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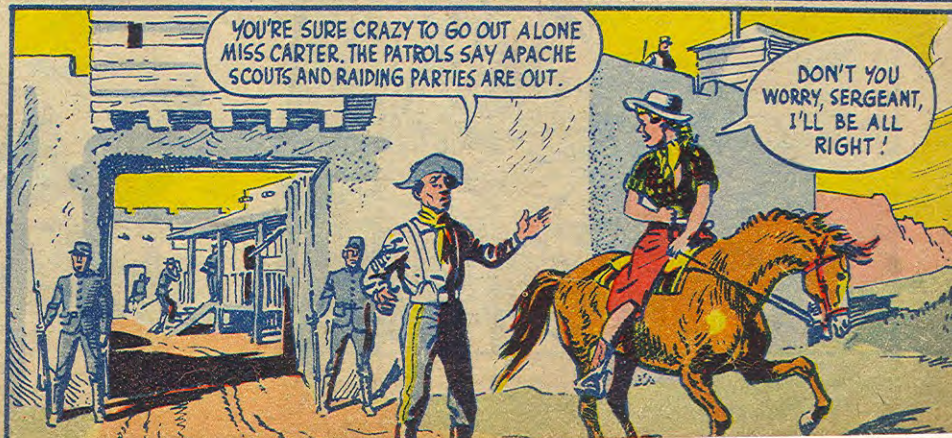
No. 207
January 24, 1953

EVERY
MONDAY

BILLY THE KID TO THE *Rescue!*



DEEP IN THE BADLANDS OF TEXAS
LAY FORT GRANT - A LONELY OUTPOST
IN HOSTILE INDIAN
COUNTRY. BUT **BETTY
CARTER**, THE
COLONEL'S
DAUGHTER,
KNEW NO
FEAR - AND
ONE DAY SHE
RODE OUT
ALONE TO
VISIT AN OLD
SETTLER.



BUT AS BETTY CARTER GALLOPED AWAY FROM THE FORT~~



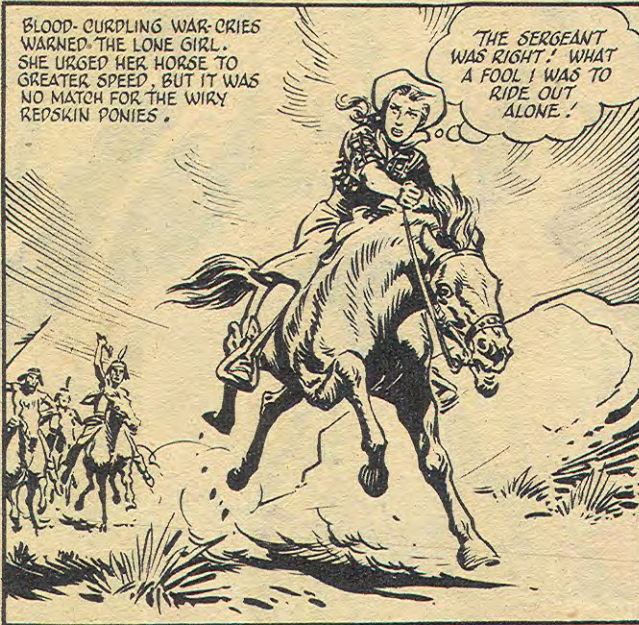
~~ SAVAGE EYES WATCHED HER! ~



AND SOME TIME LATER THERE SOUNDED THE DRUMMING OF MANY UNSHOD HOOFES ON THE SUN-BAKED GROUND~~



BLOOD-CURLING WAR-cries WARNED THE LONE GIRL. SHE URGED HER HORSE TO GREATER SPEED, BUT IT WAS NO MATCH FOR THE WIRY REDSKIN PONIES.



"THE SERGEANT WAS RIGHT." WHAT A FOOL I WAS TO RIDE OUT ALONE!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER~~



INTO THE VILLAGE OF THE YELLING, TRIUMPHANT APACHES WENT BETTY CARTER, TRYING HARD NOW TO HIDE THE FEAR THAT GRIPPED HER~~ AND CHIEF WOLF CLAW SMILED GRIMLY WHEN HE SAW HER.~~



"UGH! IT IS GOOD! THIS PALEFACE SQUAW IS THE DAUGHTER OF THE CHIEF OF THE LONG-KNIFE SOLDIERS!"

THAT SAME DAY THE BEST BOWMAN OF THE APACHES SHOT AN ARROW



HIGH INTO THE AIR SANG THE APACHE ARROW, TO LAND, A BOLT FROM THE BLUE, IN THE CENTRE OF FORT GRANT~~ RIGHT OUTSIDE THE COLONEL'S ORDERLY ROOM.



TIED ROUND THE ARROW WAS A PIECE OF BARK AS THIN AS PAPER. BUT THE COLONEL'S LIEUTENANT, WHEN HE TOOK IT TO HIS COMMANDER, WAS UNABLE TO READ IT -- FOR IT WAS SCRAWLED IN RED OCHRE IN THE INDIAN SIGN LANGUAGE.



BEATS ME, SIR. I'VE NEVER LEARNED TO READ THIS STRANGE INJUN LINGO -- AND I DON'T THINK THERE'S A MAN IN THE SQUADRON WHO CAN.

THAT YOUNG CATTLEMAN, WILL BONNEY, IS IN THE FORT RIGHT NOW, SIR -- AND HE KNOWS THE REDSKINS WELL.

THEN GET HIM! PERHAPS HE CAN READ THIS. IT MAY BE IMPORTANT!

SO HAPPY-GO-LUCKY WILL BONNEY, 8066 OF THE CIRCLE-B RANCH, WAS BROUGHT TO THE COLONEL'S OFFICE. BUT AS HE SWIFTLY SCANNED THE MESSAGE, HIS FACE GREW GRAVE --

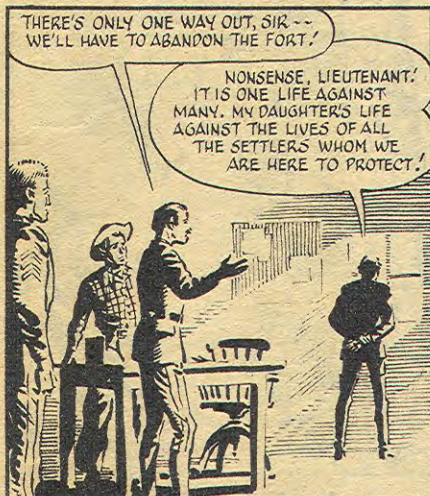


GOSH, COLONEL, THIS IS BAD NEWS! THE APACHES HAVE CAPTURED YOUR DAUGHTER.

CHIEF WOLF CLAW SAYS SHE WILL DIE AT THE STAKE UNLESS YOU CLEAR RIGHT OUT OF FORT GRANT AND LEAVE ALL THIS TERRITORY TO THE APACHES. AND IF YOU TRY TO RESCUE HER, HIS SCOUTS WILL WARN HIM, AND SHE WILL BE TOMAHAWKED STRAIGHT AWAY!



COLONEL CARTER'S FACE PALED. HIS JAW SET GRIMLY AND HIS EYES BECAME HARD AS HE ROSE AND TURNED AWAY FROM THE LITTLE GROUP --



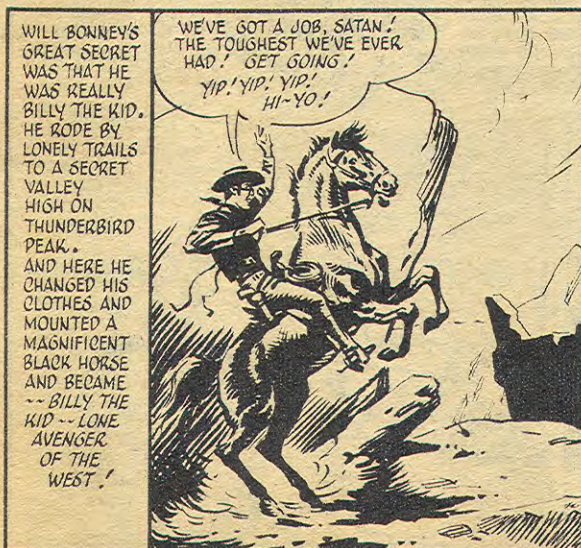
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY OUT, SIR -- WE'LL HAVE TO ABANDON THE FORT!

NONSENSE, LIEUTENANT! IT IS ONE LIFE AGAINST MANY. MY DAUGHTER'S LIFE AGAINST THE LIVES OF ALL THE SETTLERS WHOM WE ARE HERE TO PROTECT!



BETTY IS A SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER! SHE WILL DIE LIKE A SOLDIER AND UNDERSTAND WHY I MUST LEAVE HER TO HER FATE -- WE STAY IN THE FORT!

