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SCHOOLBOYS ABROAD!



HARRY WHARTON & CO. IN YPRES!

(One of the Scenes in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale of the Chums of Grayfriars.) 23-8-19



SCHOOLBOYS ABROAD!

by
Frank Richards

**A Magnificent Long, Complete
Story of HARRY WHARTON
& CO.'S Visit to the Battle-
fields of France.**

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

■ Harry Wharton & Co.'s Arrival!

"BOULOGNE!"
"What a ripping place it looks!"

"Rather!"
Harry Wharton & Co., the juniors of Greyfriars School, Kent, were standing on the crowded deck of a Channel steamer as she glided into the harbour of the famous French Channel port. One of the ports the Huns had fought to get for four long years! Thanks to the valiant soldiers of Britain and France, the cruel invader had fought in vain!

The boat the boys were on was a troopship, and the only excuse they had for being on board was due to the fact that Johnny Bull's uncle, who happened to be a major-general at the War Office, had arranged the trip for them. Johnny's uncle had given Harry Wharton & Co. their warrants and passports so that they could go to France in order to make an organised tour round the great battle-fields of the war.

The party was made up of juniors from the Remove Form at Greyfriars. The boys had hailed for the tour, and the result of the ballot had provided much joy, and at the same time much disappointment.

But Greyfriars is a school of sportsmen, and the unlucky ones, although envious of their more fortunate schoolmates, had one and all wished Harry Wharton & Co. "Bon voyage, and a safe return!"

The group on deck, as the steamer drifted alongside Boulogne's quay, consisted of Harry Wharton, the captain of the Remove Form; Bob Cherry; Frank Nugent; Harree Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur; Alonzo Todd; Tom Dutton, the deaf junior of Greyfriars; Fisher Tarleton Fish, the Yankee lad; Johnny Bull; Lord Mausever, the immaculate schoolboy-earl; and last, but not least, Billy Bunter, the fat boy of Greyfriars, and commonly called the Owl of the Remove, or the Porpoise.

Billy Bunter was looking decidedly pale now. Pork-pies with plenty of gravy in them, and jam-tarts with very puffy pastry, on the eve of sailing, had proved his undoing, and, as was the case with most of the other juniors, he was

delighted now that the Channel passage was over.

It was not the first time some of the boys had been in France; but they were all greatly excited, all the same.

"My lint! How ripping it is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as sailors on the quay-side made fast.

"I wonder what sort of chap the officer is to whom we have to report," said Harry Wharton. "You fellows stick together when we get ashore, and stand by the kits. I will go and show our papers."

"All right, old bean!"
"Now, don't forget. We don't want the party wandering all over the place."

"Nunno!"
"And, besides, we haven't the remotest idea where we're sleeping to-night. Perhaps we shall not stay in Boulogne to-day. It's only just one o'clock."

The gangway-planks had been pushed out, and officers and men started to stream ashore. There were hundreds of them. They were returning to France from leave in the United Kingdom, and now they were destined to join their units on the Rhine, or on the lines of communication in France and Belgium. They looked a fine, healthy body of fellows, and Harry Wharton & Co. felt very proud of them.

At last the decks were cleared, and Harry Wharton led his party ashore, and was told at the gangway to report and show his papers to the Landing Officer at the office a few yards away.

Wharton left the group of juniors standing with their baggage, and made his way to the office, where he waited for several minutes before an officer came up to him.

"Are you one of the boys belonging to the party from Greyfriars School, in Kent?"

Harry Wharton raised his cap.
"Yes, sir. My name is Wharton, and so far I am in charge of the other fellows."

The officer smiled and held out his hand.

"Glad to meet you, Wharton!" he said. "Will you just let me have a look at your papers? We have received a wire from the War Office. I understand that Sir Charles Delawney has fixed things up for you. You are very lucky,

as it means a jolly cheap trip when he fixes things up for people."

"Good!" laughed Harry Wharton. "Here are the passports and papers, sir. We got all our English money changed into French currency notes when we were on the steamer."

The officer took the papers and looked them through.

"These all seem in order," he remarked. "Now, I will give you a rough idea of the tour."

"Will you be in charge, sir?" said Harry Wharton. "It's rather hard luck on you, and I am sorry we are putting you to so much trouble."

"Not at all!" replied the officer. "My name is Captain Matthews, and as I was with the Guards Division during the greater time of the war, I think it would be much more interesting for you if we arrange the tour to bring in most of the places where the Guards were."

"How ripping, sir!"

"Of course, it will mean leaving out a good bit of the old British lines; but the Guards were in most of the big shows, so, as we have got less than a week, you will find it a very crowded tour."

"The more we do and see the better, sir."

Captain Matthews smiled.

"Well, look here, Wharton," he said.

"So long as you fellows play the game I intend to give you a pretty free hand. You know there are still a lot of troops out here. They are clearing up and doing all sorts of jobs, so you must not get up to any tricks which are likely to interfere with them. If you do, the authorities will only send you back to England."

"We understand that, sir, and we shall do everything we can to help you."

"That's right," said Captain Matthews. "Now, this is what I intend to do. You will be accommodated at the Hotel Folkestone for to-night, and at six o'clock to-morrow morning I shall meet you there with three motor-cars. I think that will be enough for the party and kit, won't it?"

"Yes, rather, sir!" replied Harry Wharton. "There are ten of us, and we have only brought light kit with us."

"Well, we will go to Ypres to-morrow, via St. Omer and Cassel, and then we will have a look at the Paschendaele

area, where the big battle from July till the end of October, 1917, took place."

"How ripping!"

Captain Matthews looked at some notes he had made.

"You will sleep at St. Pol to-morrow night, and the next day we'll go to Arras, and see the old lines there. The next day we'll get to Cambrai and Boulogne Wood and that part of the line. That's the area where the Guards attacked in 1918. Then, the next day, I propose to go to Albert and see the old Somme battlefield of 1916. You will be put up at Amiens that night, and I will have to be the end of the tour, I'm afraid."

"It will be a topping tour, sir!" said Harry Wharton. "Shall we see any of the Front where the French and Americans were?"

Captain Matthews smiled.

"No; I'm sorry, but I don't think there will be any time for that."

"All right, sir. It's awfully good of you to arrange things like you have!"

"Well, Wharton, you take your fellows to the Hotel Folkestone now. It's on the other side of the quay, over there. You have to cross the bridge opposite the Hotel Louvre. You can get a cab here easily enough, and the manager of the Hotel Folkestone has been told to expect you. It has all been arranged."

"Thank you, sir!"

"Well, you do what you like now, and see that you are all ready to move off at six o'clock to-morrow morning. Good-bye for the present!"

"Good-bye, sir!" said Harry Wharton, raising his cap. "And thank you very much!"

Captain Matthews hurried away, and Harry Wharton rejoined his chums.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry, who was sitting on a pile of luggage. "Whyfore that jolly old grin, my pippin?"

"It's all fixed up, you fellows," replied Harry Wharton. "Boulogne for to-night!"

"And to-morrow?"

"Ypres and Passchendaele."

"Good egg! And then?"

"Arras, and then Cambrai, and then the Somme."

"How ripping!"

"Who was that johnnie? What's he like?"

"His name is Captain Matthews, and he's coming with us on our tour. He's a jolly good sort. He has been with the Guards Division during the war."

"My hat! The Guards, eh?"

"Yes; if he can't show us what's what, nobody can."

There was a regular babel of voices as the Greystriars juniors discussed their good fortune.

"Well, come along, you fellows!" cried Harry Wharton. "We've got to get a cab for the baggage, and then we can have a look round Boulogne. The Hotel Folkestone is the place we're going to sleep to-night. There it is, over on the other side of the harbour. It's no distance round. Whoever's going to walk will have to go down this side of the quay. Turn to the left over the bridge, and then to the left again, and the hotel's about a quarter of a mile along on the right-hand side."

"Here's a cab!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "I'll go with the kit."

"All right, Bob!" said Harry Wharton. "You and Mauly and Franky go with the cab, and I'll take the other fellows with me."

"Right, my dear fellow!" drawled Mauleverer. "Pray get in, Bob! Come on, Nugent!"

