"Oh, you ass! Oh, you innocent duffer! You'll be the death of me! If Skinner was really stranded on these rocks, how could he have sent you a message?"

"Oh dear! I—I hadn't thought of that!"

"What Skinner meant was that he was broke—stony—on the rocks—and that he wanted you to come to the rescue with a loan!" said Wharton.

"Dear me! Then I have taken all this trouble for nothing?"

"That's so. It's your own fault for taking things too literally."

Wharton rowed on, and landed his drenched passenger without mishap.

Alonzo Todd bore the appearance of a drowned rat. We assisted him back to Greyfriars, where he had a hot bath and a brisk rub-down, to avoid getting a chill.

On emerging from the bath-room, Alonzo bumped into Skinner.

"Well," said that youth, "can you come to my rescue, Lonzy?"

"I have been to your rescue once, Skinner," was the reply, "and I got exceedingly damp in the process. I decline to give you any further assistance!"

And Alonzo passed on, leaving Skinner wondering what on earth he was talking about!

The next time Skinner finds himself "on the rocks," he will realise the futility of sending an appeal for help to Alonzo Todd!

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Our Special Representative, not having recovered from the shock of his interview last week with Bob Cherry, is unable to contribute to this issue. He will hob up again next week with another screamingly funny interview!—Ed.

[Supplement iv.]

The Secret of the Caravan!

(Continued from page 8.)

"We've done it beautifully. Coker will be at least five minutes."

"At least!" assented Greene.

"Buck up!"

The hurried walk became a run. Potter and Greene arrived rather breathlessly at the railway station. They took their tickets and sped to the platform. With a full minute to spare they arrived there, and the train came snorting in. The few seconds that elapsed before it started again seemed like whole minutes to Potter and Greene. But the train moved out at last.

Potter leaned back comfortably in his seat.

"Just think, Greeney!" he said dreamily. "We sha'n't see old Coker again before next term at Greyfriars! Just think!"

"Seems too jolly good to be true, don't it!" said Greene.

It was several minutes after the train had left the station that Horace Coker came out of the cycle-shop, wheeling a machine, followed by a man wheeling two other machines. He looked round for Potter and Greene. He did not see them.

"Silly owls!" said Coker. "Wandering away, of course! I warned them not to get lost! I shall have to hunt round the town for them. I'll come back for those machines."

Coker did hunt round the town for them. He had been hunting for about an hour when the truth dawned upon him, trickling slowly, as it were, into his mighty brain.

"They've gone!" he ejaculated.

He realised it. His faithless followers had deserted him, and he was left on his own—on his lonesome own! Coker's feelings were almost too deep for words, but not quite. He found some words to express his feelings as he ambled off to the railway-station, with a faint hope of catching the deserters there. But they were far away, and Coker did not even know whether Potter had gone home with Greene, or whether Greene had gone home with Potter—or, indeed, whether they had gone home at all. Horace Coker thought it out as the dusk deepened, and he finally decided that he had better go home himself, mentally promising his chums a terrific time when he met them next term at Greyfriars. Horace Coker went home, and his Aunt Judy, at least, was very glad to see him. Aunt Judy was always glad to see her dear Horace. As Potter had remarked to Greene, and as Greene had remarked to Potter, there was no accounting for tastes.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The Mystery of the Caravan!

"**N**OTHING doing!" remarked Bob Cherry.

"It's jolly queer!" said Wharton.

And Hurree Janset Ram Singh remarked justly that the queerfulness was terrific.

The Greyfriars caravanners had camped in a meadow near the pleasant town of Ashford. It was a sultry evening, and they dispensed with a camp-fire. Bunter—useful for once—had done the cooking on the oil-stove. As there were six in

the party, Bunter had cooked enough for ten. But there was not likely to be much left over when William George Bunter had finished.

While the Owl of the Remove was still champing, the Famous Five had set to work on the van. They turned it out from end to end, searching every nook and corner of it. They even searched over the roof and under the floor. That the green caravan held some secret they were quite certain. It was obvious that the pursuit of Stokes and Rabbit could mean only that one thing. Somewhere in the caravan was concealed something that the two rascals were after—or, at least, Messrs. Stokes & Rabbit believed that the "something" was concealed there. They had searched the van while it was in their possession, without success, which showed that the something was well hidden, if it was there; that there was some secret recess, unknown to them, but the existence of which they knew. It was a really amazing mystery, and the chums of Greyfriars were keen to get to the bottom of it.

But the search, thorough as it was, was wholly a failure. There was no sign of a secret recess to be discovered, no indication that there was anything out of the common about the caravan.

The juniors gave it up at last, and discussed the matter over their evening cocoa.

"There's some story about this van that we don't know," Harry Wharton remarked thoughtfully. "Lazarus must know it; he bought the van. We want to get it from Mr. Lazarus. One of us has got to bike back to Courtfield for the bags and the bike. And then—"

"Good idea!" said Bob Cherry. "The stuff can be brought on the railway to Ashford, and picked up here. We don't want to roll the old bus back."

Wharton nodded.

"You fellows keep in camp here, and I'll get off by the earliest train in the morning," he said. "Only keep a jolly good look-out. I fancy we've thrown those rotters off our track, but they may be keeping it up."

"We'll handle them all right if they come nosing around," said Bob.

And the caravanners put up the tent and turned in.

Bright and early in the morning the captain of the Remove walked into Ashford, and ere long the train landed him in Courtfield. He hastened at once to Mr. Lazarus' shop in the High Street.

The old gentleman greeted him with his usual shiny smile.

"Goot-morning, Master Wharton! There is nozzing wrong with the van?"

"Not at all!" said Harry. "It's a topping van, and we've got a good horse—(thanks to Coker. But I want to know some more about that van, Mr. Lazarus, and I want you to tell me. Where did you bag it?"

Mr. Lazarus hesitated.

"That van has been great troubles to me," he said. "I am shorry that I ever bought it. I sell him again at vunce when you shentlemens have done with him. Tree times thumbody try to steal him while I have him here in my shed."

"And they've tried since," said Harry. "There are two rascals after the van now we've got it."

Mr. Lazarus started.

"My cootness!" he exclaimed.

"They seem to think that there is something hidden in the van—something they want to find," explained Wharton. "Now, we want to know all

about the dashed thing. Whom did the van belong to before you had it?"

Mr. Lazarus considered for a moment or two.

"I vill tell you, Master Wharton," he said at length. "I bought the van rather sheap—in fact, ferry sheap. It belonged to a man who is now in prisons."

"Oh!" ejaculated Wharton.

"I do not tell my gustomers that," said Mr. Lazarus, with a smile. "Perhaps they shall not like to hire a van that belong to a teef, vat? But it is a very good van, and I let him to you very sheap. It does not hurt you that it belonged to Captain Flash."

"Captain Flash!" repeated Wharton. "Ye gods, what a name!"