AS THE NEWS SPREAD, MEN STOOD ABOUT IN ANGRY GROUPS DISCUSSING THE APACHES' TERRIBLE MESSAGE. SOME WERE FOR ABANDONING THE FORT TO SAVE THE POPULAR GIRL -- OTHERS WANTED TO RIDE OUT IN A DESPERATE RESCUE BID. SOME CONDEMNED THEIR COLONEL -- OTHERS PRAISED HIM FOR HIS SOLDIERLY SENSE OF DUTY --



WILL BONNEY'S GREAT SECRET WAS THAT HE WAS REALLY BILLY THE KID. HE RODE BY LONELY TRAILS TO A SECRET VALLEY HIGH ON THUNDERBIRD PEAK. AND HERE HE CHANGED HIS CLOTHES AND MOUNTED A MAGNIFICENT BLACK HORSE AND BECAME -- BILLY THE KID -- LONE AVENGER OF THE WEST!

BUT MEANWHILE, APACHE SCOUTS WATCHING THE FORT SAW NO SIGNS THAT THE SOLDIERS MEANT TO LEAVE



IN THE APACHE VILLAGE --

THE PALEFACES DEFEY WOLF CLAW! DEATH TO THE PALEFACE SQUAW!



AT AN ORDER FROM WOLF CLAW, THE WHITE GIRL WAS FORCED TO HER KNEES--A GLEAMING TOMAHAWK ROSE. BUT SUDDENLY--

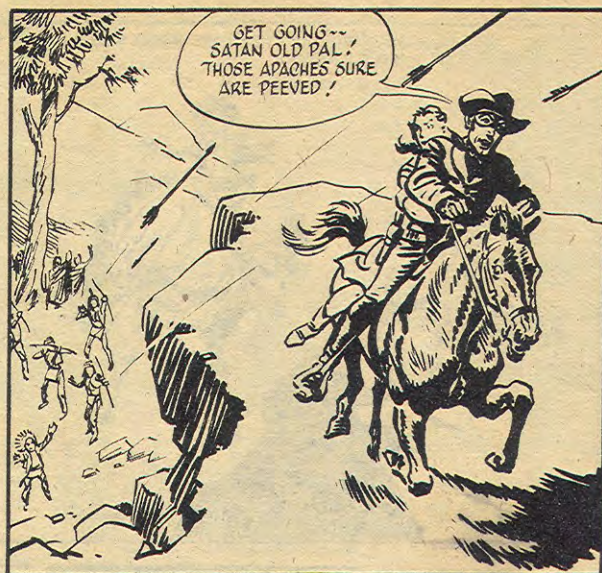
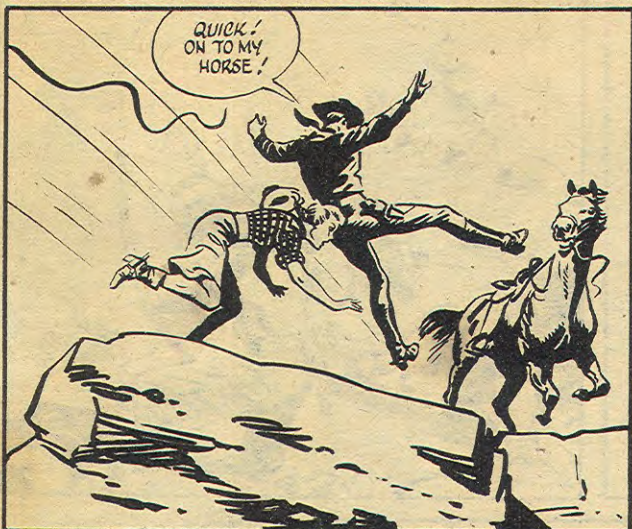


EVEN AS THE BRAVE TENSED FOR THE DEADLY BLOW--BILLY THE KID LAUNCHED HIMSELF IN A DARING LEAP--

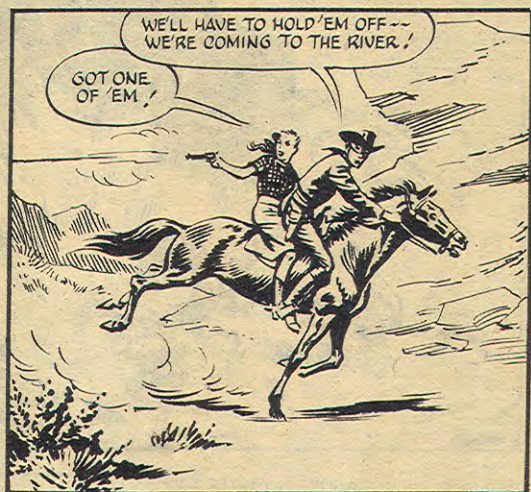
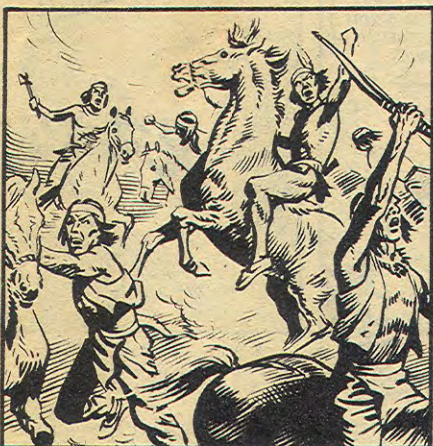


BILLY AND BETTY SWUNG RIGHT ROUND THE TREE AND UP TOWARDS THE ROCKY HEIGHT FROM WHICH BILLY HAD JUMPED!

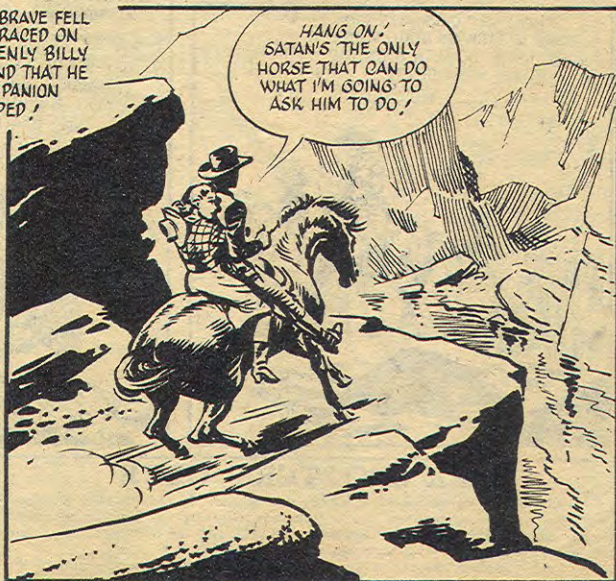
BILLY THE KID AND THE GIRL HE HAD SAVED LANDED IN A HEAP BESIDE THE GREAT BLACK HORSE AS THE REDSKINS RECOVERED FROM THEIR SHOCKED SURPRISE.



THE FEARSOME APACHE WAR-CRY SHRILLED OUT AS THEY LEAPED ON THEIR PONIES TO GIVE CHASE--



BUT AS ONE BRAVE FELL
THE OTHERS RACED ON--
AND SUDDENLY BILLY
THE KID FOUND THAT HE
AND HIS COMPANION
WERE TRAPPED!



AND NEXT MOMENT, BILLY THE KID URGED HIS GREAT BLACK HORSE
IN A FLYING LEAP OUT INTO SPACE--



WITH BOULDERS AND ARROWS
SHOWERING AROUND THEM
BILLY THE KID AND BETTY,
HELPED BY THE POWERFUL
HORSE, SWAM TO THE FAR
BANK OF THE RIVER--



"THOSE RED RASCALS
HAVE NOT GIVEN UP YET!
SOME ARE WORKING
THEIR WAY DOWN
TO THE RIVER."

"WELL, WE'LL
GIVE 'EM A RUN
FOR THEIR
MONEY!"



BUT SUDDENLY AS THEY RODE UP A
SLOPE, THEY HEARD THE CLEAR NOTES
OF A CAVALRY BUGLE, AND SAW--



-- A BODY OF CAVALRYMEN
WHO HAPPENED TO BE OUT
ON A LONG PATROL ---

AND BILLY THE KID AND BETTY CARTER RODE SAFELY
BACK TO FORT GRANT AT THE HEAD OF THE TROOP--

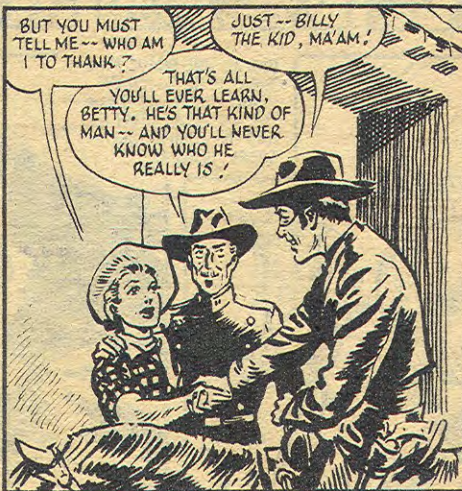
"THOSE RED VARMINTS WON'T
DARE ATTACK US NOW. YOU'LL BE
SAFELY BACK WITH YOUR DAD
SOON, MISS BETTY!"



BUT YOU MUST
TELL ME-- WHO AM
I TO THANK?"

JUST-- BILLY
THE KID, MA'AM!"

