

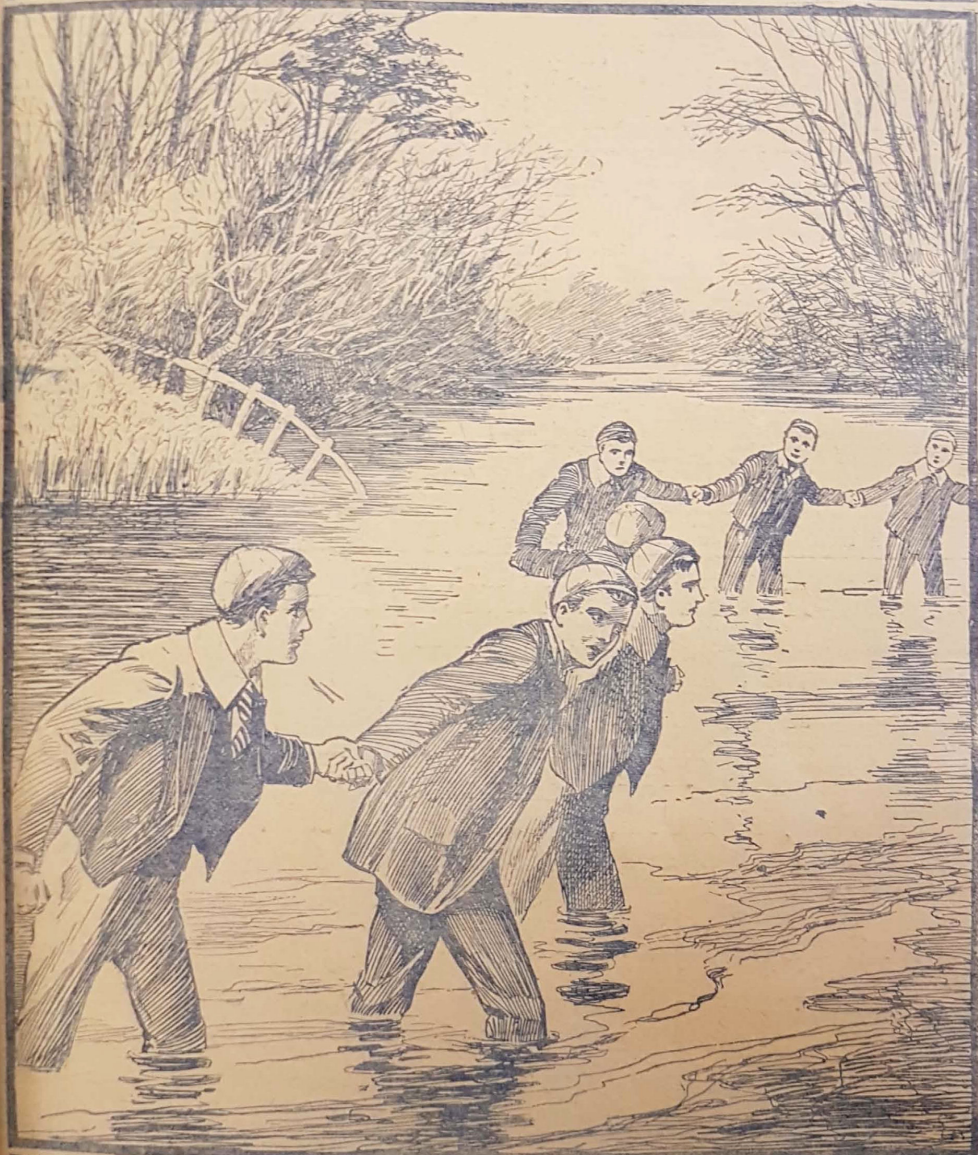
157
SCHOOL AND ADVENTURE STORIES FOR ALL.

PLUCK

GRAND COMPLETE
SCHOOL TALE.

1^D

THRILLING COMPLETE
ADVENTURE STORY.