"He was one big rogue," said Mr. Lazarus, shaking his head. "He travel round the country in that van, like one gentleman of leisure—he pay big price to have that van built for him—very free-handed shentleman with his money—vat? The police nab him and he go to prisons a few mont' ago. He burgled a house thumwhere, and the polithe men found all the stuff in the van. Captain Flash go to prisons, and thum relation of his get the van, and sell it—sheap. That is all, Master Wharton."

Wharton wrinkled his brows.

It was easy for him to guess that Stokes and the Rabbit were, in some way, pals or confederates of the cracksmen who had used the van on his lawless expeditions. But he was still puzzled.

"You say the police found the stolen stuff in the van?" he asked.

"Yes, thilver plate from a big mansion," said Mr. Lazarus.

"They found all of it?"

"Thertainly!"

"There wasn't any missing—any that might have been hidden in a secret place in the van?"

Mr. Lazarus grinned.

"I shink not," he answered. "The polithe were satisfied. I have not heard that anything was mithing."

"And that's all you know about it?" asked Harry.

"That is all."

"But those two rogues who tried to get hold of the van," said Harry. "They must have had some connection with Captain Flash, as you call him."

"Yeth, I think so. I think they wanted the van to use like the captain, in his time. Very utheful thing, a caravan, to a gang of burglars," said Mr. Lazarus, with a nod. "That wath their game."

"That wouldn't account for their searching it," said Harry. "And, besides, if they only wanted to steal a caravan to travel in, they wouldn't be so keen on this special van—any one would do for them."

Mr. Lazarus shrugged his shoulders. Apparently he gave the problem up. A customer came into the shop, and Mr. Lazarus was called upon to supply him with a second-hand coat, so Harry Wharton gave it up. As he left, the customer was trying on the coat, and Mr. Lazarus was helping him, and assuring him that it fitted him "like ze paper on ze wall." The Greyfriars junior returned to the station, sorted out the baggage from the left-luggage office, and took the train for Ashford again.

He was still puzzled over the mystery of the green caravan, but Mr. Lazarus' story had made matters somewhat clearer.

Arrived at Ashford, he found a vehicle to convey the bags and the bicycle to the caravan camp in the meadow.

He arrived in time for the midday meal. There was a pleasant scent of

cooking in the camp. William George Bunter was busy with a large saucepan on the oil-stove, with an expression of beatific satisfaction on his fat face. Cooking was one of the few things that Bunter could do well, and by common consent he had been nominated cook to the party.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here you are again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Just in time for grubber. That stew done, Bunter?"

"Just on," said Bunter, taking it off the stove, and bringing it up to the waiting juniors.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Convincing Bunter!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. did full justice to Bunter's stew—which certainly was good. It was some compensation for Bunter's presence in the caravanning party; the juniors agreed on that. Over dinner the captain of the Remove related what he had learned from Mr. Lazarus.

"That accounts for it," said Cherry. "Those two rogues think that the merry captain left some plunder hidden in the van when he was taken by the police. That's what they're after."

"Only it seems that all the plunder was captured when Captain Flash was captured," said Harry.

"I suppose they'd know if they got it all," said Bob, puzzled. "I—I suppose Stokes would know, too. It's jolly odd."

"If I may make a suggestive remark to—" murmured Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You may make a suggestion, if that's what you mean, you image!" said Bob Cherry.

"That is my esteemed meanfulness, my worthy Bob. Is it not possible that the excellent and dishonest captain may have made some ridiculous robbery that the police do not know about, and may have hidden the esteemed proceeds."

"Oh!" said Bob.

"By Jove, Inky's hit it!" exclaimed Wharton. "The rotter hid something in

the van from an earlier robbery, and the police know nothing at all about it."

"Phew!"

"And it's still there!" exclaimed Nugent.

"Well, I mean, Stokes and Rabbit think so," said Harry. "That's what they're after. They knew the captain had a secret hiding-place in the van, and they think there is something still hidden in it. Something left from years ago, perhaps, that the police don't suspect. They must have searched the van when the captain was nabbed, but as they found what they were looking for, they were satisfied."

"My hat!" ejaculated Bob, staring towards the green caravan. "And—and there may be something jolly valuable in our giddy van at this blessed minute."

"We've searched it very thoroughly," said Johnny Bull soberly. "More likely those two rogues are on a false scent. They think there's something there, and there isn't."

"That's possible, of course," said Harry thoughtfully. "But it's possible, all the same, that something small and valuable is hidden in some little recess—secret, of course—"

"I say, you fellows!" Billy Bunter stopped eating, with a dumpling poised on his fork. His little round eyes glittered with excitement behind his oig spectacles. "I say, if we find anything valuable in that van, it's ours, you know."

"Fathead!" said Wharton. "If there's anything there, it's stolen property, and if we came on it, it would have to be handed over to the police at once."

"What utter rot!" exclaimed Bunter warmly. "Findings' keepings, you know."

"You fat bounder!" growled Bob. "I'll give you findings' keepings! You'll be finding somebody's watch soon, in somebody's pocket."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"If we find anything in the van, of course it will be given up at once," said Harry. "But—"

"For goodness' sake don't be an ass, Wharton!" said Bunter peevishly. "Findings are keepings. If I find any-

thing, I'm jolly well going to keep it. Might be worth hundreds of pounds! I'll tell you what—let's have an accident with the van—"

"What?"

"Smash it up!" said Bunter. "Then if there's a secret hiding-place in it, we're bound to find it."

"And who's going to pay a hundred and fifty quid for the van, if we smash it up?" bawled Bob Cherry.

"Well, it could be an accident! Roll it down a hill, or something, and make out it was an accident!" suggested Bunter cheerfully.

"You—you—" gasped Bob.

"Well, I think it's a jolly good idea," said Bunter. "You fellows haven't much brains, I must say."

"If we had an accident with the van, it would have to be paid for all the same, you owl!" said Nugent.

"We could get out of that," said Bunter, blinking at him. "We're minors, you know—under age. They couldn't stick us for damages, could they? Old Lazarus would have to sue our people. They could get out of it. And if we found anything, we could keep it—see?"

The Famous Five blinked at the cheerful Owl. Bunter's ideas on the subject of "meum and tuum" had always been rather mixed. But this was the limit, in the opinion of the Greyfriars caravanners. Bob Cherry rose to his feet with the air of a fellow about to carry out a painful duty.

"I won't argue with you, Bunter, old top!" he said. "But you've got to learn to keep your paws from picking and stealing."

"Look here— Yaroooop!"

Bob Cherry seized the fat junior by the back of his collar and jerked him over.

As Bunter had just helped himself to a plateful of stew, and had it on his fat knees, the result was rather disastrous.

Bunter sprawled on his back, and the stew sprawled on Bunter.

"Groooooch!" spluttered the Owl of the Remove. "Oh! Ow—ooooch! Grooogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Are findings still keepings?" asked Bob.

"Groogh—oh—ow—yes—oooooch!"