The cab was an open voiture, very comfortably cushioned. There was room for three, side by side, on the seat, and

there was a little extra seat for a fourth facing them. Bob Cherry, Nugent, and Mauleverer got in, and the rest of the juniors piled the luggage all around them.

Mauleverer made a slight grimace. "I suppose we couldn't have another cab for the baggage?" he remarked.

"Hardly, Mauly," said Bob. "It's a bit of a squeeze; but these are days of economy. My hat! I wish the blessed driver wouldn't talk so much! He's been babbling away ever since we got into the cab. What on earth is he talking about, Wharton?"

Harry Wharton chuckled. "He wants to know where he's to drive to?"

"By Jove! I never thought of that," remarked Mauleverer, looking up at the driver. "Hotel Folkestone, dear boy!"

"Hotel Folkestone?"

"Yea, rather!"

"Oui, m'sieur."

The voiture rolled off.

The driver rattled on down the quay-side for some distance, and passed Alonso Todd and Hurree Singh, who had started off in advance of the others. The three juniors in the cab waved their hands, and shouted out a greeting.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Looking Around!

THE voiture rolled across the iron bridge, running over the harbour basin, and then turned to the left.

The driver was whipping up his horse now, with the air of a man who was anxious to get the journey over quickly, short though it was. The three juniors felt anxious for the safety of the baggage piled up all around them, as the rickety cab rattled along.

Excitedly for the boys, the voiture came to a halt very soon. It had stopped outside a handsome-looking hotel with a white-painted front, and rows and rows of window-shutters picked out in green paint. On a sign over the door was the legend "Hotel Folkestone."

The driver gesticulated.

"Voila, mesieurs!"

"Good!" cried Bob Cherry. "Here we are, Mauly!"

"Right, my dear fellow! Shall we wait until the other fellows turn up?"

"Oh, dry up, Mauly! Pay the cocher! I mean the cocher—and come on!"

"But—"

"Don't jaw, old chap!" said Frank Nugent, leaping out. "Here's the hotel porter; he'll take the kit in. Come on, and brass out for the cab. You've got all the cash!"

"Oh, very well," drawled Mauleverer, stepping out and feeling for his purse. "Combien?" he asked the driver. "How much?"

"Vingt francs, m'sieur," said the driver.

"Eh?"

"Vingt francs, m'sieur."

"Twenty francs?" said Bob Cherry.

"My only hat!"

"It's a swindle!" said Frank Nugent.

"He's asking that because we're English. Offer him a quarter of it, Mauly!"

"By Jove!"

"Vingt francs, m'sieur," repeated the driver, blandly; and he ran on with a string of explanations in French so rapidly that the juniors could hardly follow the meaning of a word.

"Oh, dry up!" said Mauly. "Jo ne comprene pas. And I don't want to comprehend, either, as a matter of fact. I regard you as a thief. However, I shall not condescend to enter into a dispute

with a fellow I regard with contempt, so here is your twenty francs!"

And he extracted a twenty-franc note from his pocket-book. Bob Cherry jerked it out of his hand.

"Really, my dear fellow—"

"You're not going to be done like that!" said Bob, cheerfully. "Here, I'll change this for you! Here's a ten-franc note. Give him that, and I'll keep the rest for my sense!"

"Really—"

"I suppose he ought really to have about five francs," said Frank Nugent. "Make it ten. Give it to him, Mauly."

"Oh, very well!"

Mauleverer extended the ten-franc note to the driver, who gesticulated wildly.

"He won't take it, my dear fellows."

"Then give him nine francs!" said Bob Cherry, in a business-like way. "Every time he won't take it, give him a franc less."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By Jove! That will be funny!"

The driver was pouring out an uninterrupted stream of bad French. Lord Mauleverer slowly put the ten-franc note away, and extracted a leather purse from his pocket and opened it. It was full of silver money. Mauly took out a five-franc piece and four separate francs. He tendered them to the driver. The man gesticulated more than ever, and his voice rose to shriek.

"Neuf francs!" said Frank Nugent. "Take them, you idiot, or you'll only get eight!"

More gesticulations.

"Very well, there's eight," said Lord Mauleverer, slipping a franc back into his pocket.

The driver looked at the eight francs in the extended palm, and seemed on the verge of a fit of apoplexy. He waved his hands wildly in the air, and his voice rose crescendo, his French growing more rapid and more incomprehensible than ever.

"Very well—there's seven—sept francs," said Mauly, putting another franc away.

The driver comprehended at last. He made a sudden clutch at the seven francs that remained, as if afraid they would further diminish in number; and then he stood pouring out a stream of remarks in his own dialect as the juniors walked into the hotel. They knew that he was abusing them; but as they did not understand a word, it did not trouble them at all. And the joke was a good one. Even with seven francs, the driver had been overpaid, and he certainly deserved the little experience he had gone through as a punishment for overcharging.

"By Jove!" remarked Mauleverer. "I regard that as very funny!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"By the way, Cherry, you've got ten francs of mine!"

"Eh? I saved that!" said Bob Cherry. "You were going to waste it. A ten-franc note saved is a ten-franc note earned, so I have earned it."

"Really, Cherry—"

"I appeal to Franky!"

"Certainly," said Frank Nugent solemnly. "Bob has earned it. I'm surprised at you, Mauly!"

"Really, my dear fellow—"

"It's right enough," said Bob Cherry.

"You're in the wrong again, Mauly, as usual!"

"Really, Cherry—"

"I'll treat the rest of the fellows to something presently with this ten-franc note I've earned," said Bob generously.

"Really, you know—"

"Hallo! Look here! Here they come!"

exclaimed Frank Nugent.

The swing-doors of the hotel entrance

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wung round with a whirl, and Harry Wharton led the remainder of the party into the hall.

"Hallo, my dear fellows!" drawled Mauleverer. "You've soon got here! I ought to have walked. It was most uncomfortable in that cab."

Bob Cherry laughed.

"If you had walked, Mauly," he said, "I shouldn't have earned my ten francs!" And Bob related the little episode to the fresh arrivals.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of the Remove gave a hearty laugh at the conclusion of Bob's story, and Billy Bunter seized the golden opportunity offered him.

"Ten francs!" he piped. "That's jolly good, Bob, old man! Now, what do you say to a little light refreshment? We can get quite a decent feed for ten francs."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Boulogne's a ripping place!" continued Bunter. "We haven't come far, but for its size there are more first-class grubshops than in any place I've ever been in. I shall come back here again some day to —"

"Oh, dry up, Bunter!" laughed Harry Wharton, who had just rejoined the group after having seen the manager of the hotel. "We'll all go out now and have a look round the town. The manager is going to let us have our dinner at six to-night, so that we can turn in early. We can stay out till then."

"Good eggs!"

The juniors streamed out through the swing-doors again, and strolled along the quay-side until they got into the centre of the town.

"This is very ripping, my dear fellows!" said Alonzo Todd as they turned into the Rue de Victor Hugo.

"Jolly good!" said Billy Bunter. "Did you notice that little side-turning we've just passed?"

"Yes. What about it?"

"I was wondering —"

"Well, my dear Bunter?"

"Whether they have a buffet there."

Bob Cherry, who was on the other side of Bunter, seized the plump junior by the arm and dragged him on.

"You come along!" he exclaimed. "You don't want to feed yet! Perhaps we'll let you have a bite before dinner; but not just yet."

"Oh, really, Cherry —"

"Cheese it!"

Billy Bunter clapped into dissatisfied silence. The French streets were very interesting to him; but it is probable that he would have given away the whole of the Rue de Victor Hugo for the sight of a well-spread table.

"Messieurs-messieurs!"

It was the piping voice of a picture-postcard merchant, and he came up with effusive smiles and outspread stock.

"Carte postale, m'sieur?" he said, addressing Alonzo Todd persuasively.

"Cinq franc le douzaine. Verree fine good!"

"We really don't want any just yet, my dear man!"

"Good fine carte postale!"

"Je ne veux acheter!" said Alonzo Todd, counting out the words, as it were, with a laborious mental effort over each.

"Fine good!" explained the postcard merchant. "All English soldiers buy. Good at fine!"