"THAT'S ALL
YOU'LL EVER LEARN,
BETTY. HE'S THAT KIND OF
MAN-- AND YOU'LL NEVER
KNOW WHO HE
REALLY IS!"



AWAY FROM THE FORT RODE BILLY
THE KID, HIS GREAT BLACK STALLION
FLYING WITH A DRUM-BEAT OF HOOF
OVER THE SUN-BAKED PLAIN--



CAR SPOTTERS' CLUB

A THOUSAND more lucky Spotters this week! If your Album number is one of those printed below you may send up for a present--free! All those with numbers between 13,000 and 13,500 inclusive, and between 43,000 and 43,500 inclusive may claim.

If your number has come up this week, first of all choose one of the following presents: Fountain Pen, "Tenni-Gun", Pocket Knife, Big Jig-Saw, Box of Paints, Box of Wire Puzzles, Purse, or Binoculars.

Write the name of the present in the space in your Album marked "For Official Use"--checking at the same time that your name and address are filled in on the Membership page. Then, on a postcard, write the name of the character or story you like most in SUN--and, in a few words, say why. Post Album and postcard in a 2d. stamped envelope to, SUN C.S. CLUB, 3 Pilgrim Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.),

to arrive not later than Tuesday, February 3, the closing date. Presents will be despatched about a week later and Albums returned at the same time.

WILD BILL HICKOK

KING OF
MARKSMEN!

THE great wooden gates of Fort Henry slowly closed behind a familiar velvet-clad figure mounted on a magnificent sorrel mare. It was James Butler Hickok, the famous frontier marshal of the lightning guns, known the West over as Wild Bill.

As he streaked across the wide prairie his thoughts were on the job he had been assigned to by the commanding officer of the fort. A couple of supply wagons carrying United States Army weapons for Fort Henry had disappeared. No trace of the wagons, or the teamsters driving them, could be found.

The commanding officer suspected a large band of Kiowa Indians whose camp lay across the other side of the prairie in a sheltered wooded ravine. Chief Willow Bird and his warriors had been none too friendly, and the commanding officer was afraid they were preparing to go on the warpath.

Being a wise man and understanding a little the ways of the Indian, he knew it would be foolish to send a detachment of cavalry to the Kiowa camp to make inquiries about the missing supply wagons. It would only anger the Indians. So he called upon the one man who could help him out—Wild Bill Hickok.

The marshal had met Chief Willow Bird a few times, and so his supposedly friendly visit would arouse no suspicion amongst the Kiowas.

But as Wild Bill drew near the Indian camp, two warriors suddenly emerged from behind some rocks and challenged him with U.S. Army revolvers.

The marshal reined in Gypsy and raised his hands over his head. With a friendly smile he addressed one of the Indians in the Kiowa language.

"Greetings, Buffalo Horn. I come in peace. I wish to make talk with your Chief, Willow Bird."

The Indian, who was wearing a buffalo horn headdress, glared at the marshal and grunted:

"Follow me."

Wild Bill was taken into the camp and led up to Willow Bird's gaudily-painted tepee. And there, a few yards behind the tepee, were the missing supply wagons! The camp was swarming with armed warriors who had gunbelts strapped round their naked waists which holstered the latest model of Army Colts. Many of them strutted about clutching brand new Army carbines in their bronzed hands.

"The camp's like an arsenal," thought the marshal, but he was careful not to show any surprise or to give any indication that he noticed the weapons.

He dismounted as the Kiowa chieftain came out of his tepee.

"Man-who-shoots-fast comes at bad time to see Willow Bird," greeted the chief. "My warriors are preparing for war dance. We take to the war-path when the sun has travelled once more across the sky. The Kiowas are strong. They have many weapons—white man's weapons which we have captured. Now we give white man taste of his own medicine."

"Yes, I see you've plenty of guns, Willow Bird," replied Wild Bill quietly. "What did you do with the



As Wild Bill rode up, two warriors suddenly emerged from behind some rocks. . . . From this exciting complete Western yarn by BARRY FORD.

men driving the wagons?" "They are still alive. We have not harmed them. But they will die when war dance has ended."

"I see. So you think you'll beat the white man now you have his weapons, do you? Well, my friend, you will never have any luck in war with those weapons unless you know how to use them properly. And that takes a lot of practice."

"The Kiowas know how to use white man's firesticks!" protested the chief indignantly.

"Do you, Chief? Well, suppose you and I have a shooting contest before you start your war dance. If you can shoot as well as I, then I'll not stop you from going on the war-path. But if you can't, it will prove you are unworthy to go to war, and I shall expect you to return all the guns to Fort Henry."

The chief stared thoughtfully at Wild Bill and then said slowly:

"Willow Bird has respect for Man-who-shoots-fast. It shall be as you say."

The chief informed his warriors about the contest and said he would let Man-who-shoots-fast draw up the terms of the match.

Wild Bill suggested that they used rifles and six-guns and fired from horseback as well as from the ground. The chief agreed, and it was decided that they each had ten shots with a rifle at fifty and one hundred yards, six shots standing with a revolver at fifteen paces, and six shots from horseback while riding past the target at full speed.

The marshal let the chief fire first, and as he toed the mark for the fifty yards with a rifle he fired the ten rounds slowly, taking careful and deliberate aim. His accuracy was fairly good and he got seven bullseyes. When he had finished, Hickok raised his rifle and, without taking apparent aim, fired as rapidly as the gun would allow and scored ten bullseyes!

A gasp of surprise went round the

circle of warriors. Here, indeed, was fast and accurate shooting.

At the hundred yards' range the same thing happened. In a fraction of the time it took the chief to fire, Wild Bill had triggered his rifle and scored another ten bullseyes against the Indian's five.

They decided to fire the revolvers together, and two targets were set up at fifteen paces. Just to make things a little more interesting for the gaping spectators, Wild Bill suggested that the chief held his revolver at the ready, while his own Colt would be in his holster at the signal to fire.

The chief gave a faint smile and readily agreed. He thought the marshal was mad to give himself such a handicap. But at the firing signal, Wild Bill made one of his incredible lightning draws and he had emptied his Colt in the centre of the target before the chief had fired two shots!

"Man-who-shoots-fast is rightly named," murmured the shaken chief. "Let us fire from horseback now."

They reloaded their revolvers and mounted their horses.

"Six shots at the target while riding past at full speed," reminded the marshal, who was thoroughly enjoying himself. "Your first go, Chief."

Willow Bird raced up to the target, but all of his shots went wild.

"Too bad," grinned the marshal, and touching Gypsy lightly with his golden spurs, he dashed up to the tree with his Colt spurting flame. Six neat shots were centred dead in the middle of the target.

Never before had the Kiowas seen such superb shooting!

"Let's try something difficult now," suggested Wild Bill. "Blindfolded we'll fire at fifteen paces with our revolvers. Like to go first, Chief?"

The Kiowa grunted and savagely tied a band across his eyes. He was wishing he had never agreed to the contest! He fired away in the direction of the target, and after emptying his gun, tore off his bandage to see his score.

As he walked over to the bushes to where the target was set up, the marshal tied his neckerchief over his eyes.

"What's your score, Chief?" he called as he firmly knotted the blindfold.

But at that second there was an ominous rattle near Willow Bird's feet, and jumping backwards he let out a yell of terror.

Instantly the marshal's hand dropped to his holster and came up with a blazing Colt. Blindfolded, he fired four shots in the direction of the rattling noise and killed the rattlesnake which threatened the chief.

As he ripped off his neckerchief, the chief and his amazed warriors were staring down at the dead snake.

"Man-who-shoots-fast has a power over the white man's weapons which is hidden from the red man. How else could he have performed such a feat?" exclaimed Willow Bird. "This is a sign from the Great Spirit, who sent the rattlesnake as a warning to our tribe not to go on the war-path with the white man's weapons."

And all his warriors heartily agreed with the chief. They were only too thankful to return all the weapons.

The captured wagons were loaded up and the teamsters were released. As the wagons prepared to roll out of the camp with the marshal in the lead, Willow Bird stepped up to Wild Bill and held up his right hand.

"To prove that the Kiowas will keep the peace, Willow Bird would make Man-who-shoots-fast his blood brother. Will he accept the honour?"

"I would be very happy to do so, Chief. And thank you," returned the marshal with a friendly smile. "I'll escort these wagons back to Fort Henry and then return to your lodge. Farewell till then."

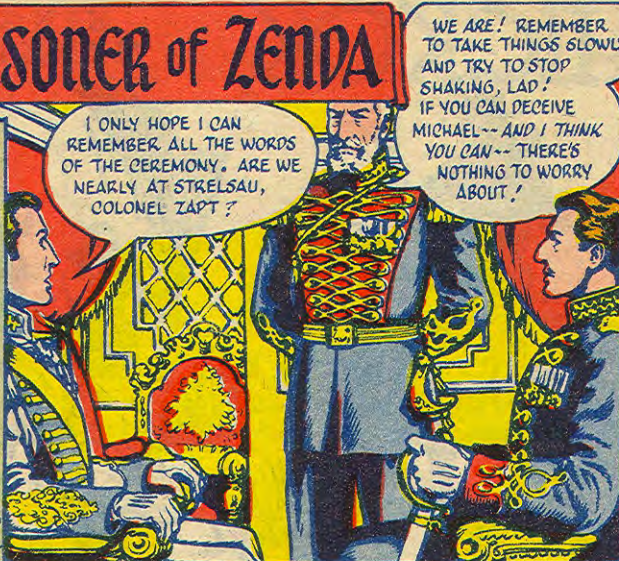
"Farewell, my brother."