Bob picked up a potato, and squeezed it into Bunter's collar. The potato was hot.

"Findings still keepings?" he asked.

"Yaroooh! No!"

"Good!" said Bob. "You're learning to be honest already, Bunter! Findings ain't keepings, my fat pippin, when you find other people's property! Catch on?"

"Yurrrggggghh!"

"If you ever have any further doubts on the subject, apply to me," added Bob. "I'm going to convince you before I'm finished!"

Apparently, Billy Bunter had no further doubts on the subject—he was convinced! Bob Cherry's methods were calculated to carry rapid conviction.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

No Luck!

"O H dear!" That ejaculation came from Billy Bunter a couple of hours later, as the caravanners walked with the van up a green hill.

Bunter had been walking with a sour face. He did not like walking. He could cook, and he could eat, and he could sleep, but there his accomplishments ended. Walking was not in his



Billy Bunter squatted heavily in the grass beside the lane. "Now shell out what you found in the caravan," snapped Bob Cherry. "Here it is!" shouted Frank Nugent as he saw the box in Bunter's pocket. He jerked it out and the juniors gathered round eagerly. (See Chapter 12.)

line all. And what the thump, Bunter wanted to know, was the good of having a caravan at all, if a fellow was going to walk all the time? But it was not only slackness that caused Bunter to desire very keenly to ride in the caravan. He had another reason now—a reason that he kept very carefully to himself.

He plodded on. He was not so fit as the other caravanners: he ate and slacked too much to be very fit at the best of times. And when the hilltop was passed, and a long slope of several miles lay before the van, the vanners took compassion on him.

“Roll aboard, tubby,” said Bob Cherry. “You can slack downhill. I’ll yank you out when we get on the level again!”

Bunter was not slow to take advantage of the permission. He jumped with unusual activity into the caravan, and, to the surprise of the juniors, closed the door after him. It was a hot afternoon, and it was decidedly stuffy in the van with the door closed.

“Ain’t you afraid of suffocating, old bean?” called out Bob Cherry.

“I’m going to have a nap,” answered Bunter.

He closed the two windows of the caravan.

“Well, my hat!” said Bob, with a stare. “The silly owl will melt at that rate. I say, Bunter, ain’t you afraid of running away in tallow?”

“Yah!”

The caravan rolled on gently down the sloping road. The juniors walked cheerfully. Nugent clambered into the driver’s seat. And Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, remarking that it was as wellful to take a rest while the van was going downhill, opened the door to step in.

Then he uttered an ejaculation.

“My esteemed hat!”

“What’s the row?” asked Bob.

“The excellent Bunter——”

Bob looked into the van.

William George Bunter had stated that he was going to have a nap. But he did not look like it.

In his shirt-sleeves, pouring with perspiration, the Owl of the Remove was squirming round the hot and stuffy van, searching!

What he was searching for, the juniors did not need telling.

“You fat rotter!” roared Bob.

Bunter scrambled up, and blinked out of the doorway.

“I—I say, you fellows——”

“What are you looking for?” demanded Wharton.

“I—I’ve dropped a sovereign——”

“A what?”

“I mean, a pound-note—that is, a gold stud—I mean, a sleeve-link!” stammered Bunter. “Just looking for it, that’s all! You fellows needn’t worry. I don’t want you to help me!”

“I’m going to help you, all the same!” said Bob, jerking himself into the van. “I’m going to help you out, you fat rascal. If you’d found anything hidden in the van, you weren’t going to tell us——”

“Oh, really, Cherry——”

“Outside!” roared Bob.

“I—I say——”

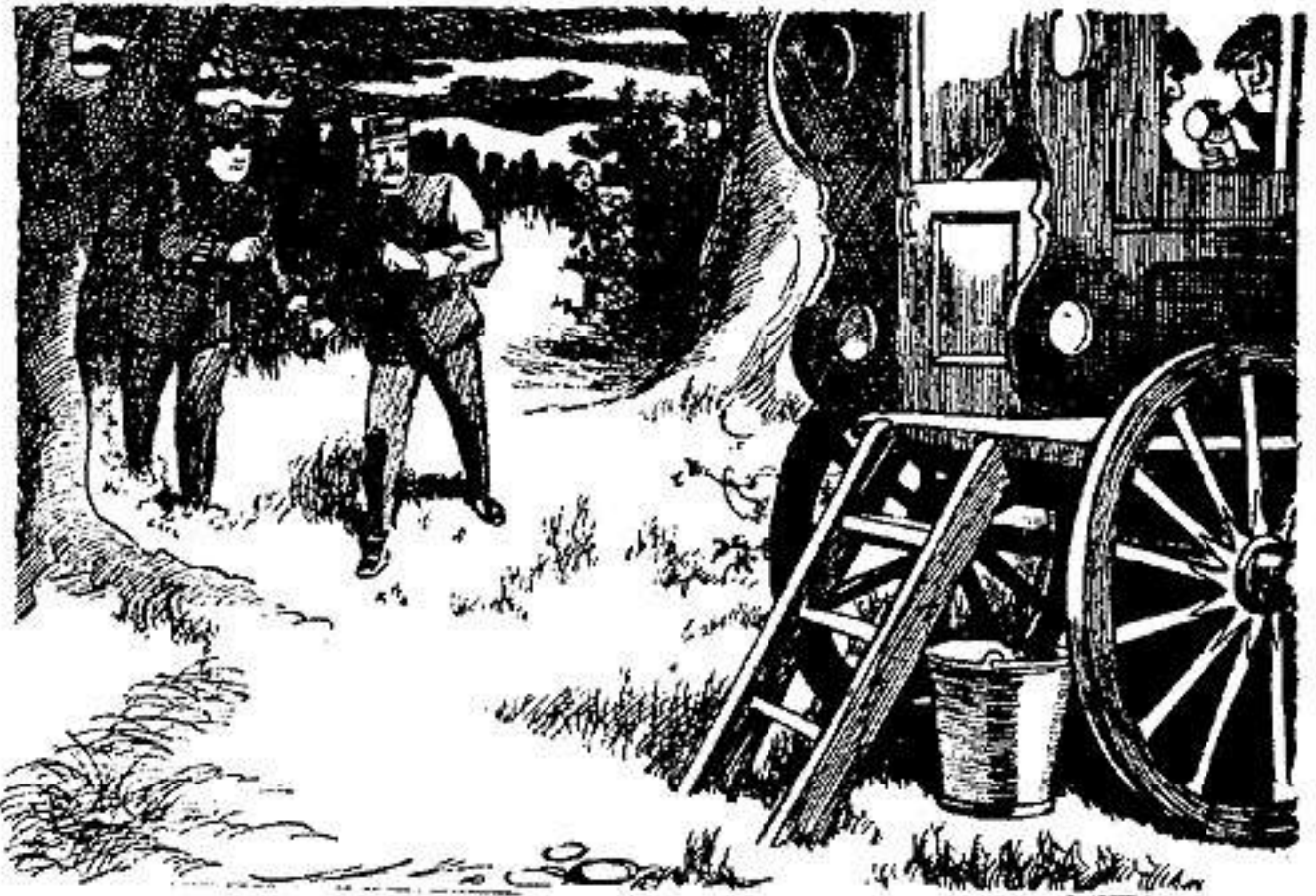
“Stand clear while I sling him out, you fellows! Now, Bunter, let’s get hold of your ears!”