"I really don't see how he knows we are English."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Really, Cherry, I do not like the way picture-postcard fellows rush up to a chap, as if he looks like a greenhorn and a stranger! I regard it as really insulting!"

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How does he know we haven't been weeks and weeks here?"

"Perhaps you look like a mug!" suggested Billy Bunter.

"Really, Bunter —"

"Fine excellent!" said the merchant persuasively. "Cinq franc le douzaine."

"What does he mean by song froig, my dear Cherry?"

"Ha, ha! Five francs."

"Really! That's rather expensive, isn't it—five francs for twelve rotten, cheap postcards? My Uncle Benjamin told me that prices are high in France owing to the war, though. But I suppose we ought to buy some, as the people here have grown to depend on English soldiers for their living."

"Prices are high; but I expect they vary according to the simplicity of the visitor!" grinned Harry Wharton. "I don't think five francs is the rock-bottom price for those postcards."

"I wonder!"

"He's pulling your respected leg, Toddy!" said Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. "Come on, and let him look for another lopsided jay! No need for him to do you!"

"Very good, my dear Fish! Merci, non!" said Alonzo Todd.

He walked on with his chums. The Boulogne picture-postcard merchant followed him, trying to spread out the picture postcards for him to look at.

"Fine good!" he insisted. "Me speak English. Fine before and so good!"

"Oh dear! Is that English?"

"And so before and good!" said the merchant. "And also fine!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Me speak too good and so fine English!" assured the merchant. "Also picture carte postal bon fine good! Quatre franc le douzaine."

"What does he mean by cart froaing, Bully?"

"Ha, ha! Four francs."

"Oh, I see!"

"The price is coming down!" grinned Bob Cherry. "It will be rather interesting to see exactly what it does come down to. Don't buy. This will be rather like the cabbie!"

"Rather not, my dear Cherry! I am afraid the man is a rascal. If the postcards are only worth four francs, he was trying to swindle me in asking for five francs!"

"Go hon!"

"They have to live, you know!" drawled Mauleverer. "Il faut vivre!"

"Really, I do not see the necessity," said Alonzo Todd, with a glance at the ragged and dirty merchant. "I cannot see that this person is either ornamental or useful."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Excellent et so fine good!" urged the merchant. "Trois franc le douzaine."

"Twar franc! How much is that, Cherry?"

"Three francs."

"Oh, I see! It's coming down remarkably."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on!" said Harry Wharton. "That chap means to keep us company all the way through Boulogne. Let him go on!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Nice good and so fine carte postale! Deux francs le douzaine!" urged the merchant.

"Oh dear!" cried Alonzo Todd.

"They're only two francs now!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Alonzo Todd stopped and fixed a very severe frown upon the persuasive native of Boulogne. There was scorn in Alonzo's look.

"Pray let me alone, my dear man!"

he said. "I refuse to buy your rotten postcards. I regard you as a dishonest man! You are apparently capable of overcharging a stranger, instead of treating him with the most exact honesty, as a decent man would and should. I regard you as an absolute rotter! Pray go away!"

"Nice and so fine good postcard! Un franc le douzaine!" said the Boulogne merchant, almost desparingly.

"I regard you with profound contempt!"

"So good fine before and excellent postcard —"

"Pray go away!"

"Cinquante centime le douzaine!" urged the merchant.

"What does he mean by songkong songtime, my dear Cherry?"

"Ha, ha! Fifty centimes."

"Oh dear! That's about fivepence, isn't it?"

"Yes; rather less than fivepence—half a franc."

"I suppose we've got to the real price of the postcards now!" grinned Johnny Bull. "You may as well have them, Toddy."

"Yes; they'll do to send to Coker," said Bob Cherry.

"Really, Cherry, I have no particular desire to send postcards to Coker of the Fifth Form!"

"But I have, so it amounts to the same thing! Buy them. I suppose you're not going to refuse to buy after beating the man down in price like that? Why on earth would poor old Uncle Benzoline say?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Why, I didn't —"

"Now, Toddy!"

"I appeal to you all, my dear fellows —"

"I think you had better buy the postcards," said Harry Wharton solemnly.

"It's really all you can do now, Toddy."

"But I protest —"

"Cinquante centime le douzaine," murmured the merchant.

"Very well, I will take them; but —"

"Buck up, Toddy! You're keeping us waiting, and we've wasted a lot of time already over your blessed bargain-hunting!"

"Really, Cherry —"

"Oh, hurry up!"

Alonzo Todd bought the postcards for half a franc, and Bob Cherry kindly relieved him of them, and slipped them into his pocket. Alonzo Todd's face relaxed.

"Thank you, my dear Cherry! It is very kind of you to carry them for me."

"Of course I will carry them," said Bob Cherry. "I'm going to send them to Coker."

"But —"

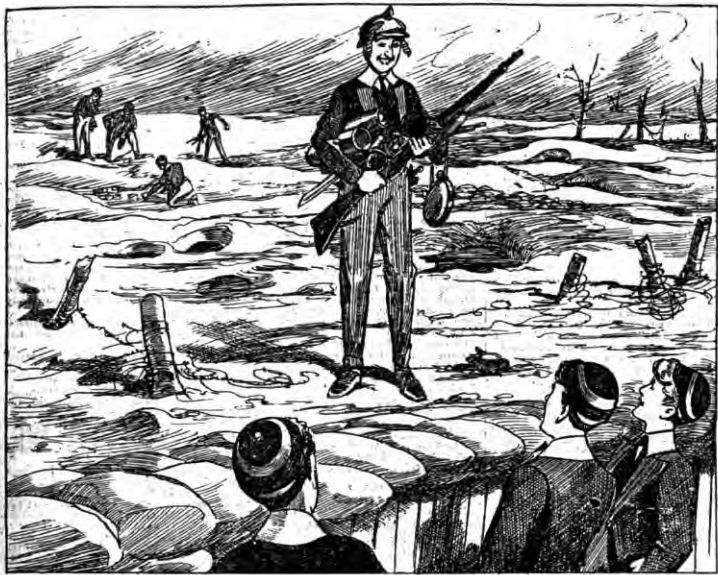
"It's all right, Toddy; you needn't bother. All you've got to do is to get the stamps now," said Bob. "You will have to get ten-centime stamps for postcards, don't forget."

To that Alonzo Todd made no reply. Words failed him.

Harry Wharton & Co. strolled the length of the street leading up to the cathedral, and then strolled back again towards the harbour. But just before they reached the famous basin Billy Bunter called a halt. He had caught sight of the magic word "Restaurant" in big type.

"Hold on, you fellows!" he said. "This must be one of the sights of the place, you know. We ought to have a look at it."

"I know the part of it you want to have a look at!" growled Harry Wharton. "You'll only have to slave off your pangs of hunger for a bit longer."



"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as Fisher Tarleton Fish came staggering towards the trench. "Any old iron, Fishy? Any rags or bones?" (See Chapter 6.)

"Look here, Wharton, I—"

"We've got to get in by six," said Harry Wharton, "and it's a quarter to now."

"Yes, but—"

"Perhaps it would be better to make for the Hotel Folkestone at once," Frank Nugent suggested. "I must say I'm jolly hungry now; and, considering we got up so jolly early this morning, I'm almost ready to turn in for a snooze."

"Hear, hear!" said Johnny Bull.

"Seconded and passed!" laughed Bob Cherry. "Come along. Follow your uncle!"

And the ten juniors returned to their hotel, where they found a special dinner awaiting them, well-cooked and plenty of it; and directly afterwards, thoroughly tired out, the juniors went up to their rooms, to sleep the sleep of the just.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Tour Commences!

HARRY WHARTON was the first up the next morning when an obliging garcon called him.

He went along the corridor from room to room occupied by the party, and kindly stripped the clothes off the other beds, and the shivering juniors turned out in the grey dawn.

Billy Bunter huddled the clothes round him and grunted. Billy Bunter was found

of his bed, and he hated cold water and early rising.

"I—I say, I think we might have another half-hour!" he exclaimed. "I had a dream last night, and it was all about Army cars turning up late."

"Get up!"