And so, once again, the lightning guns of Wild Bill kept the peace.

Another thrill-packed adventure with the fighting marshal in next week's SUN!

The PRISONER of ZENDA

RUDOLF RASSENDYLL, AN ENGLISHMAN, TOOK THE PLACE OF HIS COUSIN, KING RUDOLF OF RURTANIA. THE KING HAD BEEN DRUGGED ON THE EVE OF HIS CORONATION BY HIS HALF-BROTHER, MICHAEL, WHO WANTED THE THRONE FOR HIMSELF. RASSENDYLL WAS ON THE ROYAL TRAIN, SPEEDING TO STRELSAU FOR THE CORONATION CEREMONY, WITH COLONEL ZAPT AND CAPTAIN FRITZ VON TARLENHEIM, THE KING'S LOYAL AND FAITHFUL FRIENDS--



I ONLY HOPE I CAN REMEMBER ALL THE WORDS OF THE CEREMONY. ARE WE NEARLY AT STRELSAU, COLONEL ZAPT?

WE ARE! REMEMBER TO TAKE THINGS SLOWLY, AND TRY TO STOP SHAKING, LAD! IF YOU CAN DECEIVE MICHAEL-- AND I THINK YOU CAN-- THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT!

THE TRAIN PULLED UP AT THE STATION WHICH WAS LINED WITH CHEERING CROWDS. NERVOUSLY RASSENDYLL STEPPED DOWN FROM THE CARRIAGE.



LONG LIVE THE KING!

LONG LIVE BOTH OF YOU! STEADY, LAD!

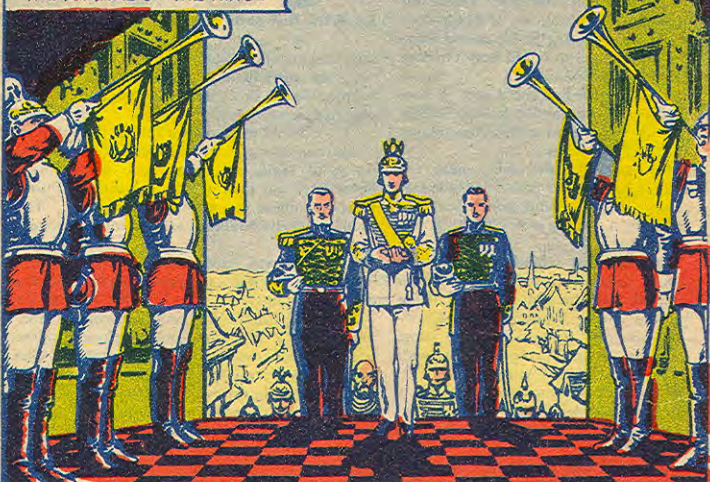
WHILE RASSENDYLL WAS DRIVING TO THE CATHEDRAL, MICHAEL, DUKE OF STRELSAU, WAS WAITING IN THE CATHEDRAL WITH HIS VILLAINOUS HENCHMAN, RUPERT OF HENTZAU.



IT'S THE DAY-- THE HOUR-- ALMOST THE MINUTE, HENTZAU. BUT THANKS TO THE WINE WE DRUGGED, THERE WILL BE NO CORONATION FOR RUDOLF TO-DAY!

HISTORY IS BORN OUT OF A BOTTLE OF WINE!

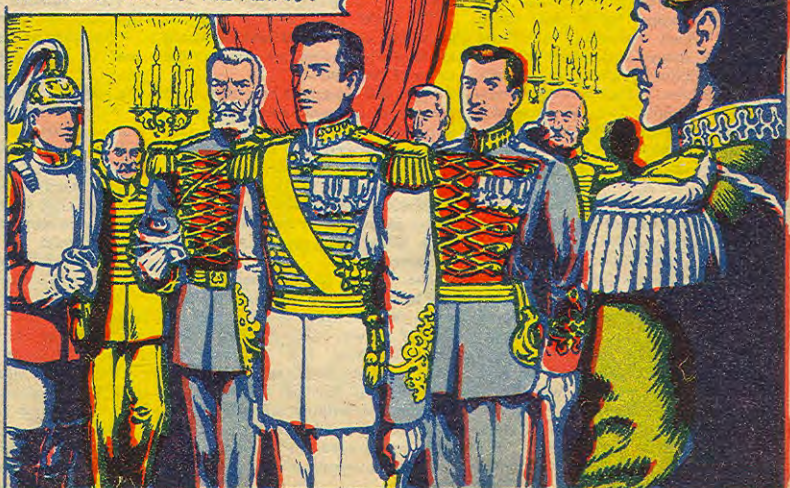
BUT THE NEXT MOMENT A LOUD FANFARE OF TRUMPETS BROKE THE SILENCE OF THE CATHEDRAL AND ANNOUNCED THE ARRIVAL OF THE KING.



THE KING! HOW IS IT POSSIBLE? IF I HAD MY WAY, POISON WOULD HAVE BEEN PUT IN THAT BOTTLE. THEN THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO CORONATION FOR RUDOLF TO-DAY, OR ANY DAY!

GET TO YOUR HORSE, HENTZAU! RIDE OUT TO THE KING'S HUNTING LODGE AND FIND OUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED!

WITH HIS HEART IN HIS MOUTH, RASSENDYLL REMOVED HIS GLOVES AND HELMET AND STARTED DOWN THE LONG AISLE. WHERE DUKE MICHAEL WAS WAITING TO ESCORT HIM TO THE ALTAR.



MICHAEL STEPPED UP TO THE YOUNG ENGLISHMAN, STARED AT HIM THROUGH NARROW-LIDDED EYES AND THEN, TO RASSENDYLL'S GREAT RELIEF, OFFERED HIM HIS ARM.

MY ARM, YOUR MAJESTY!

THANK YOU, BROTHER MICHAEL!



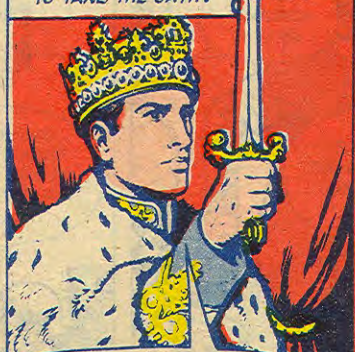
MICHAEL LED RASSENDYLL TO THE CARDINAL.

LOOK NOW UPON RUDOLF THE FIFTH, KING OF THIS REALM. IF ANY MAN WOULD DENY OUR SOVEREIGN LORD'S TITLE TO OUR LANDS, LET HIM SPEAK!



RASSENDYLL, COLONEL ZAPT, AND FRITZ VON TARLENHEIM HELD THEIR BREATHS AND WAITED. BUT MICHAEL KEPT SILENT. RASSENDYLL WAS SAFE, FOR MICHAEL THOUGHT IT WAS HIS BROTHER STANDING BEFORE THE CARDINAL.

AND SO THE CARDINAL CROWNED RASSENDYLL AND HE STOOD UP TO TAKE THE OATH.



I, RUDOLF, WILL RULE WITH JUSTICE AND MERCY. I WILL GUARD WITH HONOUR THE WELFARE OF MY PEOPLES, AND WILL DEFEND THEM FROM ALL ENEMIES. ALL THIS DO I SWEAR.



THE CEREMONY OVER, RASSENDYLL RODE THROUGH THE STREETS IN THE ROYAL CARRIAGE--BOWING TO THE KING'S LOYAL SUBJECTS.

LONG LIVE THE KING!



THAT NIGHT, THINKING THAT THEIR PLANS HAD SUCCEEDED RASSENDYLL AND COLONEL ZAPT SET OFF FOR THE KING'S HUNTING LODGE.

BUT AT THIS VERY MOMENT, THE REAL KING, STILL UNCONSCIOUS, WAS BEING CARRIED OUT OF HIS HUNTING LODGE-- BY RUPERT OF HENTZAU AND HIS MEN.

WE MUST LEAVE AT ONCE IF I'M TO HAVE HIS MAJESTY BACK HERE BY DAYLIGHT. READY, RASSENDYLL?

READY, COLONEL. GOOD-BYE, CAPTAIN VON TARLENHEIM!

SO! IT WAS NOT THE KING WHO WAS CROWNED TO-DAY AFTER ALL. IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOME PLAY-ACTOR. ALL RIGHT, MEN, TAKE OUR SLEEPING MONARCH TO THE CASTLE OF ZENDA. THEN LET THEM FIND HIM WHO CAN!