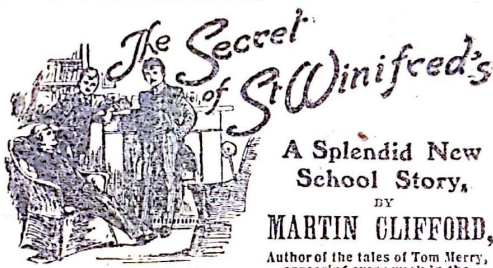


RETREATING FROM THE GAMEKEEPERS!

(An exciting incident from "A LEADER OF EIGHT," the long, complete school tale contained in this number.)

NO. 174, VOL. 6, NEW SERIES.

NEW SCHOOL TALE.



"No, you don't, Clemmo!" he said. "Jim Lee's going to be heard now, and he'll talk to some purpose." "And he'll have someone to help him talk!" shouted Lee, as he waved his hand. "Way there for Jim Clifford! Pass him right along, boys. We'll have him here, where all can see him.

Sure enough, Clifford, who had been waiting Lee's signal, came from the bank, and was passed amidst great excitement right up to the piazza.

Rayner Clemmo, almost unable to believe his senses, stepped forward to welcome him effusively.

"Wait a bit, Clemmo!" interposed Lee. "There's time enough for congratulations. We'll just hear what Clifford has to say. Who do you accuse of putting you away, Clifford?"

"I accuse Rayner Clemmo!" cried Clifford, in a voice that everyone could hear.

The crowd and Clemmo himself were too stupefied to utter a sound.

"And who do you, Lee, accuse of murdering Bart Cruden and the two men at the Grand Saline?" cried Sheriff Cottle.

"Rayner Clemmo!" answered Lee, in ringing tones, as his gun covered the mine-owner.

Even in that terrible moment Clemmo's nerve did not desert him.

"It is easy to do that," he retorted. "I defy you to adduce a single proof."

"I'll prove Clifford's accusation first, then," answered Lee. "Clifford drew a cheque for the man that captured him. How did you sign it, Clifford?"

"I signed it as James Courtney Clifford."

"And that is not your right name, but was given to put the bank people on their guard?"

"That's so. They would never have paid the cheque on it. James Clifford is my real name, and the name I should put to cheques."

"Has the cheque been presented?"

"No, it is still out. The man I gave it to must have feared to use it."

"And probably has it on him now," said Lee. "Would you oblige me, sheriff?"

Quick as thought the sheriff and one of his men seized Clemmo, who was standing as if turned to stone. There was a brief struggle before he was secured. Then in breathless silence they searched him. The sheriff drew a few papers from a concealed pocket in his shirt. He held one of them up. It was Clifford's cheque.

"Now, boys," cried Lee, "I've made out my case for one indictment. Now I'll prove that this man killed the others we know of for the same reason. Here's the written confession of his accomplice Nat Herd, as he was known here, but better known to me as Abe Foote, of Montana.

"He writes here a full confession of it all, saying how they robbed and murdered a dozen or more men, and how Bart Cruden at last, by some means came to suspect them. He accuses that Clemmo, or Hank Mallock, as his real name is, killed Cruden, and that I can swear to as well."

"But where's Herd?" someone shouted. "Writin' is all very well. Let's hear what Herd's got to say?"

"He's in the gaol here," cried Lee, "and the sheriff will keep him for trial. He has confessed to him as well, and given us all the proofs."

"Then the sheriff shan't have 'em both!" roared Barney Blum, who was standing, head and shoulders above the crowd, close to the hotel. "We'll have Clemmo, boys, if it's the last act!"

With a roar like that of a mighty flood let loose the whole mass of men surged towards the hotel. Vainly the sheriff and his posse tried to hold their ground.

In less than a minute Rayner Clemmo, fighting desperately, was torn from their grasp, a rope was flung round his neck and over a convenient beam, and Rayner Clemmo, alias Hank Mallock, expiated his crimes at the hands of James Lynch.