"Now, I suppose it's no good our cooling our heels in the blessed street!" expostulated Billy Bunter. "My idea is that if we get up—"

"Out you get!"

"But, you see—Ow-oo-ooch!"

It seemed to Billy Bunter for the moment that another flood had visited the earth. But it was only a bath-sponge full of cold water that Bob Cherry was squeezing down his neck.

"Gerrooh!" roared Billy Bunter, leaping out of bed like an indiarubber ball. "Yarool! Stop! Yow! Yah!"

"Have some more!"

"Yow! Yah! No!"

"Better get dressed," said Harry Wharton, laughing.

"Look here—"

"Want some more water?" inquired Bob.

"I'll—I'll—"

There was a tap at the door, and the grinning garcon put his head in.

"Messieurs—"

"All right," said Harry Wharton. "We're coming. Bob—Bunter, stop that silly roving now, and get into your clothes. If we're late for the cars—"

"By Jove, yes!"

And Bob Cherry was soon splashing away merrily. Billy Bunter was the first ready to go, after all. There was an anxious frown on Bunter's face.

"Feeling bad, Bunter?" asked Johnny Bull, with friendly interest, as he came into the room to borrow a hairbrush. "Haven't you got over yesterday's boat trip yet?"

"Oh, yes! That's all right," said Bunter. "I wasn't thinking about that. I think I'll run down now, and not wait for you chaps. I'm not quite easy in my mind."

"Why, what's the matter?"

"It's about the brekker. You know these blessed French breakfasts! If they expect me to start a day's motoring on a roll and butter there will be a row!"

And Billy Bunter descended, and the rest of the juniors followed him shortly afterwards.

Captain Matthews had taken care that there should be a substantial breakfast prepared for the juniors; and even Billy Bunter, was satisfied with it. After breakfast the luggage was piled on to one of the three Army motor-cars, which had already arrived, and sharp at six o'clock, Captain Matthews turned up, and the juniors crowded into the cars, and, with the officer in the leading one, the tourists drove off.

The page of the leading car was slow getting out of the town; but as soon as they were clear of Boulogne and its

suburbs Captain Matthews ordered his driver to open out, and the three cars fairly flew along the long, straight road.

"My hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "This is ripping!"

"Jolly good roads these French ones."

"Yes, I wish we had them in England. You can see for miles ahead. They call their main roads 'Routes Nationales'."

The rain of the previous day had laid the dust, and the speed of the cars kept the juniors comparatively quiet. The rush of air did not allow them to talk much, and kilometer after kilometer was covered under very pleasant conditions.

The leading car, besides the driver and Captain Matthews, contained Wharton, Bull, and Cherry. The second car had as passengers Nugent, Dutton, Mauleverer, and Fish; and Todd, Bunter, and Hurree Singh were travelling with the baggage in the rear car.

Captain Matthews had expressed a wish before starting that the juniors should stick to the same cars throughout the tour.

By eight o'clock the cars had reached the outskirts of St. Omer, and the drivers, on reaching the famous old town, found it necessary to slow up somewhat.

Captain Matthews turned round to speak to Harry Wharton as the leading car drew into the quaint old streets of St. Omer.

"This is the town where General French had his headquarters," he cried.

"It was G.H.Q. for a long time, you know; but it was eventually shifted back to Montreuil. That's about forty kilometers due south of Boulogne."

The juniors stared at them.

"I've told the drivers of the other cars to let those others fellows know things of interest," said Captain Matthews.

"Jolly good of you, sir," Captain Matthews smiled.

"Not at all!" he cried. "We're not going to stop here. We're going straight on to Cassel now. That's where General Plumer has his Second Army Headquarters. I'll show you round there, and we'll have lunch in the town."

"All right, sir."

And the cars gradually increased their pace again as they left St. Omer behind them. The roads were not quite so good here, as so much heavy military traffic had passed over them; but before eleven the leading car had reached Zuytpeene.

The road commenced to wind in a most extraordinary way now, and the speed of the cars was reduced to a mere crawl as

she mounted the hill on the top of which was the quaint old town of Cassel.

Harry Wharton leaned forward in the car.

"What a ripping view you can get from here, sir!" he said.

"Yes, Cassel's a wonderful place; but you will get the best view from the roof of General Plumer's old headquarters. We shall go up there, and I shall be able to point out to you places of interest. You see these windmills here at the side of the road?"

"Yes, sir."

"They were used a great deal by the Army signallers during the war."

The Greysfriars juniors looked at the old mills, full of interest. It seemed difficult to realise that only a year ago there were probably British soldiers posted in those quaint structures, staring out across country, and signalling messages of direst urgency.

At last the summit was reached, and, turning to the right, the cars drove through the narrow, cobbled streets until the leading car came to a standstill at a large white house on the left-hand side of the handsome square.

Captain Matthews leapt out on to the pavement, and the Greysfriars fellows tumbled over by one.

"What a ripping trip, sir!" said Lord Mauleverer.

"Are we going to have lunch now, you chaps?" asked Billy Bunter, rolling up to the group.

"Not yet," replied Captain Matthews. "I thought you would like to see a few things here, and we could have lunch at the hotel at the other end of the square here."

Billy Bunter blinked.

"What about a snack first, sir?"

Bob Cherry caught Bunter's ear between his finger and thumb, and gave it a good twist.

"Shut up!" he hissed.

"Really, Cherry?"

"Another word, and I'll rub your nose in these cobbles!"

Bunter shook all over.

"A-a-all right, Cherry!" he stammered. "Leggo my ear!"

"Sorry we've brought this fat boulder, sir!" said Bob, with a grin. "But we're doing our best to train him in the way he should go."

"That's all right," said Captain Matthews, with a laugh. "Motoring does give one an appetite. But come along, now! It's a ripping clear day, and we ought to get a splendid view!"

The party went up a sort of alleyway, and then up some steps leading to the doorway of a fine, big house. A soldier was stationed at the top of the steps, and he gave Captain Matthews a smart salute as they climbed up.

"I want to show this party round," said the captain, returning the salute.

"Very well, sir. There are only half a dozen men inside, still clearing up, sir."

"Right! Thank you! Come on, you fellows!"

The Greysfriars juniors tramped into the house.

"All these rooms were used by the Staff," said Captain Matthews.

The sign of the cross was next door. There, that's General Plumer's old room."

"My hat, how ripping!"

The boys stared into the room, which was now quite bare. All the maps had been removed from the walls, and the place was devoid of all furniture; but the interest of the room remained still, and Harry Wharton & Co. were duly impressed.

The party next clambered up the stairs, and at last got out on to the fine flat roof of the house.

"My hat, what a view!" gasped Johnny Bull.

"By Jove!" exclaimed the rest.

Looking out in all directions, it seemed as though the whole world was at their feet.

"That's Flanders, that is!" laughed Captain Matthews. "That's all that can be said for it. It's as flat as a blessed pancake!"

He pointed eastward, and the boys followed the direction of his hand.

"Right in the distance, there," said the captain, "you see that sort of brown patch, all ruins!"

"Yes, rather, sir!"

"Well, that's Ypres. We are going there after lunch. Due north—over there, you see?—that's Dunkirk."

"How ripping!"

"You can't see Ostend, but it's well to the right of Dunkirk. Now, looking south, you see Baillou. I knew that place before it was touched; but the Huns got at it in their big push last year, and now it's knocked about dreadfully. Awful shamo, as it was a jolly pretty little place!"

"The dirty Huns!"

"Now, down there, in the same direction as Ypres, you see Poperinghe. All the Tommies who got to know Flanders so well used to refer to the place as 'Pop.'"

"I could do with some now," murmured Billy Bunter.

"I don't mean that sort of pop!" laughed Captain Matthews. "Now, you see that sort of ridge, and what looks like a forest, just to the left of Ypres?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, the forest is Houthulst Forest, and the ridge is the Passchendaele Ridge. I hope to be able to get you there this afternoon."

For several moments the boys look in the wonderful view in silence, and they all pictured in their minds' eye how General Plumer must have often stared across towards Ypres, just as they were doing now; but with his thoughts sometimes full of hope, sometimes full of doubt and anxiety, for that brave khaki line endeavouring to frustrate the blood-thirsty Teuton, whose one thought in those days was of greed, cruelty, and lust.