“Yah! Beast!”

Bunter jumped out of the van without assistance.

“Look here, I’m not going to walk, you beasts!” he roared.

“Suit yourself!” said Bob. “You’re not coming into the van. Haven’t I



The inspector and his man entered the field and crossed quickly towards the caravan. The Famous Five followed them closely in the rear. A light was moving in the van and they saw the two ruffians were searching for something. (See Chapter 13.)

told you to keep your fat paws from picking and stealing?”

“I—I wasn’t——”

“Shut up!”

“Well, I’m going to find it if I can!” yelled Bunter. “If it’s worth anything, I’m jolly well going to keep it, too! Yah!”

“Then you’ll keep outside the van,” said Bob. “If there’s anything valuable hidden in this van, my fat tulip, you’re not going to get your thievish fingers on it, you—you fat jackdaw!”

“Oh, you rotter!” groaned Bunter.

And he took up his weary tramp behind the van again.

Billy Bunter’s temper grew worse and worse as the caravanners marched on to the next halt. He had no doubt that there was something of value hidden about the van somewhere—hidden there by Captain Flash before the worthy captain was caught by the police. And evidently Bunter intended to put into practice his theory that findings were keepings if he came upon the hidden valuables.

When the caravan halted at sundown, and permission was obtained from a farmer to camp in a field, Bunter dodged into the van again while the juniors were busy camping. He was quickly routed out to cook the supper. After supper, the tent was put up, and then Billy Bunter exercised some of his deep diplomacy.

“I say, you fellows, you keep on grumbling about my snoring,” he said.

“Well, it’s not what you’d call nice, is it?” asked Nugent.

“Well, I’ve been thinking,” said Bunter. “I don’t want to disturb you fellows; it’s a shame you should have to hear me snore!”

The Co. gazed silently at Bunter.

This kind of concern for their comfort was so new a thing in William George that they could not very well help being suspicious, as well as surprised.

“That’s a jolly good tent,” continued Bunter. “I’d really rather sleep in the tent, but I’ll let you fellows have it. What I suggest is that I should have the caravan to myself—there’s lots of room

for five in the tent. And nobody need use the other bunk. See? Then—then nobody will be worried by my snoring. I’m only thinking of you chaps, of course!”

“Well, my hat!” ejaculated Bob Cherry.

“You’re not thinking of searching the van while we’re not looking?” demanded Johnny Bull.

“Oh! Nunno! Never thought of anything of the kind, of course!”

“Bump him!” said Bob.

“Here, I say—— Yaroooh! Leggo!” roared Bunter.

The Owl of the Remove was duly bumped in the grass. Leaving him there to recover his breath, the juniors proceeded to give the van another search themselves. They were busily engaged when Bunter blinked in at the doorway on them.

“I say, you fellows, if you find it——”

“Shut up!” roared Bob.

The search was futile, as before. If there was a secret recess in the van it was very secret indeed. Bob Cherry gave a grunt as he jumped out.

“It’s all rot!” he declared. “I don’t believe there’s anything to be found; and I’m fed up with looking, anyhow. I’m going to turn in.”

Harry Wharton swept the darkening landscape with his eyes before turning in. He wondered whether Mr. Stokes and the Rabbit were keeping up the hunt for the caravan. But there was no sign of them to be seen. But the Greyfriars caravanners reckoned with the possibility, and they decided to keep a regular watch. And Billy Bunter offered generously to be the watchman, an offer that was rudely refused.

Night descended on the caravan camp, with the juniors taking it in turns to watch, and Billy Bunter’s deep snore echoing from the van. There was no alarm in the night. If Stokes and the Rabbit were tracking the van they were not at hand. And the Greyfriars caravanners turned out bright and early in the morning for another day’s march.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.**An Amazing Discovery!**

O H!" It was a gasp from William George Bunter.

Instinctively he stifled it.

He blinked hurriedly round.

It was two days later, and the caravan was in camp again on the slope of a sunny Surrey hill. During those two days the Co. had seen nothing of Mr. Stokes and the Rabbit, and they were fairly convinced by this time that the two ruffians were well off the track of the caravan, even if they were keeping up the pursuit. And in the many interests and activities of caravan life they had almost forgotten the supposed secret of the caravan.

The secret, if secret there was, was beyond them, and they dismissed the matter from their minds, and only smiled when Bunter, with an air of great caution that drew general attention to him at once, sneaked softly into the van to make a private search "on his own." But even Bunter had grown discouraged by failure at last, and had given the thing up.

And then it happened.

There was a blaze of sunset over the Surrey hills, and the Famous Five were chatting in the camp after supper. Billy Bunter had rolled into the caravan, but not to search for the supposed hidden valuables. He was tired of that. There had been jam-tarts at tea-time, and the Owl had hidden a few tarts away for his own special delectation, and it was the tarts he was now after.

He opened the little larder very quietly and reached for the bag of tarts he had thrust well back out of sight. It was rather dark in the van, and darker in the larder. But Bunter did not venture to strike a match. He did not want the other fellows to know about the tarts, and was blissfully unconscious of the fact that Bob Cherry had seen him hide the tarts, and had taken them away, and that they had already been disposed of internally by the Famous Five. Bob had not mentioned that little circumstance to Bunter, leaving the fat Owl to make the discovery for himself.

Bunter was groping blindly at the back of the little larder, his fingers feeling for the tarts that were not there, when there came a sudden click, and he jumped.

And then he gasped.

He forgot even the tarts at that thrilling moment as he blinked into the dusky recess.

In the woodwork a small panel had opened.

Bunter was not a quick thinker, but he understood what had happened. His blundering, groping fingers had touched, by sheer accident, a hidden spring in the wood, and the panel had clicked open; and it dawned upon him that by that accident he had discovered the secret of the caravan.

His fat heart thumped spasmodically.

He was fearful that the caravanners outside might have heard that sharp click, and he listened breathlessly.

"Bunter!" came Bob Cherry's voice.

Bunter quaked.

"I—I'm not here!" he gasped. "I—I mean——" It was a moment of anguish for the Owl of the Remove.

"Have you found the tarts?" bawled Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I—I——" stammered Bunter.

"If you find any, old bean, guzzle 'em!" roared Bob. "My idea is that

you won't. You see, I found them long ago."

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter breathed more freely. He did not mind the loss of the tarts. He was convinced that he had found something more valuable than jam-tarts.