Then the body was cut down, and dragged beyond the city limits. A week later Abe Foote, after an open trial, was also condemned, and executed. The Spread Eagle mine was closed down, and even now lies unworked, with all its buildings and machinery going to rack and ruin, no one caring to buy a property associated with so much crime.

James Clifford took up another and richer claim, which has turned out a fine paying concern, and as long as Lee remained in Wyoming he remained staunch friends, and was associated, with Chris Cottle, in several exciting adventures which fully demonstrated Lee's daredevil courage and absolute disregard of personal danger.

THE END.

(Two long, complete stories again next Saturday, entitled "Green of Lyncroft," by H. Clarke Hook, and "The Mystery of Kempton Hollow," a tale of Martin Stern, Detective.)

THE train containing the boys of St. Winifred's slowed down alongside Ferndale Station platform. "You scoundrel! Why didn't you yell!" asked Clive Lawrence, a Fourth-Former, shouted the question to Clive Lawrence—a new boy, but one in no way shy or constrained. "What was there to yell about?" asked Clive. Locke sniffed. "Oh, of course, you don't know; you're a new kid. We're at daggers drawn with the Fifth at St. Winnie's, and Kendall and Keene, who are standing over there, are the heads of the Fifth." Clive joins the party of Fourth-Formers, and they eventually get to the school by capturing the Sixth Form brake. Clive is told to give a study with Fisher and Locke. Courtney, a bully, takes Clive for "fag," and sends him on an errand to the Jolly Seaman, a public-house in the village. Clive arrives at his destination and is told by the man who answers his ring to hand over the note. (Now go on with the story.)

READ THIS FIRST.

A Curious Quest.

Clive made no motion to obey. He remembered how particularly Courtney had impressed upon him that he was to place the note in no hands but Mr. Napper's.

"I cannot give it to you," he said quietly.

The landlord of the Jolly Seaman glared at him.

"Why can't you give it to me, younker?"

"I was told to give it to no one but Mr. Napper himself."

"Jimmy Napper's not here. I'm George Beasley, the proprietor of this ere place, and Mr. Napper's friend. You can give me the note."

"Do you know when Mr. Napper will return?"

"No, I don't. He may be back in half an hour, and he may not be back till midnight."

Clive's heart sank. He had not foreseen a contingency of this kind. Nor, apparently, had Courtney. He had not been told what to do if Mr. Napper were not at the inn. Apparently Courtney had counted for certain upon the man being there.

Clive hesitated. What was to be done? It might be all right to trust the note into Beasley's hands, as he was the friend of the absent Mr. Napper. On the other hand, it might be all wrong. Courtney would not have been so much in earnest without a reason.

No; he would not disobey his instructions. Having taken the matter in hand, he was bound to carry out Courtney's wishes.

But what was to be done? To return to St. Winifred's with the note was to throw all Courtney's plans, whatever they were, out of gear. The senior had some powerful motive for sending the note that night. Yet to wait till, perhaps, midnight—

"Well, what are you going to do?" said Mr. Beasley roughly but not unkindly. "You can leave the note with me, and I'll see that Napper has it, or you can wait."

"Can't you tell me how long he's likely to be?"

"No; I can't for certain. But the chances are that he'll be back soon. That's the best I can say."

Clive hesitated still, sorely troubled in his mind.

"You can come in, if you like," said Mr. Beasley. "You can sit in my little parlour all by yourself till Jimmy Napper comes in. There's nobody there."

The man was certainly not a good character, but he seemed good-natured. He spoke of the doubtful and hesitating boy kindly enough. It was probably that which decided Clive Lawrence. He nodded.

"Thank you, sir! I'll come in and wait, for a bit, at all events."

NEXT SATURDAY:

"GREEN OF LYNCROFT," A Faded & Long, Complete School Tale of 62pp. The Truth & Co., by H. Clarke Hook.

AND "THE MYSTERY OF KEMPTON HOLLOW," IN "PLUCK," 1d. A Thrilling, Complete Tale of 200 pp. Stern, detale 412s.