"Thank heavens, we won!" murmured Harry Wharton, with a sigh.

"You're right, Harry," said Bob Cherry quietly. "And it's not a year ago!"

"Well, come along, you fellows!"

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cried Captain Matthews. "We'll push along now. We have only to walk across the square to the hotel."

The juniors clattered down the staircase, and once more found themselves out in the street.

"I've told the car-drivers to be ready for us outside the hotel in an hour's time," said Captain Matthews. "Come on! Follow me!"

They trooped across the cobbled square, past the iron bandstand standing in the middle of the street, and entered the quiet old courtyard of the hotel.

"By Jove," said Bunter, "this looks all right, you chaps!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Jolly good smell of dinner, too!"

"Steady, porpoise!" laughed Frank Nugent, as the party trooped into the fine big dining-room. "Don't get excited!"

There was one long table set out for a meal, and the room contained a number of smaller tables, at which were seated mostly French people. At a small desk by the door were two very charming young French ladies, and they bowed sweetly to the juniors as they trooped in and took their seats at the long table.

"Now, then, you fellows," said Captain Matthews, looking at his wrist-watch, "you'll have to wire in, and not waste any time!"

"By Jove, sir, I'm ready for it!" drawled Mauleverer.

"I must say I'm famished!" laughed Johnny Bull.

"I'm as empty as a drum!" grunted Billy Bunter. "Pass the bread across, Dutton, and I'll have some of these sardines to go on with, Ink, if you'll pass them across."

Inky, otherwise Hurree Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, passed the plate of sardines across to Bunter.

At last, with ravishing appetites, the Greyfriars juniors settled down to their luncheon.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

A Visit to Ypres!

"YPRES!"

"My hat!"

"What a frightful ruin!"

The Greyfriars juniors had arrived in Ypres.

Coming along the road through Poperinghe, and so into the famous town, the juniors had been given their first sight of battle desolation. Large areas of Poperinghe smashed to ruins had shocked them; battered trees and farmhouses on the roadside, and countless thousands of shell-holes and crumpled-in trenches had held them spell-bound; and now that they were in Ypres itself the scene of ruin appalled them. Captain Matthews had left the cars at the road junction in the centre of ruined Ypres, and the party were now examining the famous old Cloth Hall and the cathedral church of St. Martin.

At least, this is what the buildings were once upon a time, before the Huns had come with their mighty guns and pounded them to dust.

For six hundred years the Cloth Hall and the cathedral were the glory of this ancient town in western Flanders. Now, battered into ruin, they are nothing more than glorious monuments of Belgium's heroic and indomitable soul, and henceforward are inseparably associated with the military glory of the British Empire.

Harry Wharton & Co. were standing before the ruins in little groups.

"There is little for me to say to you," said Captain Matthews. "You know what Ypres means to the British Army?"

"Yes, rather, sir!"

"I suppose there have been more casualties in the Ypres salient than in any other part of the line," continued the captain. "I dare say you all remember that the First Battle of Ypres commenced on October 11th, 1914, and on November 11th of that year the fight was raging at its height."

"That's the time the Prussian Guard was fought to a standstill, wasn't it, sir?" said Harry Wharton.

Captain Matthews nodded his head.

"Yes; and it was undoubtedly the battle which preserved the safety of the Channel Ports for the whole of the war."

"By Jove! What a fight it must have been!"

"On April 22nd, 1915, the Second Battle of Ypres commenced."

"And the Huns got it in the neck again!"

Yes, his losses then were even bigger, I believe; but then, again, the British lost tremendous numbers of men; well; but they held the salient, and held it securely, but with awful losses, until they were ready to get a bit of their own back in 1917. That battle started here on July 31st, and was an effort to get possession of the Passchendaele Ridge, and so command the Menin Road. If we had had a complete victory then the Hun would probably have had to evacuate the whole Belgian coast; but unfortunately it didn't quite come off."

"We heard the bombardment of our guns even at Greyfriars," said Bob Cherry. "It was kept up for days."

"Yes, rather! I guess it was a real corker in the way of bombardments," added Fisher T. Fish. "I guess you can tell us how many shells the Allies fired on that occasion, sir?"

Captain Matthews laughed.

"I guess I can't," he replied. "But it was the most prolonged heavy bombardment that had ever taken place, and goodness knows how many Huns were knocked out. Their losses must have been colossal; but what our commanders hadn't reckoned with were the weather conditions and the concrete pill-boxes, as they were called, and which the wily Hun had secretly built in every commanding position he could find. These pill-boxes were so strong that nothing but a direct hit from a big gun had an effect upon them, and, of course, they were manned with Huns, and fairly bristled with machine-guns."

"Is that why we failed, sir?"

"Yes; personally, I think it is," continued Captain Matthews. "They were terribly hard nuts to crack, brave as our fellows were."

"And the ground was frightfully bad, wasn't it, sir? Shell-holes full of water, and nothing but mud?"

"Yes, the conditions were dreadful. It started to rain on the first night of the attack, and it seemed as though it never stopped the whole blessed autumn."

"Jolly bad luck for our side, sir!"

"Yes, indeed it was, my dear fellow! As a matter of fact, it was my first experience of an actual battle in Flanders; but I'm jolly certain I shall never forget it!"

"Won't you tell us some more, sir?"

The gallant captain laughed.

"Oh, no, I don't think there is much to say! And I think we shall have to be getting along."

"Only just three o'clock, sir."

"Yes, I know. But we've got to see the Passchendaele area, and then get back to St. Pol for the night. I can assure you we've got to hustle through this town."

A few of the juniors had wandered off, and were hunting for mementoes of the old Cloth Hall, and Harry Wharton

shouted out to them to make for the cars.

They wandered through the silent, ruined streets of Ypres until they found the motors, and they wasted no time in getting away.

"We go north now," said Captain Matthews, as the leading car set the pace. "There is the Yser Canal over there, with that line of old, battered tree-trunks."

The car was bumping along the road, and the juniors eventually found themselves in the road running alongside the canal-bank to which their guide had referred.

"My hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Is that the old front line, sir?"

"Yes. You see, at this point the British were on one side of the canal, and the Hun was sitting just on the other side. They are not exactly trenches, they're redoubts. This place is Elverdinghe, and that old white house there in ruins was once upon a time called Elverdinghe Chateau."

"My hat!"

"Here's Boesinghe," said the captain, a few minutes later. "We cross a bridge here. This is where the Guards Division started their attack on July 31, 1917."

"This is where the Guards went over the top, sir!"

"Yes, they crossed the canal at this point."

The car, bowled along, and gained the road on the crest of the Pilken Ridge. The country in every direction was a scene of utter desolation. Of course, the grass had commenced to grow now, but there was not a vestige of a tree or bush. Mile upon mile of shell-torn earth, with here and there the remains of an old gun-limber, a pile of shattered shell-cases, a smashed rifle—sometimes with rusty bayonets still fixed into them—or a blown-up concrete pill-box.

The boys of Greyfriars stared in amazement.

The utter ruin of what had once been a fair country-side simply appalled them.

"That place over there was once known by the Belgians as Fulse Farm," exclaimed Captain Matthews, breaking the silence at last. "The Huns turned it into a veritable fortress. But the Guards got it. From what I can remember, I believe it was the Welsh Guards who captured it."

"Hurrah! Good old Wales!"

"What's that battered-looking wood over there, sir?"

"That's Houthulst Forest. The French captured a bit of it in 1917; but it was the Belgians who got the whole thing in 1918. Here, now, we are coming to what is left of Langemark."

What had once been a pleasant little village, but was now a mere heap of broken bricks, loomed up ahead of them a few hundred yards on the other side of a stream.

"What's this little river called, sir?"

"That's the Stroombeek, and our gunners had a fearful time there in October, 1917."

The schoolboy tourists passed through ruined Langemark, and, bearing to the right, gradually climbed uphill.

"Straight ahead of us is the remains of Poelcapelle. You will see dozens of Boesche pill-boxes there," said the captain. "And then three miles ahead of that is Passchendaele."