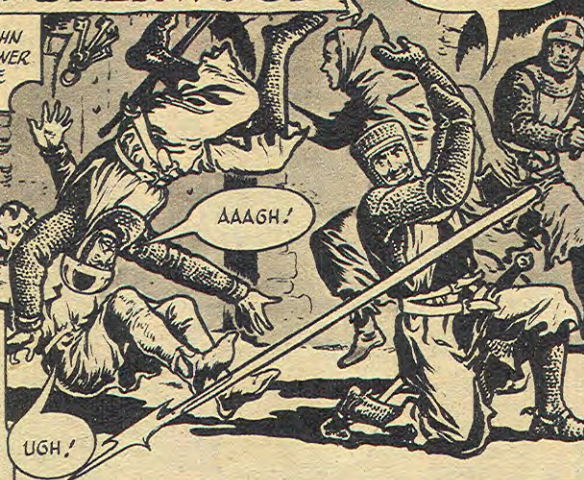
WHAT A DAY FOR YOU TO REMEMBER. GOOD-BYE, MR RASSENDYLL. I HOPE YOU GET ACROSS THE BORDER SAFELY. GOOD LUCK, AND THANKS FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE FOR THE KING AND RURITANIA.



LORD of SHERWOOD

MARIAN AND LITTLE JOHN HAVE ENTERED THE TOWER OF LONDON IN DISGUISE TO RESCUE IVANHOE AND SOME OF THE MERRIE MEN. LITTLE JOHN-- IMPERSONATING THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, HAS AROUSED THE SUSPICIONS OF THE WARDER OF THE DUNGEONS.

A MAN-AT-ARMS THRUST AT LITTLE JOHN WITH HIS SPEAR. THE GIANT OUTLAW DROPPED ON ONE KNEE AND SENT THE MAN OVER HIS SHOULDER WITH A MIGHTY HEAVE-INTO THE FACE OF THE WARDER.



SEIZE THE KEYS, MARIAN!

AAAGH!

UGH!

LITTLE JOHN SIDE-STEPPED A SWORD STROKE AND DROVE HIS GREAT FIST INTO THE FACE OF THE OTHER MAN-AT-ARMS--



NOT FAST ENOUGH, YOU DOG!

IVANHOE AND THE OUTLAWS SPRANG UP IN SURPRISE AS THE DOOR BURST OPEN--



BY MY SWORD-- 'TIS LITTLE JOHN!

AND MARIAN!-- WHAT--?

YES-- WE ARE HERE-- BUT GETTING OUT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT!

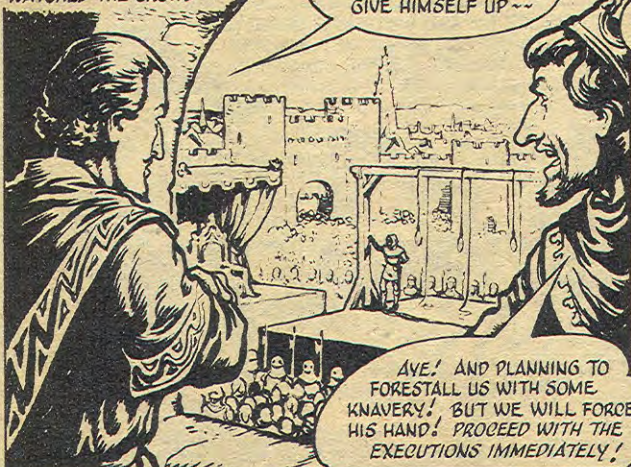
MEANWHILE, OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF THE TOWER, A GREAT CROWD OF SAXON TOWNSFOLK WAITED AND WATCHED--



KING JOHN HAS GIVEN ROBIN UNTIL NIGHTFALL TO GIVE HIMSELF UP AND SAVE HIS MEN FROM THE GALLOWS!

AYE!--AND WOULD THAT WE COULD DO SOMETHING TO PREVENT IT!

FROM A WINDOW HIGH IN THE WHITE TOWER, KING JOHN AND SIR GUY OF GISBORNE WATCHED THE CROWD--



SOMEWHERE DOWN THERE, ROBIN HOOD IS DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO GIVE HIMSELF UP--

AYE! AND PLANNING TO FORESTALL US WITH SOME KNAVERY! BUT WE WILL FORCE HIS HAND! PROCEED WITH THE EXECUTIONS IMMEDIATELY!

DOWN IN THE DUNGEONS, THE OUTLAWS HEARD A HURRYING STEP IN THE CORRIDOR-- A MOMENT LATER A GUARD STOOD ON THE THRESHOLD.



CAPTAIN! THE TRAITORS ARE TO BE LED OUT TO INSTANT EXECUTION!

SEIZE HIM!

THE GUARD WAS QUICKLY OVERPOWERED AND THE OUTLAWS PREPARED TO LEAVE --



WE ARE ONE TOO MANY WITH MARIAN -- WILL, YOU WILL HAVE HAVE TO BE A MAN-AT-ARMS!

SOME OF YOU CONCEAL THESE WEAPONS -- THE REST WILL HAVE TO FIGHT FOR ARMS WHEN WE MAKE A BREAK FOR IT!

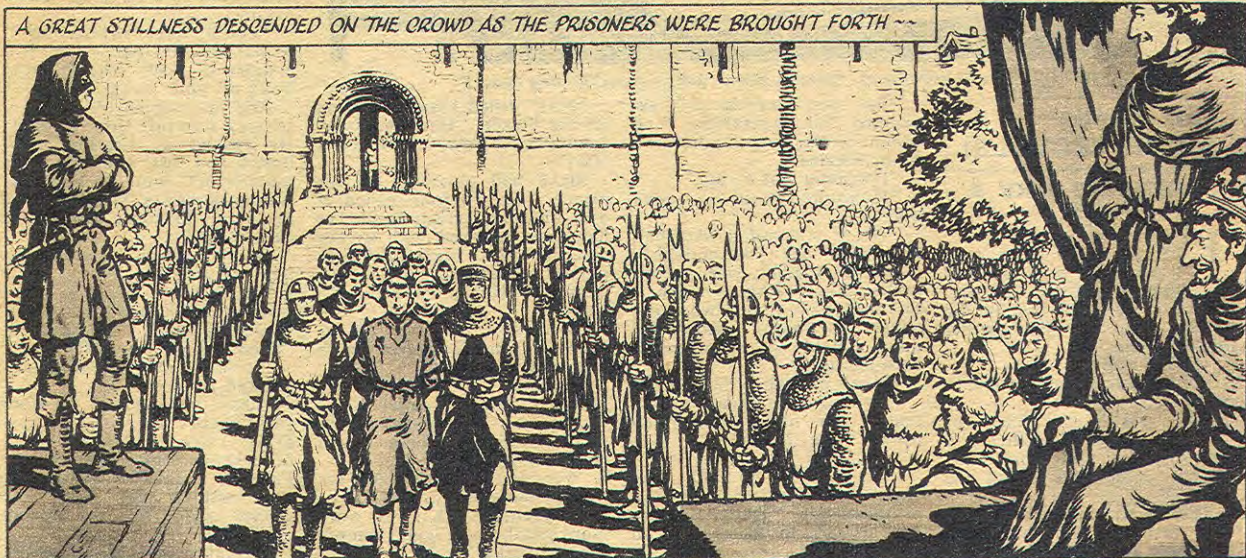
UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF KNIGHTS, MEN-AT-ARMS AND CROSSBOWMEN, THE TOWNSFOLK WERE ADMITTED INTO THE TOWER TO WITNESS THE EXECUTIONS --



WE SHALL SOON SEE IF ROBIN HOOD IS MAN ENOUGH TO GIVE HIMSELF UP, YOUR MAJESTY.

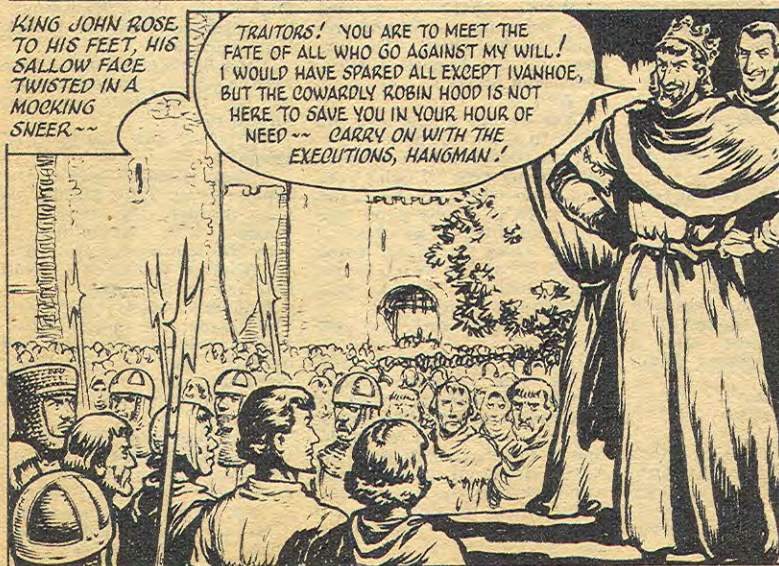
NEVER FEAR, GISBORNE, THAT SOFT-HEARTED FOOL WILL NOT DISAPPOINT US!