Evidently the caravanners had not heard the click, and did not suspect what he had found.

Bunter blinked into the larder. The opened panel revealed a small orifice, evidently cut out of the solid woodwork. What was in it? Bunter's hand trembled as he groped in.

His fat fingers came into contact with something—he felt the outlines of a small box.

There was nothing else in the secret recess.

Bunter drew out the box and slipped it into his pocket. It was small—not more than six inches long, by two and by one. Then he closed the panel, and heard it click again.

Then he sat down to think.

He dared not open the box, lest any of the caravanners should look into the van while he was so engaged. But he was burning with eagerness to see what it contained.

He blinked from the window.

Harry Wharton & Co. were reposing in the grass six or seven yards from the caravan, discussing the morrow's route. Bob Cherry caught Bunter's face at the window, and gave him a nod and a grin.

"Found any tarts?" he called out.

"Yah!" replied Bunter.

He drew away from the window, and, feeling safe for a few minutes at least, he extracted the box from his pocket. There was no keyhole to it, but he found a protuberance, which he guessed worked a spring. He pressed it, and the lid flew up.

Then Bunter fairly gasped.

From the interior of the little box there came a blaze and a glitter. It was the blaze and glitter of diamonds.

Bunter knew little enough about precious stones, but he knew enough to know that he held a rich prize in his fat hand.

He stared at the diamonds as if fascinated.

There was a necklace curled up and a number of loose stones. They flashed and gleamed and glittered as the box shook in his hand. At least fifty diamonds were there, and at the lowest computation they were worth several pounds apiece.

Bunter breathed spasmodically.

He had found it!

This was the loot that Captain Flash had hidden in his van, and of which he had said no word when the police came suddenly down upon him and arrested him for a later robbery. Possibly the rascal hoped to get at the caravan later, when his sentence was up, and recover the hidden jewels. And certainly his confederates know, or suspected, that the diamonds were hidden in a secret place in the van. Bunter was aware now of what Mr. Stokes and the Rabbit were after.

And he had found it!

Findings were keepings, according to

William George Bunter's peculiar system of ethics.

He closed the box hastily and slipped it into his pocket again.

The necessity for caution was quite evident to Bunter. If the Co. knew of this discovery he knew what would happen—they would not even have sense enough to keep it dark and "whack out" the loot. Not that Billy Bunter had any desire to whack out his plunder. Findings were keepings; and he was going to keep what he had found.

He sat on the edge of the bunk and thought it out. Finally, with the little box safely out of sight in his pocket, he descended the steps of the caravan and approached the campers. Bob Cherry glanced at him.

"What the thump have you been up to all this time?" he asked. "Did you have any other tuck hidden, as well as the tarts, you porpoise?"

"Oh, really, Cherry——"

"He's been up to something," said Johnny Bull suspiciously. "He looks jolly guilty!"

"Oh, really, Bull——"

Harry Wharton rose to his feet.

"May as well turn in," he remarked.

"We're starting at dawn, you know."

"Hold on a minute, you fellows," said Bunter firmly. "I've got something to say to you!"

"It will keep!" said Wharton carelessly.

"It won't keep, Wharton."

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What's the giddy affair of importance that won't keep? Are you expecting a postal-order?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have you decided to pass the rest of the vacation with some of your titled and nobby relations, and are you going to leave us in the lurch?" asked Frank Nugent, laughing.

"Yes."

"Eh?"

"Yes," said Bunter firmly; "you've hit it, Nugent! I'm not treated properly in this party, and I'm going to leave you. It's no good begging me to stay. I refuse. All I want you fellows to do is to lend me the railway-fare home. I decline to stay another hour in this party!"

And the Owl of the Remove elevated his fat little nose, and bestowed a disdainful blink upon the astonished caravanners.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.**Bunter's Farewell!**

GREAT Scott!"

"Gammon!"

"Too much luck!"

"The luckfulness would be terrific!"

"Draw it mild, Bunter!"

Such were the comments of the Famous Five when they recovered their breath. Bunter's bombshell had amazed them for the moment. But the next, they realised that it was too good to be true.

But William George Bunter looked as if he were in earnest. His fat little nose went up higher, and his blink grew more disdainful and scornful. In his pocket, his fat hand rested on the box of diamonds—the hidden reason for his new and surprising attitude.

"I mean it!" he said loftily. "You haven't treated me with respect. You must admit that, I suppose?"

"Guilty, my lord!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've never really had enough to eat," continued Bunter.

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"Only the lion's share," chuckled Nugent. "You always load up past the Plimsoll-mark, I believe."

"I've been woke up early in the morning," said Bunter. "You know I don't want to get up till ten. You never let me have my sleep out."

"True, O king!"
"I've had to walk, when I've wanted to ride—"

"Right on the wicket," said Bob. "You have. And you'll have to go on doing it if you stick to this outfit."

"The go-onfulness will be terrific!" said Hurree Janset Ram Singh, with a nod.

"I refuse!" said Bunter. "I don't want to hurt you fellows' feelings, but I must say I'm disgusted at you!"

"My hat!"
"Your manners," continued Bunter, who was beginning to enjoy himself—

"your manners aren't exactly what I'm accustomed to among my own people—I may say among people of my own social status."

"Great pip!"
"I refused invitations from titled people to come with you caravanning," went on Bunter. "You remember how Lord Mauleverer urged me to go home with him for the vac—"

"Our memory isn't so good as yours, fatty," chuckled Bob. "We don't."

"I've had a pressing invitation from my pal D'Arcy, of St. Jim's, to visit him at Eastwood for the vac, too—"

"That's odd," remarked Nugent thoughtfully. "I've heard that D'Arcy is on a walking-tour this vac with Tom Merry and his crowd."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I—I mean—"

"Never mind what you mean, old barrel," said Bob. "The only thing that matters is, do you really mean to deprive us of your fascinating company, and withdraw the illumination of your countenance from this benighted outfit?"

Bunter nodded.

"I mean it!" he answered.

"Then I suggest a general vote of thanks," said Bob. "I never thought the time would come when I should feel grateful to you, Bunt. But I do now. Gratitude isn't the word."

Harry Wharton was surveying the fat junior with a perplexed expression.

"You really mean to go, Bunter?" he asked.

"Certainly!"
"But—" began Wharton.

Bunter waved a fat hand.

"No good begging me to stay!" he said. "The fact is, I've given you fellows as much of my time as I possibly can. A fellow whose company is sought after, like mine, has to be fair all round. I can't neglect my other numerous friends. I can't give all my time this vac just to a few. I really have to ration fellows, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Blessed if I see anything to cackle at! I'm off!" said Bunter.

"You must be—off your chump—fairly off!" said Bob Cherry, in wonder. "I'm dashed if I know of anybody who will stand you, excepting our noble selves."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

All the juniors were regarding Bunter very curiously.

The fat junior held out a podgy hand.