The distance was soon covered, in spite of the atrocious condition of the roads, and at last the Greyfriars juniors found themselves on the famous Passchendaele Ridge, for possession of which the British had fought on and off from April till November, 1917, during which period

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over 50,000 Huns had been made prisoners, about 450 guns captured, and an immense amount of other war material destroyed.

"Now, we can't spend much time here," remarked the captain. "It's a long way back to St. Pol, and I don't expect we shall get back there before it is dark."

"All right, sir."

"Ripping view from this ridge, sir!"

"Yes, rather! If we could only have got here sooner than we did we should have been well into the Hun's system of defences, and the war would have ended much sooner than it actually did."

"Jolly bad luck, sir!"

"Now, what about a snack before we go back?" said Billy Bunter, rolling up.

"I must say I could do with a few sandwiches and two or three pork pies and—"

"Oh, dry up, Bunter!" laughed Frank Nugent. "We've brought some grub with us, but if we've got a decent long drive back to St. Pol we had much better eat it later on the journey."

"But—"

"Dry up!"

"But—"

"Ring off, I tell you!"

"But I—I've eaten mine already!" exclaimed Bunter. "I—I always get so faint whilst motoring."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The party gave a hearty laugh at the Owl of the Remove, and, on Captain Matthews' recommendation, they made for the cars, and were soon on the move once again.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Off to Arras!

BOB CHERRY was the first to awake the next morning. He opened his eyes in a blinding flood of sunshine which was pouring in at the window of the large room five of the juniors were sharing in the Hotel de France, St. Pol. Bob closed his eyes again immediately and rubbed them, and then he sat up in bed.

"My hat!" he ejaculated.

It was a curious surprise. They had had a long motor-drive from Ypres down to St. Pol. The party had not arrived at their destination until after nine o'clock the previous night, and it had taken Captain Matthews some time to fix up accommodation in the Hotel de France—the little French estaminet almost in the centre of St. Pol. After a good meal the juniors, thoroughly exhausted by their day's tour round Ypres and Passchendaele, had been almost too tired to get undressed for the night. They had literally fallen into bed. And now Bob Cherry woke up to find himself dazzled by the brilliant sunshine.

He jumped out of bed. It was quite cool, though the sunshine was like fire. His cheery voice called up the others. Billy Bunter, in the next bed, turned over and grunted.

"Ow! 'Tain't rising-bell yet!"

"Ha, ha, ha! This isn't Greyfriars, Bunter, you dummy; this is St. Pol!"

Billy Bunter rubbed his sleepy eyes.

"Well, we haven't a train to catch—no need to turn out early!"

"Early!" said Bob Cherry, looking at his watch. "It's a quarter-past eight!"

"Well, we're on a holiday, you know."

"Now then, porpoise, don't be a slacker!"

"I think I could do with another couple of hours. And if you're going down you might tell them to send my breakfast up at twelve o'clock," said Bunter drowsily. "I don't mind much

what it is so long as it's good and there is plenty of it."

"Get up, Bunter!" said Johnny Bull.

"Oh, bosh! Let me alone!"

Hurree Singh dipped his sponge into cold water. Billy Bunter rolled out of bed with a disgruntled grunt. He had not forgotten how he had been assisted to rise the previous morning in Boulogne.

"Breakfast, Bunter!" said Tom Dutton persuasively. "Think of that! Breakfast! The longer you stay in bed the later you will feed!"

"Think of that, Bunter!" said Johnny Bull solemnly.

Billy Bunter grunted. But as soon as he began to move about he found that he was hungry, and he was ready first of all to go down.

The Owl of the Remove led the way down, and as he reached the foot of the stairs he was accosted by a French waiter.

"Dejeuner!" said the man. "Billet?"

"Day-jay-nay?" repeated Billy Bunter.

"Day-jay-nay bee-jay? Now, I wonder what that means!"

Billy Bunter's eyes gleamed. It was only half-past eight; but Bunter was always ready for a meal.

"It means they're having dinner," he said. "I'm feeling awfully peckish. I thought perhaps all that motoring yesterday would take my appetite away; but it hasn't. Yes, I'll have dinner. I don't mind giving up breakfast for once!"

"Shut up, ass!" said Harry Wharton, who had come downstairs, and had

overheard the conversation. "They don't have dinner until the evening!"

"But he says—"

"He means—"

"I suppose I know what dejeuner means!" said Billy Bunter indignantly. "You're not the only one who learns French at Greyfriars, Harry Wharton. The chap may mean lunch; anyway, he means grub!"

"Lunch isn't till the middle of the day."

Well, it may be an extra dinner for fellows who get hungry," said Bunter. "I think it's very likely. I've heard that French hotels are jolly well-managed, and it would be an awfully good wheeze to have an extra dinner in the morning for visitors who get extra hungry. I haven't noticed that Frenchmen are very sensible as a rule; but that would be a good dodge—"

"Billet pour dejeuner," repeated the attendant. "Billet pour dejeuner?"

"There, he says dejeuner," said Billy Bunter. "I know that that jolly well means lunch. Yes, I'll have lunch."

"Oh, dry up, Wharton! It's no good your telling me that I don't understand French—"

"Your French might be different from French French," grinned Bob Cherry, who had joined them at the foot of the stairs.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Billet pour dejeuner, pour dejeuner," repeated the French waiter, making his meaning less clear in the hope of making it understood, as French garçons frequently do.

"Yes, I'm coming to have lunch!" said Billy Bunter.

"Monsieur."

"Oui," said the Owl of the Remove. "Oui, oui, oui! Blessed if it doesn't make me feel like a blessed guinea-pig talking this blessed lingo. Oui, oui, oui!"

The waiter took out a little book, jerked out a slip of paper from it, and handed it to Billy Bunter. Then he looked round inquiringly at the others.

"Yes," said Harry Wharton. "Oui!"

Billy Bunter stared at his slip of paper. "What on earth's this! Here, you chap, I can't eat this—pas bon pour moi!"

"You ass!" almost shrieked Harry Wharton. "Why won't you let me explain! He—"

"Really, Wharton, I tell you—"

"He's only coming round now to find out the number of people who want breakfast in the dining-room!" bawled Harry Wharton.

Billy Bunter's face fell.

"Oh!"

"Now do you understand, you fat porpoise?"

"Yes, Wharton! Then there isn't any grub yet!"

"Yes, of course there is, fathead! But these French people in St. Pol are sensible. They aren't going to waste a lot of cooked food when people don't want it. That's why they sent that johnnie to us to see whether we want to order anything. The average Frenchman never has anything for breakfast excepting a roll and a cup of coffee."

"Oh-h! What silly asses!"

"Come on, you fellows!" cried Harry Wharton. And he led the way into the little dining-room, where, to their surprise, they found Captain Matthews just on the point of finishing his breakfast.

"Oh, good morning, sir!" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"Good-morning, you fellows!" said the captain. "Hurry up, now, and get your breakfasts! The cars are waiting, and I want to be in Arras by ten o'clock, if possible!"

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A wild shriek had rung out from the top of the dug-out steps, and then there was a crash. Bump, bump, bump! Harry Wharton & Co. peered through the gloom. "My hat!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "It's Bunier!" (See Chapter 6.)

"Right, sir!" cried the juniors. And they wasted no more time, but sat down to an excellent breakfast, and by nine o'clock they were all ready to depart.

The cars got away, and soon left the little town of St. Pol behind them. The long, straight road to Arras was in excellent condition, and they arrived in Arras without mishap.

Passing under the big, stone archway built across the Arras-St. Pol Road, they entered the town.

"Now you'll see some damage!" cried Captain Matthews, turning in his seat. "Arras has been knocked about dreadfully; but not half so badly as Ypres. The damage is confined more to certain areas."

"My hat, it looks bad enough, sir!" "Yes, it's cruel! and the Hun used to bombard it out of pure wantonness!" "The beasts!"

"Yes, you may well say so. Now, we will just make a tour round the town, and I will point out a few places of extra interest to you, and then we will go along the Athies-Famponz Road, and I will show you some of the old front-line trenches that I know so well."