A GREAT STILLNESS DESCENDED ON THE CROWD AS THE PRISONERS WERE BROUGHT FORTH --



KING JOHN ROSE TO HIS FEET, HIS SALLOW FACE TWISTED IN A MOCKING SNEER --

TRAITORS! YOU ARE TO MEET THE FATE OF ALL WHO GO AGAINST MY WILL! I WOULD HAVE SPARED ALL EXCEPT IVANHOE, BUT THE COWARDLY ROBIN HOOD IS NOT HERE TO SAVE YOU IN YOUR HOUR OF NEED -- CARRY ON WITH THE EXECUTIONS, HANGMAN!

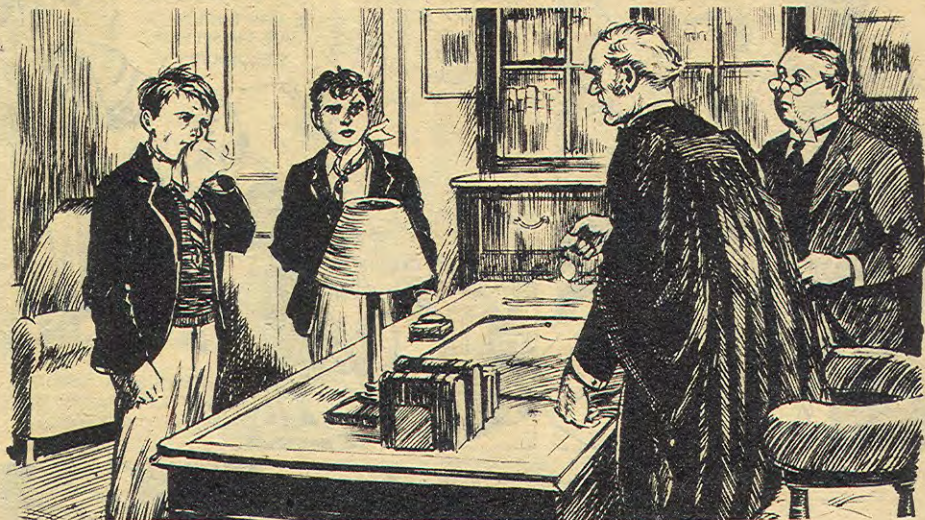


SUDDENLY --

YOU LIE, TYRANT! ROBIN HOOD IS HERE!



TOM MERRY'S SCHOOLDAYS.



The Head's brow grew stern. "Merry, Blake, you've been fighting again!"

This Week: MORE TROUBLE!

SOMETHING LIKE A FIGHT!

"HAVE you heard?" It was Figgins who asked the question, and he addressed Monty Lowther, whom he had just met in the quadrangle at St. Jim's. Lowther looked at him.

"Heard what?" "That yarn about the small-pox."

"Oh, yes!" said Lowther. "They're saying that there's a fellow got it and being kept secretly somewhere about the school."

"That's it," said Figgins. "I have just had the yarn from Skimpole and it seems to be all over the school. Of course, there's nothing in it!"

"Of course not," said Lowther. "but it's queer!"

"But who could it be? I've checked on all the fellows in our House and they're all well and kicking and all to be seen!"

"So are all on our side, excepting Gore. He's gone home to his people, as his uncle is ill. But they're saying—"

"They're saying that he hasn't really gone home," said Blake, joining them. "Some of the fellows think he's got it and is being hidden away."

"Some silly busybody has started the yarn, I suppose," said Figgins, with such an extremely significant look at Blake that the School House lad could not help noticing it.

"What are you looking at me like that for, Figgins?" he demanded at once. "Do you mean that I started the yarn?"

Figgins gave a shrug of the shoulders.

"Oh, I don't say so!"

"But you implied it," exclaimed Blake wrathfully, "and I want to know what you mean by it, Figgins!"

"I'd prefer not to say."

"If you're afraid to speak out—"

"Oh, if you put it like that, I'll speak out fast enough!" exclaimed Figgins, with a flash in his eyes. "What I mean is this then, that a chap who goes about backbiting people is quite capable of spreading a yarn like this."

Blake's eyes fairly blazed.

"And do you mean to say that I go about backbiting people?" he shouted.

"Yes, I do."

"Here, draw it mild, Figgins!" exclaimed Lowther in astonishment. "That's not the way to talk to Blake! We all know—"

"I know what I'm talking about!" said Figgins obstinately. Blake pushed back his cuffs.

"You say that I'm a back-biter, Figgins?"

"Yes, I've said it."

"Then you'll have to back up your words!"

"I'm ready. Come into the gym."

"Hang the gym! Put up your fists!"

"Right you are!"

No more time was wasted in words. The two juniors were at it hammer-and-tongs in a second, with blazing eyes and set teeth. Lowther looked on in helpless amazement and a crowd quickly gathered round the spot.

"What's the row?"

"Here, hold on!"

"Pack it up!"

Figgins reeled back with blood streaming from his mouth. Blake followed him up with clenched fists.

"Are you going to take your words back?"

"No!" yelled Figgins, tearing off his blazer. "Here, hold my coat, Fatty! Now, let me get at him!"

Blake had also torn off his blazer. The two foes rushed at one another fiercely and the fight was renewed with savage determination such as was seldom witnessed even in the worst of House rows at St. Jim's.

"What's it all about?" exclaimed Tom Merry, coming on the scene.

"Blessed if I know!" said Lowther. "Figgins called Blake a backbiter for some reason and, of course, Blake wasn't going to stand that!"

"Figgins did!" exclaimed Tom Merry indignantly. "Well, of all the cheek! That's a word more suitable to Figgins himself than to Blake!"

"What's that?" exclaimed Kerr, firing up instantly at this insult to his chief. "Do you mean to call Figgins a back-biter, Tom Merry?"

"Well, I—"

"Yes or no, unless you are afraid to speak out plainly!"

"Yes, then," said Tom Merry between his teeth. "I don't want to quarrel with you, Kerr, but that word is a jolly good description of Figgins, as I know."

Kerr struck the School House lad full in the face with his open hand, with a smack that sounded like a pistol shot.

"Now, come on!" he said savagely.

Tom Merry did not need asking twice. He came on with blazing eyes and he and Kerr were soon fighting like tigers. The crowd thickened round the spot in the growing dusk of the April afternoon, looking on with eagerness and amazement. Two fights at the same moment were rather exciting and the end was not reached yet.

"Go it, Figgins!" "Give him beans, Blake!" "Go it, Tom Merry!" "Buck up, Kerr!" yelled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Although a patriotic School House fellow, I must weally remark that I think Tom Mewwy deserves to get a thwashing. He certainly has no wight to call Figgins names, considering his own wascally and backbiting conduct!"

Monty Lowther reached out and seized D'Arcy by the nose and thumb.

"What's that about Tom Merry?" he demanded.

"Welease my nose, you wotter!" wailed D'Arcy.

"Take back what you said!" "I wefuse to do anything of the kind! Welease my beastly nose and I will give you a licking!"

"You'll have the chance!" exclaimed Lowther. "I've had enough of your rot, D'Arcy! Take off your jacket!"

And he dragged off his own. D'Arcy was not slow to obey. He rushed at Lowther with brandished fist and the next moment was lying on his back, staring up at the stars that were beginning to come out in the dark blue sky.

Digby rushed forward and faced Lowther.

"Here, come on, you Shell rotter, you'll find me a bit harder to tackle!" he shouted. "Come on, do you hear?"

"I hear and I'm coming!" grunted Lowther.

Digby was indeed a more formidable opponent than D'Arcy. Lowther had his hands full when he tackled the Fourth-Former. Arthur Augustus sat up, rubbing his nose. He groped about for his missing eyeglass.

"Thank you vewwy much, Digby! Give him a thwashing!" he exclaimed. "Go it! Knock him right out!"

Three fights going on at once were certain to attract attention, but the combatants were too furious to care.

"What is this fearful row about?"

It was Kildare's voice. The captain of St. Jim's pushed his way through the crowd of juniors, with Monteith, the New House prefect, at his heels. "What is the matter? Stop that fighting instantly!"

Kildare's words were law. The exasperated juniors separated unwillingly, bruised and battered, but by no means satisfied.

The captain's brow was dark and stern.

"How dare you fight like this in the quadrangle?" he exclaimed. "What is it all about? Another of your House rows?"

"No, it isn't!" said Monteith. "Here's Lowther fighting with Digby. What are you up to, you

young rascals!"

"What is all this about, Tom Merry?"

"Oh, nothing!"

"Answer me at once!"

"Well, I started it," said Blake, wiping his mouth from which the red was streaming. "I didn't like something Figgins said—"

"Something that was quite true!" shouted Figgins.

"Do you want some more?"

"Yes, I do, and—"

"Grab that young fool, Monteith!" exclaimed Kildare, seizing Blake by the shoulders and forcibly dragging him away from Figgins. And the New House prefect did the same with Figgins.

"Go into your own houses, you young rascals!" went on the captain of St. Jim's. "I think you have all taken leave of your senses the past few days. There has been nothing but quarrelling and ill-feeling."

"He called me a backbiter."

"You had no right to use such a word, Figgins!"

"Well, he is one!"

"Oh, take him away, Monteith! Every fellow who was fighting here will get six with the cane!"