"I just want my railway-fare home," he said. "I'll return it to you when I've—I've—I mean, later. Don't think I'm going to be under any monetary obligation to you. I don't need to. I can manage on a couple of pounds."

"Worth it," said Bob, looking round.

"Hear, hear!"

"Yah!"

"Two pounds is cheap, if he really does a bunk," said Bob Cherry.

"I'm going to walk into Reigate this evening, and take the train," said Bunter. "I can get home to-night. I shall shake the dust of this camp from my feet!" he added dramatically.

"You'll blue the quids in a bunshop at Reigate, and then roll back, you mean," said Bob. "I know you!"

"Yes, rather!"

Bunter snorted angrily.

"I tell you I'm going!" he roared. "If I had any ready cash I'd have gone off before this, as soon as—as—"

"As what?"

"N-n-nothing! Look here! I'm waiting to start," said Bunter. "Will you lend me a couple of quid to get home or won't you?"

Harry Wharton's eyes were fixed on Bunter.

"Let's go into this a bit first," he said. "This is jolly odd. If you want to clear, Bunter, we'll stand your exes home, and be jolly glad to do it. But when did you decide on this?"

"Oh, I haven't been satisfied since I joined you!" said Bunter. "Besides, this caravanning is hardly up to my social standing, really. All very well for you fellows, of course."

"You've decided on it very suddenly," continued Wharton, in the same quiet tone. "You certainly hadn't any intention of going half an hour ago. It's since you've been rummaging about in the caravan that you've suddenly made up your mind to bolt."

"Oh!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Phew!" whistled Johnny Bull.

"I—I say—" stammered Bunter. He backed away a step or two, with a look of alarm on his fat face.

"Have you found anything in the caravan?" pursued Wharton, still with his keen eyes fixed on Bunter's face.

"Nunno! Certainly not!"

"My only hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, jumping up from the grass.

"That's it! The fat boulder has found whatever it is that was hidden, and he's going to bolt with it!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Shell out!" roared Bob wrathfully.

"I—I—"

"That's the only way I can account for

it," said Wharton, with a nod. "He has been rummaging in the van, and all of a sudden he decides to clear off after sticking to us like a leech!"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"He's found something," said Harry, with conviction.

"I—I haven't—"

"Shell out!" roared Johnny Bull.

"Sha'n't! I—"

"Then you have found something?"

"Nunno! Not at all! I—I've got nothing about me at this blessed minute—nothing at all!" gasped Bunter. "I—I—"

"Collar him!" said Bob. "Whatever it is, he's got it in his duds."

"Oh, crumbs!"
Bunter jumped back, and turned, and fairly ran for it. The caravanners gazed after him blankly for a moment or two.

Then, with a whoop, they rushed in pursuit. Bunter's sudden flight was proof enough that Wharton's surmise was correct.

Puffing and blowing, Billy Bunter tore across the field towards the lane, and hot on his track came the Famous Five, whooping. And as the whole party disappeared through a gap in the fence, into the lane, two slinking figures crept through a hedge near the camp, and stole towards the deserted caravan.

"Ere's our chance, Rabbit!" muttered Mr. Stokes. "Git in—git in, quick, you silly owl—afore they come back!"

"I'm arter you, Stokey!"

And the two ruffians jumped into the van. And then began a frantic search of the van—a search for the valuables that, at that moment, reposed in the pocket of the fleeing, panting William George Bunter!

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Not for Bunter!

"O W! Oh! Yow-ow!"
Billy Bunter gasped and spluttered wildly as he ran.

Bunter had never been a champion on the cinder-path. He had about as much chance, in a foot-race, against any member of the Famous Five, as a walrus would have had with a hare. But he was spurred on by sheer desperation. Considering the weight he had to carry, his speed was wonderful; and he had a start. He was out of the field, and racing up the lane towards Reigate, in record time; and, with a ringing whoop, the Famous Five came out into the lane after him. The juniors were not running their hardest—they were laughing too much for that. The sight of William George Bunter foot-racing roused their hilarity. But though they did not exert themselves, they gained fast on the Owl of the Remove.

Bunter was about two hundred yards up the lane, when a hand fell on his shoulder.

"Back pedal, old pippin!" said Bob Cherry.

"Yow-ow! Yah! Leggo!"

In desperation, Bunter swung round and hit out. Bob Cherry caught the fat fist on his chin, and that unexpected drive, with Bunter's weight behind it, sent Bob spinning. He sat down in the dust and roared.

Bunter panted on; but Wharton and Nugent had hold of him the next moment. He was dragged to a halt.

"Hold him!" panted Bob, as he



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scrambled up. "I'm going to slaughter him! I'm going to burst him! I—I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Leggo!" yelled Bunter, struggling wildly in the grasp of the juniors.

"You fat idiot!" roared Wharton. "Chuck it!"

"Leggo! Help!"
"Squat him down!"
"Yaroooh!"

Billy Bunter squatted heavily in the grass beside the lane. He sat there and panted for breath.

"Now shell out what you've found in the van!" snapped Bob Cherry, rubbing his chin. "If you weren't a helpless lump of fat, I'd give you the licking of your life for punching me! I've a jolly good mind to, anyhow."

"Yow! Ow! Lemme alone! I haven't found anything!"

"Up-end him, and drop it out!" suggested Johnny Bull.

"Good!"
"Yooooop!" roared Bunter, as his fat ankles were grasped, and he was up-ended in the grass.

Nothing dropped out; but the box, sagging in the fat junior's pocket, was clearly revealed.

"Here it is!" exclaimed Nugent.

He jerked out the box, and Bunter was allowed to roll into the grass again. The juniors gathered eagerly round the box.

"That knob opens it!" said Johnny Bull.

"My hat!"
"Diamonds!"

There were breathless exclamations from the Removites as the lid shot up, revealing the contents of the box.

"Phew!"
Bunter scrambled up.

"It's mine!" he yelled. "Gimme my box! Hand it over! It's mine, I keep on telling you!"

"You found it in the van!" howled Bob Cherry.

"I—I didn't! Those—those diamonds are heirlooms in my family!" gasped Bunter. "I—I carry them about with me for safety!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Now you understand!" gasped Bunter. "Now you just gimme me diamonds!"

"You crass idiot!" said Harry Wharton, in measured tones. "Can't you understand that if you stole these diamonds, you would be arrested and sent to chokey?"

"Oh, really, Wharton—"

"You fat clam!" said Bob, in disgust. "So you were going to steal them!"

"I wasn't!" howled Bunter. "Findings keepings! I—I mean, they're heirlooms—"

"Oh, shut up, you crass duffer!"

"Well, they're ours," said Bunter, perhaps feeling that the heirlooms story would not "wash," so to speak. "I—I found them. I'll let you fellows have some. That's fair."

"Do you really think we are thieves, too?" hooted Johnny Bull.

"Oh, really, Bull—"

"Thank goodness we collared the fat fool before he got away with them!" said Harry Wharton. "Bunter, you born idiot, don't you understand that these diamonds must have been stolen—"

"They're mine!"