"Jolly good of you, sir!"

"That reminds me!" exclaimed the captain. "I must call in at the Hotel Universe here, and try to book our rooms for the night. I will do that as we go through the town."

"Some of the houses haven't been damaged very much, sir."

"No; some of them have been lucky. Now, you see that place there, that red-bricked building on the corner of that square. The house has got a shell-hole right through it. That was the headquarters of my division when we were in the line in 1912, before the Hun offensive that March."

The Greyfriars juniors stared at the place in astonishment. It seemed hard for them to realise that so few months ago that shattered building was humming with the activity of a Divisional Staff whilst its brigades and battalions were holding the front line.

The leading car turned to the left, passed the old French barracks—now hopelessly shattered by shell-fire.

"This place is the old station of Arras," said the captain, pointing to the ruined framework of a beautifully spanned railway station. "Now we'll turn to the left again here, and then

we'll motor down the principal street, which the British Tommies always referred to as Bond Street, because it had a few shops in actually whilst the fighting was in progress—they were well barricaded in those days, I can assure you!"

There were quite a number of French people going about the streets now, and there were signs of builders at work, endeavouring to repair the havoc wrought.

Just before the party arrived at the square containing the old theatre of Arras, Captain Matthews left the boys for a few minutes whilst he walked up an alley-way leading to the Hotel Universe. He was only absent a short while, and he returned to them with a smiling face.

"That's all right," he said. "The place is still being run, I'm glad to say, and the old French proprietor is going to fix us up for the night."

"Good!" said Harry Wharton. "I like the look of Arras, in spite of its ruins, sir!"

"Yes, it's a good place. Now we'll just go and see the old Spanish square, THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 602.

and then we'll go along and look at the trenches up at Greenland Hill. That's up the Scarpe Valley, you know."

Harry Wharton & Co. didn't know; but they nodded their heads as if they were thoroughly well acquainted with the geography of Arras and its environs.

The cars started off again, and, after looking round the famous square, and seeing the shell-pounded remains of the famous Hotel de Ville, Captain Matthews directed his driver to make for the Fampoux Road.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Billy Bunter's Visit to Pudding Trench!

"IT'S a pity I haven't got time to show you through the sewers of Arras," said Captain Matthews to the boys.

"T-t-the s-s-sewers, sir?" gasped Johnny Bull.

"Yes," the sewers," laughed the captain. "They were of great military value to General Haig in April of 1917. When the British attacked here, General Haig brought up thousands upon thousands of troops at night, and put them all into the sewer tunnels until all was ready for the push to start. These sewers are tunnelled out all the way to what was the front line in those days. That is the place over there. It's called Saint Nicolas. Well, the British attack was a surprise to the Huns, and our fellows rolled out of the sewer tunnel by the thousands. They captured all the ground that we are motoring over at this moment. They got as far as Greenland Hill, and captured the famous hill known as Monday."

"My hat, how ripping!"

"This place we're going through now is Blangy Saint Laurent. Once upon a time it was a beautiful little country village on the banks of the River Scarpe. There's the Scarpe on our right."

"Oh, yes, sir!"

"This place ahead of us, on the other side of the old railway bank, is Athies, and when I was here last it was a very beastly place. It bristled with our guns, and the Huns used to bombard the batteries day and night."

"Must have been a jolly dangerous place on the road, sir."

The captain laughed.

"You can believe me, it was," he said.

"The driver will bear me out with that."

The driver of the car, with his eyes fixed ahead of him, gave a grim sort of smile, and nodded his head.

"Now, here we come to Fampoux," said Captain Matthews. "I intend to leave the three cars here, and I will show you a trench which was officially known as Pudding Trench. You know by now, I suppose, that every trench that was dug was always given an official name, and these names were always put on to the Army maps."

"Pudding Trench will appeal to Bunter, sir."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The leading car came to a standstill, and the captain and the rest of the passengers tumbled out, and greeted the other two cars with a cheery hail as they came up to them.

"Out you get, Bunter!" cried Bob Cherry.

"All right!"

"We're just going to have a bit of pudding."

Billy Bunter blinked.

"Oh, good!" he grinned. "I'm just feeling like a snack. I always get hungry in this sort of weather. What sort of pudding is it, Bob, old man? Pork, with plenty of gravy in it?"

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The worthy Bob gave an expansive grin.

"That's the start of it, anyway!" laughed Captain Matthews, pointing to a slit in the bank at the side of the road. "And it goes on for a good many hundred yards."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter blinked through his spectacles at the laughing juniors.

"Oh, hard cheese, Bunter, old bean!" laughed Bob Cherry.

"You—you rotter, Cherry!" howled Billy Bunter, looking very indignant. "You said there was pudding, and there—there isn't, and you've whetted my appetite and made me feel quite funny!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a hearty laugh, in which the gallant captain joined with great gusto.

"Ha, ha!" he cried. "You had better come along now with me, Bunter. You're in a bad way, you are!"

Captain Matthews left the road and walked into the commencement of Pudding Trench.

The trench was on the crest of a high ridge, which commanded a fine view of the Scarpe River Valley on the right, and, looking eastward, the boys had an interrupted view for miles and miles.

"On a clear day," said the captain, "you can see from this trench as far as Douai, and we used to have a wonderful view of the German system of trenches in front of us. We had a brigade headquarters in this trench for several months, and I am hoping we shall find their old dug-out. It was a very good one, and I will take you down it. I've brought some candles with me."

"My only aunt!" murmured Bob Cherry, turning to Johnny Bull. "This chap is a sport, isn't he? He seems to remember everything!"

The winding trench took the party some time to get down; but at last Captain Matthews, who was leading, came to a halt, and the Greyfriars juniors closed up and listened attentively to what their guide had to say.

"There used to be a sort of sand-bagged shanty here," said the captain. "But, of course, that has long since gone, especially as the Huns got this bit of line in the March offensive."

"Was there stiff fighting for this trench, sir?"

"I believe there was," replied Captain Matthews. "I wasn't here, as my division was taken out of the line here the night the Huns attacked on March 21st, last year. The Highland Division were here then, and I heard that they accounted for whole hordes of Germans."

"Good egg!"

"Seems to be a whole lot of stuff lying about, sir."

Captain Matthews peered over the parapet of the trench.

"Yes," he replied, "there seems to be plenty of battle souvenirs still here."

"What's that, sir?" cried Fisher T. Fish, the American junior. "If there are any little souvenirs about here, I guess this galoot's not going back without a full cargo! Those jays at Greyfriars will pay anything for them!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Bob Cherry. "Trust our tame Yankee for that!"

"Well," laughed the captain, "I don't suppose you all want to come down the dug-out, so I suggest that those of you who do not come down should spend their time in searching about to see what there is."

"I guess I'm for the top!" said the Yankee junior.

If the honoured sahib says so agree-

fully," added Hurree Singh, in his weird and wonderful English, "I will look for the souvenirs so anxiously."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And Tom Dutton had better stop upstairs," suggested Harry Wharton. "We don't want any deaf duffers in the dug-out."

"Nor Bunter!" added Bob Cherry.

"Really, my fellows?"

"Oh, run off, porpoise!"

"Very well!" said Bunter, pretending to look very hurt. "I don't want to thrust myself on you. I'm not that sort of chap. I hope I'm too much of a gentleman and full of refinement to barge in where I'm not wanted. I should hate to thrust myself on you!"

"Ha, ha! Thank goodness for that! I don't want a ton weight thrust on me, I'm jolly sure!"

Captain Matthews took out from his tunic-pocket a bundle of candles.

"Well," he said, "the candles decide it! There are five candles here. I want one. Here's one for you, Wharton, one for Cherry, one for Bull, and one for Mauleverer."

"Right! Thank you, sir!"

Lord Mauleverer was peering down into the murky depths of the dug-out.

"By Jove! My dear fellows, are—we are going down into that dirty place?"

"Rather, Mauly!" laughed Harry Wharton, following the captain as he led the way down the shaft. "Come on, you duffer! Follow your uncle!"

The dug-out was beginning to fall in places, and the timber lining the steps down was rotting from the damp, and a cold, dank air seemed to pervade the whole place.