"Right!" said Monteith. "I'll look after Figgins and Kerr!"

And he bundled the New House champions off. There was the sound of a car horn in the gateway and a little saloon car, with Dr. Short sitting in it, drove in and stopped before the Head's House.

Well known were Dr. Short and his little car to the boys of St. Jim's, and a buzz went round at the sight of them.

"Then it's true!"

The smallpox story was fresh in every mind. And the sight of the medical man driving up to St. Jim's confirmed what had hitherto been a doubtful rumour.

CALLED BEFORE THE HEAD

DR. HOLMES, the Head of St. Jim's, was in his study. He rose to his feet as Dr. Short was shown in, and looked in some surprise at the serious expression upon the little medico's face.

"No bad news I hope, Short?" he exclaimed.

"That is what I have come here to learn, my dear sir," replied Dr. Short.

The Head looked puzzled.

"I confess that I don't quite understand—"

"Do you know the rumour that is about in the village?"

"No, I must say I do not. I have heard nothing. What is it?"

"It is to the effect that there has been an outbreak of smallpox at the school here. And as you know, smallpox is a very serious illness and extremely contagious."

The Head looked amazed.

"Smallpox! Here!"

"Yes!"

"What absolute nonsense! There is absolutely no founda-

tion for it! What can possibly have put such an idea into people's heads?" exclaimed Dr. Holmes in utter bewilderment.

"That is what you must find out. I am glad to learn that there is no truth in it."

"Not a particle, my dear sir."

"I found some boys talking over it, by chance, in a shop in the village," said Dr. Short. "Then I inquired and found that others had heard the story. They say that a boy here is dangerously ill and is concealed, the story being given out that he has gone home to see a sick relation."

The Head started.

"One boy has certainly gone home to see a sick relation!" he exclaimed. "A boy named Gore, in the Shell."

"Ah, then no doubt that gave rise to the story!" said Dr. Short with a nod. "But it is pretty clear that the rumour must have originated at the school here."

"You mean that some foolish lad belonging to St. Jim's must have spread the report in the first place?"

"There is not much doubt about that in my mind."

"What could make a lad act in a way so absurd and malicious?" The Head frowned. "I shall inquire into this. If I knew which boys to question—"

"Question those whom I heard speaking of the matter in Mrs. Murphy's shop," said Dr. Short. "Some of the Grammar School boys were twitting them with it. I remember that Merry was there, and Blake and Lowther, with their friends."

The Head touched the bell.

"I will send for Merry and Blake."

"That is a good idea. I have no doubt that they will tell you all they can and, at all events, you can depend upon the truth from them."

Tom Merry and Jack Blake were quickly summoned to the Head's study. The Head looked at them very expressively as they came in. The heroes of the School House bore very visible traces of the fight in the quad.

They had not had time to put themselves in order, either, and their clothes were dishevelled and dusty. Blake kept a handkerchief to the corner of his mouth to mop up the blood that was still oozing away there. Tom Merry was blinking painfully with his left eye. Dr. Short smiled slightly, but the Head's brow was growing very stern.

"Merry, Blake, have you been fighting together?"

"No, sir!" said Tom Merry.

"But you have been fighting somebody?"

"Yes, sir!"

"Well, and whom was it?"

"Kerr, sir, of the New House."

"And you, Blake?"

"I've been scrapping—I mean fighting, sir, with Figgins," mumbled Blake. "It—it was nothing, sir. It doesn't matter!"

"It matters a great deal, I think," said the Head. "I usually take no notice of House disputes, as you know, but in this case the fighting appears to have been carried to a brutal extent."

The two juniors coloured uncomfortably.

It was quite true that the combat had been, for once, hard and bitter, and the signs of battle they bore showed it.

"But that matter may stand over," said the Head, dismissing the subject. "At present I wish to question you about another matter entirely. There seems to be an absurd rumour abroad that there has been an outbreak of smallpox at the school and that a boy suffering from that disease is hidden at St. Jim's. Have you heard anything about it, Merry?"

"Yes, sir. I have heard it."

"Have you any idea how the rumour was started?"

"No, I have only heard it talked about among the fellows."

"And you, Blake?"

"I don't know who started it, sir. Every fellow I've heard speak of it says that he heard it from somebody else."

The Head wrinkled his brows. "That is generally the way

with rumours." Dr. Short remarked. "Nobody knows exactly how they start, but they gather in size like a snowball rolling downhill. I came over to inform you of what was being said. Dr. Holmes. May I suggest a way to silence the absurd chatter?"

"Certainly. I shall be very grateful."

"The story seems to have centred itself round the departure of the boy Gore. If he could return immediately to the school—if only to remain here a day or so, it would explode the absurd story."

The Head nodded.

"That is true. I will see if it can be done. Unfortunately Gore's uncle is very ill and his people want him at home. But I dare say it could be managed. Thank you very much for the suggestion. You may go, Merry and Blake."

The juniors left the study. They left the Head and the little doctor deep in consultation. In the passage outside the two juniors looked at one another curiously.

"You look a pretty object, Merry," Blake remarked.

Tom Merry grinned.

"If you could see yourself, Blake, you wouldn't pass any remarks on me."

"Very likely. I had about the toughest tussle of my life with Figgins," Blake said as they walked down the wide-flagged corridor. "And it's not over yet. I'm going to look for him in the gym this evening."

Tom Merry's brow was clouded.

"Things are getting into a bad state here," he said with a shake of the head. "I don't quite know how it is, but everything seems to be going wrong lately. D'Arcy has got something up against me and won't explain what it is. I give you my word that I haven't done anything to put his back up that I know of. Well, so-long, I'm going to get a wash!"

"Same here!"

And the juniors parted.
Next week: Another Committee!

"SUN" STARS FOR YOUR SCRAPBOOK



Gregory Peck



Sir Laurence Olivier



James Mason

DICK TURPIN

AND

The PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN



Moll is robbed by the Phantom Highwayman in "The House of Secrets". The two comrades follow the spectre to a ruined chapel in the grounds... here they are met by Jasper Doom...

THIS IS NOT THE BEHAVIOUR I EXPECT FROM MY GUESTS! ... CREEPING ABOUT AT THIS HOUR!

SIR, WE ARE WELL WITHIN OUR RIGHTS... A GHOSTLY FIGURE STOLE MY COMPANION'S COAT AND MONEY, AND WE FOLLOWED THE THIEF TO THIS CHAPEL



Jasper Doom gave a scornful laugh.

HEH! HEH! GHOSTLY FIGURE! INDEED! SO YOU, TOO, BELIEVE THESE STORIES OF THE PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN! YOU ARE A FOOL, CAPTAIN! ... APART FROM YOU AND I, ONLY THE RATS AND SPIDERS WALK ABROAD TONIGHT

I HAVE HEARD SOMETHING OF THIS PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN! ... AND THE FIGURE WE FOLLOWED HERE MIGHT WELL ANSWER TO THAT NAME!



Still chuckling evilly, their host led them back to the dark, forbidding house...

HEH! HEH! GHOSTLY FIGURE! PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN! HEH! HEH!



Suddenly Moll saw something which caused her to grasp Dick by the arm!

DICK! ... LOOK! ... HE IS WEARING OLD-FASHIONED RIDING BOOTS!



BY THUNDER! ... SO HE IS! ... WHEN WE LAST SAW HIM, HE WAS WEARING SLIPPERS... THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE REASON FOR HIM TO BE WEARING CAVALIERS RIDING BOOTS...

HE MUST BE THE PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN!



Jasper Doom bade them a mocking good-night... while Dick whispered an urgent warning in Moll's ear!

DON'T GO TO BED... KEEP WATCH! ... IF HE IS THE PHANTOM HE MAY BE UP TO SOME MORE KNAVERY BEFORE DAWN...

TRUST ME DICK! I'LL SIT WITH MY PISTOL AT THE READY! YOU'LL NOT CATCH ME SLEEPING IN THIS HOUSE AFTER WHAT I'VE SEEN TONIGHT



Moll took up guard in her silent room...

BUT WHAT GOOD IS A PISTOL? ... THE LAST TIME THE BULLET SEEMED TO GO RIGHT THROUGH THE PHANTOM! ... STEADY, MOLL! ... YOU MUSTN'T START THINKING SUCH THINGS!

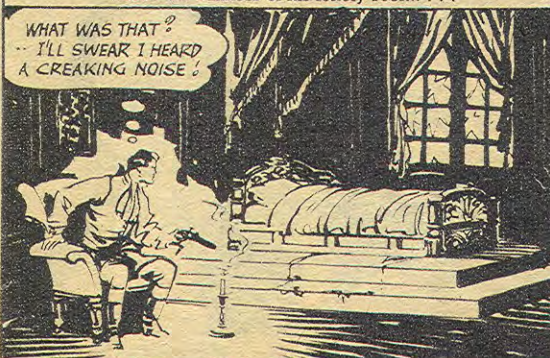


Unseen by the girl beneath, the eyes in the painting gleamed down at Moll evilly...