"And the police will have a description of them—"

"Eh?"

"And anybody trying to sell them would be arrested!" snapped Wharton.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter. His fat jaw dropped. Evidently that very obvious consideration had not entered Bunter's mind.

"You can thank your lucky stars we stopped you," said Harry. "I suppose you can't understand that you're a dishonest little beast; but you can understand that thieves are sent to prison, I suppose?"

"Oh, dear!"

"Shut the box," said Harry. "We don't want anybody to see that lot, if possible. There's at least five hundred pounds' worth of stuff, if not a thousand or more—perhaps two or three thousand pounds."

"Phew!"
"I—I say, you fellows, we can't afford to lose all that!" mumbled Bunter.

"You fat chump! All you'd get for these diamonds would be skilly and the treadmill!"

"Ow!"
"Let's get rid of them at once!" said Wharton uneasily.

"It's dangerous having such things; we don't want to keep them in the camp overnight. Let's walk into Reigate, and hand them over to the police at once!"

"Yes, rather!"

"I—I say, you fellows—" protested Bunter feebly. "Fuf-fuf-findings are kik-kik-keepings, you know—Yaroooh!"

Bob Cherry's boot interrupted the fat junior.

"Now you get back to the camp, and keep an eye on the things while we trot into Reigate with this stuff," said Bob.

"We'll keep it dark that you were going to steal them, you fat rotter!"

"I—I say—"

"Kick him out!"

Two or three boots were at once forthcoming, and Billy Bunter was started on his way back to the camp.

He ran for it, yelling. His visions of ill-gotten wealth were gone from his gaze, like a beautiful dream. Which was certainly all the better for William George Bunter; for he had had a narrow escape of being sent to a reformatory, if he had only known it.

Harry Wharton & Co. walked at a good speed into Reigate, where they inquired their way to the police-station, and handed over the loot of "Captain Flash" to an astounded inspector. They were detained some time at the station, giving particulars of the discovery, and their names and addresses; and when they left, an inspector and a constable accompanied them to make a further investigation of the green caravan. It was deep dusk when they reached the caravan camp in the field; and there a surprise awaited them.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Lagged at Last!

"I SAY, you fellows—"
A fat figure crawled from the shadow of the fence as the juniors came up.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!"

"They're there!" mumbled Bunter.

"Eh? Who are where?"

"In the van!"

"My hat!"

Harry Wharton stared through the fence. The van was a good distance away across the field; from its open doorway, into the summer dusk, came

the gleaming of a light. Here was Bunter—but there was somebody in the van—somebody with a light—searching!

The Greyfriars juniors hardly needed telling who it was.

"Those two rogues!" muttered Bob Cherry.

"Stokes and Rabbit!"

"I saw them!" breathed Bunter. "I—I spotted them in the van, and bunked! I—I mean, I kept away to—to watch them and give the alarm. No good giving the alarm, you know. I—I hid under the fence—I mean, I took cover, and—"

"Dry up, Bunter, old top!" Harry Wharton turned to the inspector and the constable, who were watching the distant van very intently. In his explanation at the police-station, he had told about Mr. Stokes and the Rabbit. "Looks to me as if those two rascals are there," said Harry. "If it is—"

The inspector smiled grimly.

"If it is, we want them," he said. "They were associated with Captain Flash in the diamond robbery two years ago, from all appearances. It was a well-known case, though you young gentlemen don't seem to have heard of it at your school. You boys had better keep clear while we go on and deal with them."

Wharton closed one eye at his comrades as the inspector turned away, and spoke in a low tone to the constable. The Greyfriars fellows were not likely to keep clear while the caravan-raiders were dealt with. The inspector and his man entered the field, and crossed quickly towards the caravan; and the Famous Five followed them. The juniors kept at a distance, however, only prepared to back up the policemen if they were needed.

The light was moving in the caravan, as on the previous occasion when the juniors had sighted the two rascals in possession of the vehicle. They were searching—their second search, and their last! There was nothing to reward Mr. Stokes and his comrade, even if they had unearthed the secret recess in the larder; but they were unaware of that, and they were searching the van with feverish haste and greed. Muttering voices reached the ears of the juniors as they came quietly up through the grass, behind the sturdy figures of the two police.

"They must be 'ere, Rabbit—they must! The cap'n had them—I know he had them! He never blowed his whack like we did—he put 'em by for a rainy day. I know it; he let it out!"

"He was going over to Amsterdam if he hadn't been lagged!" mumbled the Rabbit. "Wot did that mean? He was going to get rid of them there! He hadn't done it yet. They're 'ere somewhere, Stokey!"

"We've got to find them—"

"And afore them kids come back!"

"Hang the kids! I've got a shooter that will scare them off fast enough if they come around!" growled Stokes.

"But where are them darned sparklers!"

The light gleamed and moved.

There was a sudden step outside, and the portly inspector leaped into the van.

"Them kids agin— Oh crumbs!" yelled Rabbit. "Look out, Stokey!"

Stokes dropped the lantern with a curse, and his hand flew to his pocket. The revolver was out when the inspector grasped him, and they fell to the floor together, struggling.

The Rabbit made a frantic bound from the van—right into the arms of the constable, who collared him promptly.

Harry Wharton & Co. ran up breathlessly.

It was dark in the van, and in the darkness the inspector and the cracksmen were struggling furiously.

Wharton flashed on his pocket torch as he leaped on the steps.

It showed the ruffian uppermost, the inspector gripping his wrist to keep the revolver turned aside.

Even as the light gleamed on him, Stokes dragged his hand free, and the revolver turned on the fallen man under him.

Wharton leaped on him just in time. A crashing blow on the side of the head sent Stokes spinning sideways, and the revolver exploded harmlessly, the bullet going through the lower bunk.

The next instant the junior had grasped Stokes, and was dragging him down. The Reigate inspector had a strong grip on him in a few seconds more, and the handcuffs clicked.

The inspector scrambled breathlessly to his feet.

“A near thing,” he said grimly.

“Thanks!”

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

Bunter Changes His Mind!

“BUNTER!”

“I say, you fellows, I’m turning in!”

“I’ve got a time-table here,”

said Bob Cherry.

Bunter turned in the doorway of the caravan, and blinked at the grinning caravanners. It was half an hour since the police had departed with their two prisoners. It had been rather an exciting evening for the Greyfriars cara-

vanners, and they were later to bed than usual.

“I don’t want a time-table, Bob Cherry!” snapped Bunter. “I’m going to bed.”

“There’s a train from Reigate—”

“Eh?”

“And just time to catch it if you walk sharp!”

“Oh, really, Cherry—”

“We’ll walk to the station with you, and take your ticket,” continued Bob Cherry.

“With pleasure!” added Nugent.

“The pleasurefulness will be terrific, my esteemed fat Bunter!” chuckled Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

“I—I’m going to bed.”