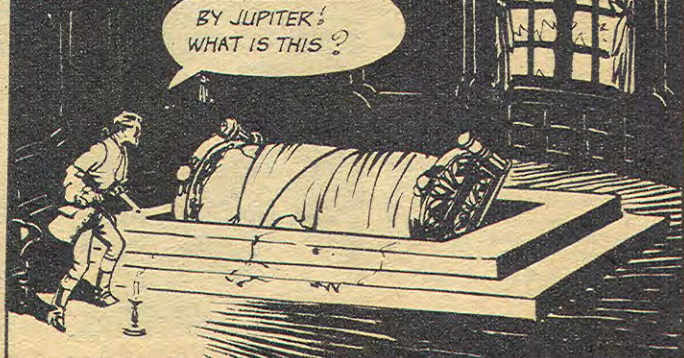
An hour later Dick Turpin started at a sudden sound which broke the stillness of his lonely room...

WHAT WAS THAT? ... I'LL SWEAR I HEARD A CREAKING NOISE!

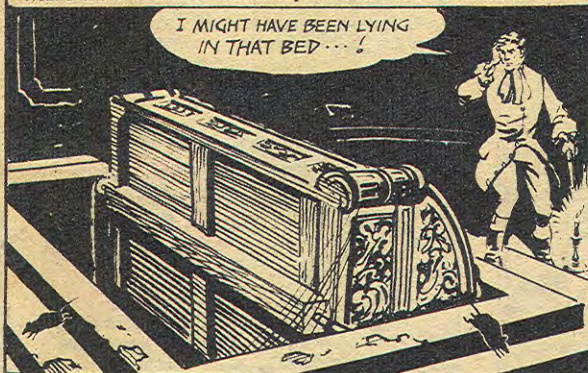


Suddenly... THE BED MOVED!

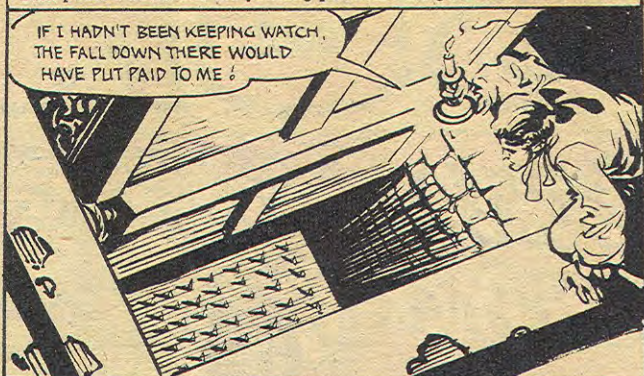
BY JUPITER! WHAT IS THIS?



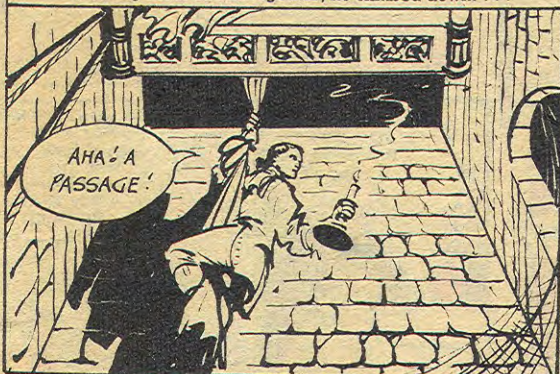
With a creak of hidden machinery the bed turned over on its side!



Dick peered down into the yawning pit where the great bed had been. . . .



Knotting some sheets together, he climbed down. . . .



Dick crept along a cold, damp, rat-infested passage. . . .

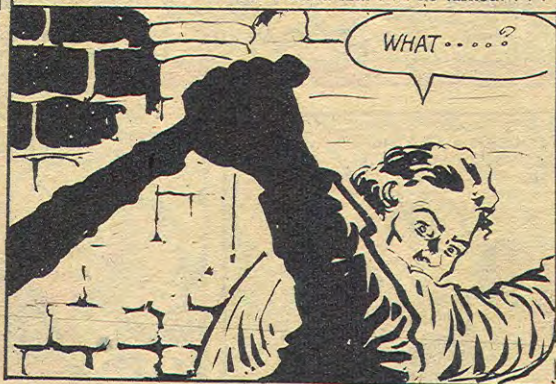


Dick reached the door and pushed it open on its rusty hinges! He peered into the silent chamber beyond. His eyes were instantly drawn to the middle of the chamber, where hung a lace-trimmed coat, a plumed cavalier's hat and a long, curly wig — all shimmering in a ghostly light!

THE CLOTHES OF THE PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN!



Suddenly Dick heard a rustle behind him . . . he turned. . . .



. . . Too late! A cowardly blow from behind sent him spinning to the ground!

HEH! HEH! SO—MY CLEVER FRIEND—YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD UNMASKED THE PHANTOM HIGHWAYMAN, EH?—HEH! HEH!



Meanwhile, in the Black Room, Moll kept watch . . . all unaware of a secret panel opening behind her.



GA-A-A-A WARRAAAAA!

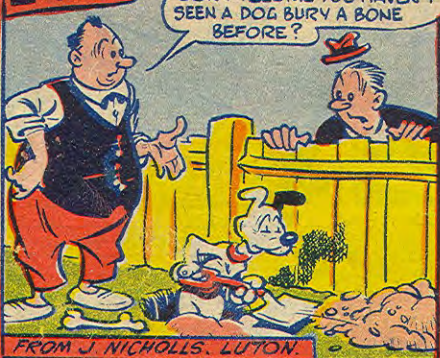


So Dick and Moll are in the clutches of the Phantom! What will happen now? See next week's thrilling instalment!

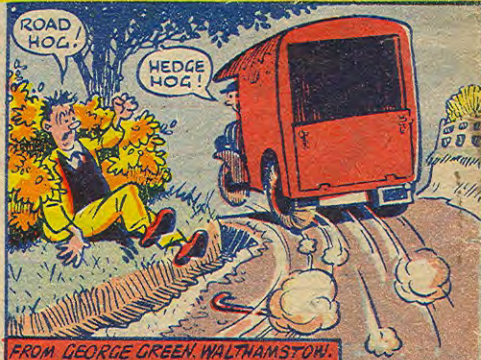
THE JOKER'S FUN PAGE

This week's prize-winning jokes from readers! The First Prize is 1s. 6d., the remainder receive 5s. How about a joke from you? Send it to The Joker, 8 Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4. The Editor's decision is final.

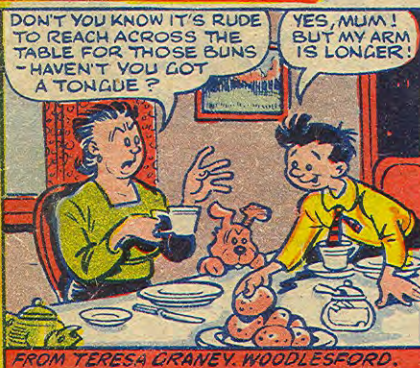
1ST PRIZE



FROM J. NICHOLLS, LUTON.



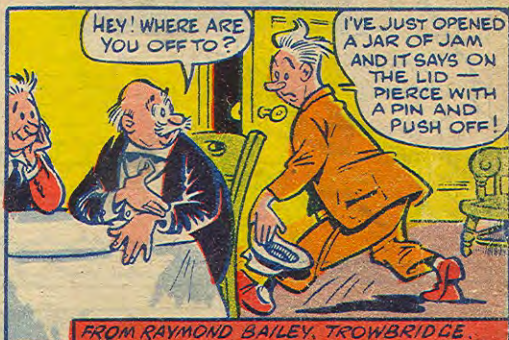
FROM GEORGE GREEN, WALTHAMSTON.



FROM TERESA GRANEY, WOODLESFORD.



FROM MICHAEL CROME, GIDEA PARK.



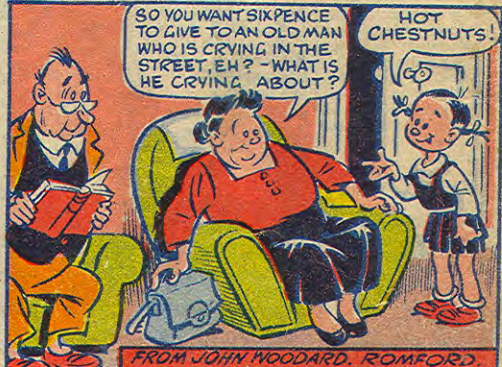
FROM RAYMOND BAILEY, TROWBRIDGE.



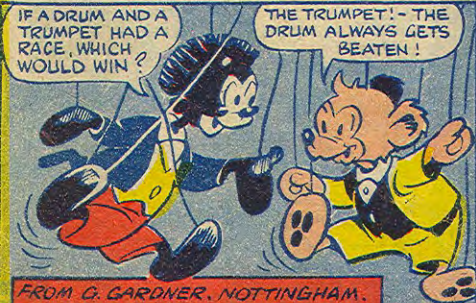
FROM M. COYNE, ACCRINGTON.



FROM FRED MITCHELL, LONDON E.16.



FROM JOHN WOODARD, ROMFORD.



FROM G. GARDNER, NOTTINGHAM.



FROM ROBERT JONES, LEICESTER.



FROM KEITH CROMARTY, MANCHESTER.