“Ain’t you leaving us?” demanded Bob.

“N-n-n-n-no—”

“Ain’t you shaking the dust of the camp from your giddy feet?”

“Ha, ha, ha!”

“Nunno! I—I’ve changed my mind,” stammered Bunter. “On—on second thoughts, I—I’m going to stick to you! You haven’t treated me well, and you’re a lot of beasts, but I’m going to stay. I feel that I oughtn’t to leave you in the lurch, after leading you to rely upon me to see you through this caravanning trip. Some fellows have a sense of duty!”

“We’ll let you off, Bunter!” chortled Bob. “We’ll manage without your fatherly care!”

“Come on, Bunter!”

“Sha’n’t!” roared Bunter.

“Let’s walk him down to the station, and chuck him into the train!” suggested Nugent.

“Hear, hear!”

There was a movement towards the caravan,

Slam!

The door closed, and the key turned.

“Ha, ha, ha!” roared the caravanners.

And from within the locked caravan came Bunter’s ducket tones:

“Yah! Beasts!”

And the caravanners turned in, quite satisfied with their day’s work, and glad that at length they had solved the secret of the caravan.

“I suppose we sha’n’t have any more excitement for the rest of the tour,” said Bob Cherry, as he pulled the blankets over himself.

There was a chuckle from Harry Wharton.

“I don’t know so much about that,” he said. “Where Billy Bunter is you’ll generally find something to do!”

“The correctfulness of my esteemed chum is terrific!” murmured Hurree Janset Ram Singh.

“Any old how, we’ll get a move on in the morning, you chaps,” added Frank Nugent. “Something else might turn up to induce Billy Bunter to make for home. Seeing him off would provide plenty of excitement.”

“He’s more likely to see us off!” growled Johnny Bull. “I’m going to sleep. Good-night, you fellows!”

The wishes of Johnny Bull were sleepily reciprocated, and the juniors were soon in the arms of Morpheus.

THE END.

(Look out for the next splendid caravanning story of Harry Wharton & Co. in next Monday’s issue of the MAGNET. Full particulars of this grand yarn will be found on the “Chat” page. Meanwhile, get a copy of the “Popular” and read all about the early schooldays of the chums of Greyfriars.)



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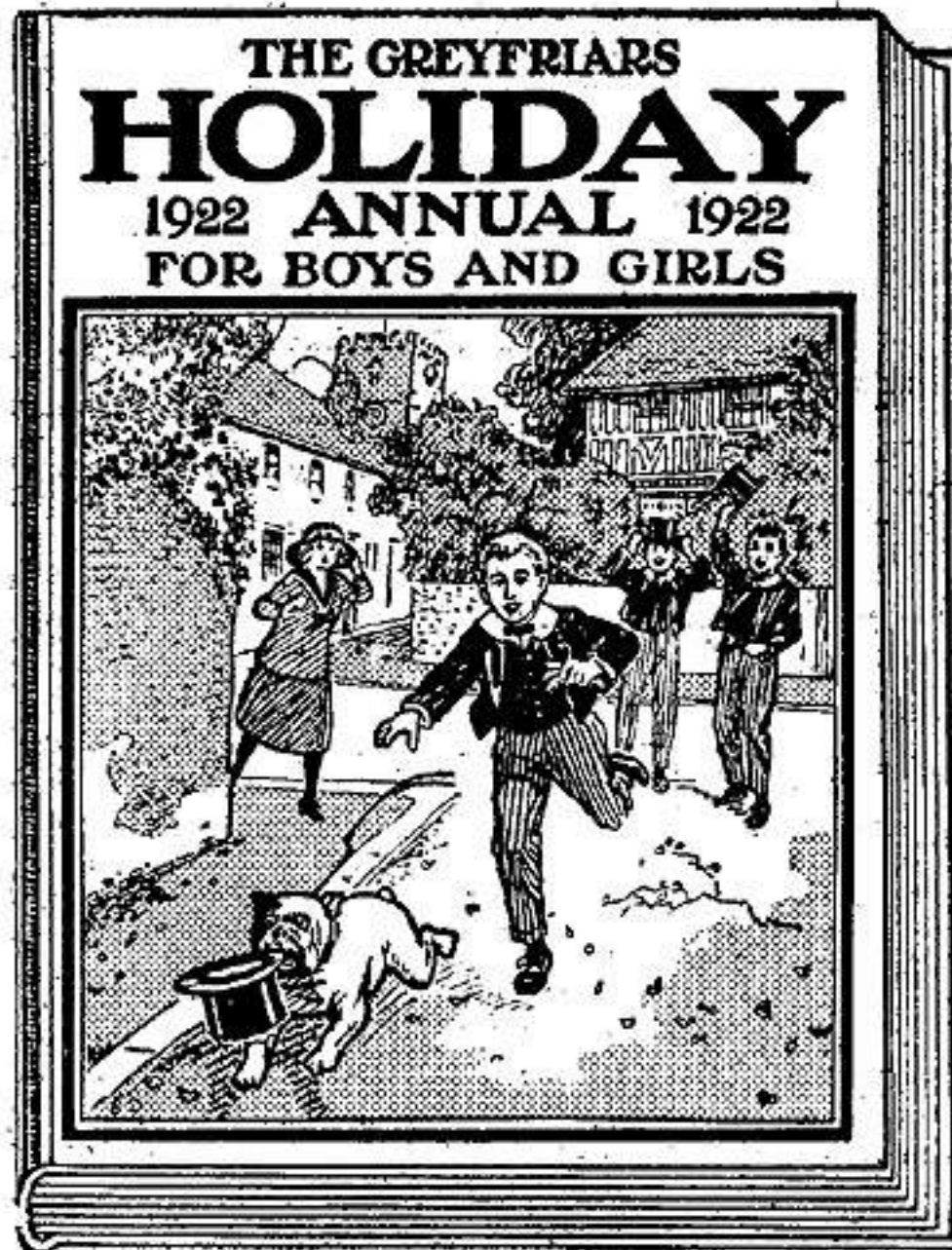
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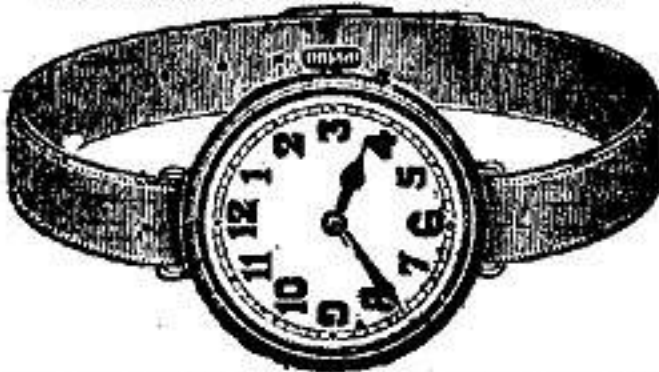
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