Captain Matthews lit his candle, and the juniors following in the rear did likewise; and then the party started the descent.

"Jolly deep, sir!" said Harry Wharton. And his voice sounded strangely hollow. The captain grunted, and did not reply until the party had got to the foot of the steps.

"It is deep!" he said, peering round the dingy interior of the dug-out. "But then, when the trench was under fire, and one was liable to gas attacks, the deeper one was the safer. Come along! I will show you along the passages. Of course, the officers and headquarters-men used to sleep down here, and— Good heavens! What is that?"

A wild shriek had rung out from the top of the stairs, and then there was a crash.

"Bump, bump, bump!"

"My hat!" gasped Harry Wharton. "I hope the place hasn't caved in!"

"Bump, bump, bump!"

"Ow! Oooooor! Help! Ow!"

The dug-out explorers peered into the gloom.

"It's Bunter!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Bump, bump, bump!"

"He's falling downstairs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bump, bump, bump!"

Billy Bunter it was, and he landed at last on the floor of the dug-out with a wild shriek.

"Ow! Oh-h-h! Help!"

"Shut up, Bunter, you fathead!" cried Harry Wharton. "Why on earth don't you come down the stairs properly?"

"Oh-h-h-h! Help! I'm killed!" howled Bunter. "I've broken both my legs and dislocated my back! Ow! I mean, I've dislocated my neck!"

"Good heavens!" gasped Captain Matthews, bending over the squirming figure of Bunter. "Is the boy really as badly hurt as that?"

"Ooer! Ow! Help!" bawled Bunter, "Of course I'm hurt, you idiot! I—"

"Shut up, Bunter!" roared Bob Cherry. "Remember to whom you are talking!"

"Oer! I'm dying! I've broken both my arms and dislocated my two legs! Oh-h-h!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry yanked Billy Bunter on to his feet.

"Get up, you dummy! And shut up that row!"

"Ow! But I'm hurt!" cried Billy Bunter. "How would you like to fall down about a hundred steps? Somebody ought to get into trouble for building a bearily, dangerous dog-out like that!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I thought you were going to search for souvenirs," said Captain Matthews.

"Ow! I was, only Fishy told me what your little game was!"

"My—my little game, my dear fellow!"

"Yes!" said Bunter. "Fishy says the Army used to keep their food supplies down these places, and I bet you—you've come down for a quiet snack! I know what sort of fellows you chaps are!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, that beastly fall has made me feel so faint!" cried Bunter. "Where's the food?"

"You silly owl!" shrieked Bob Cherry. "Fishy was pulling your fat leg! He only wanted to—to get rid of you, you—your dummy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, there isn't anything very interesting to show you down here!" laughed Captain Matthews. "I see the Royal Engineers have been here, and have dismantled most of the timber out of the place. I really think we may as well go up, and I dare say Bunter is feeling a bit bruised and could do with a little help!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Harry Wharton. "Come on, you fat lubber! Catch hold of my arm!"

Billy Bunter recovered his spectacles, which had rolled off in the fall, and he put them on to his fat nose and allowed Harry Wharton to haul him upstairs.

The party extinguished the candles when they reached the top once more, and Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry peered over the parapet of the trench.

"My—only aunt!" gasped Bob. "Here comes Fishy!"

"Goodness me!" drawled Mauleverer.

Fisher T. Fish was making his way back to Pudding Trench. He was wearing a German helmet on his head, whilst his arms were full of the most extraordinary battlefield souvenirs imaginable. He had an old, rusty rifle, quite four shell-cases, old machine-gun ammunition-belts, and goodness knows what.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" cried Bob Cherry. "Any old iron, Fishy! Any rage or bones?"

Fisher T. Fish looked very flushed and happy.

"I guess you lopsided jays made some error in going down that blessed coalmine!" he cried. "These mementoes of the battlefield are it—absolutely IT!"

"Well, there are plenty more, I suppose?" laughed Captain Matthews. "I think that you fellows had better spend half an hour getting together a few things, and then we'll go on to Greenland Hill, where the original Hun lies was!"

"How ripping, sir!"

"We'll spend an hour or two there, and then make our way back to Arras."

"All right, sir!"

The boys scrambled out of the trench, and joined the remainder of the party in a ramble across country.

There was no lack of mementoes lying about, and the whole party returned to the cars with a plentiful supply before proceeding with Captain Matthews, who

patiently showed them round the elaborate system of trenches around the old chemical works adjoining Roeux Caves in the valley of the Scarpe and at the foot of Greenland Hill.

The boys were thoroughly tired out by the time they were due to return to the Hotel Universe in Arras, where they dined and slept.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

In Ruined Cambrai!

"HURRAH! We're off again!"

"Ripping morning!"

Parp, parp! went the motor-horn.

Harry Wharton & Co. seemed to be born under a lucky star as far as the weather was concerned. The sun was shining down from a azure-blue sky, and the air was as bracing as the juniors could wish it to be, as they once more found themselves on the move.

They had risen at seven-thirty, and now, as the cars raced through the empty

generous with that sort of stuff. The Canadians know this part of the line as well as anybody. They did a whole heap of fighting here. One used to hear that all the Canadians—lived in No Man's Land. I really believe they did, too, because the Hun was frightened to death of the Canadians, and nearly every night when we were in the line we used to see an elaborate firework display on the German front line.

"S.O.S. rockets, I suppose you mean, sir?"

"Yes; rockets and Verey lights, and flares, and goodness knows what. In spite of the danger and anxiety of holding the front line, that part of the show used to be spectacular, not to say the least of it."

It was only just over twenty miles to Cambrai, and as the road was as straight as it could be, and in fairly good condition, the party were soon there. As they neared the town Captain Matthews pointed out to them Bourlon Wood, standing high up on the right of the road, its shattered tree-trunks looking very grim even in the golden rays of the summer sunshine.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Here we are again!" cried Bob Cherry, as they arrived in the main street of Cambrai. "Bricks and mortar everywhere, and not a house to live in!"

"It's not quite so bad as that," laughed the captain. "Whole streets of houses had been blown up by the Huns before we evacuated last October, and hundreds of houses were wantonly burned down. But there are still plenty of places left intact. Of course, you know the Germans took everything out of Cambrai, every bit of furniture in the town. They left no pictures, no clothes. It was the most inhuman act in the war, I think. They behaved like swine, or worse than swine! Oh, it makes my heart too full to even speak of their tyrannical acts!"

Captain Matthews' face looked very grim as he spoke so feelingly, and the Greyfriars juniors wondered what sort of time the Huns had had at his hands when he felt so bitter over their cruel acts towards the French civilians.

"Now there is an old English officers' club here that I know quite well, and I have arranged for us to sleep here to-night. But between then and now we have a very crowded day."

"Good egg, sir!" laughed Bob Cherry. "I don't propose to waste much time in Cambrai. After all, you've seen Arras and Ypres, and there is not much variety between one town and another when they have been smashed to smithereens. I think it's much more interesting to see the battlefields over which your fellow-countrymen fought to avenge the acts of violence on the innocent civilians."

"Rather, sir!"

"Well, I propose we go straight through Cambrai now," continued the captain. "We will get on to the Cambrai-Peronne Road, and first of all, have a look at Masmieres. That's a little town about five miles down the road."

"Shall I turn, sir?" murmured the driver.

"Yes, please."

In less than fifteen minutes the party were in Masmieres. They had passed through some terribly battle-scarred country; and Masmieres itself they found was a town of smashed houses—houses to which the poor French folk had returned, and the chums of Greyfriars could see them now making every effort to patch up their ruined homes.

Captain Matthews bade the driver of the leading car stop, and he alighted and referred to a large map.

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streets of the old French town—they were destined for Cambrai and the battlefields in its vicinity—the famous chums felt prepared for the most strenuous sort of day that could be offered them.

"My hat!" cried Bob Cherry. "This is a topping morning! The sort of day that would make even old Quelch feel full of buck!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Captain Matthews, sitting next to the driver in the leading car, smiled to himself as he heard Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Johnny Bull chattering busily away in the seat behind him.

The tourists were soon clear of Arras, and they bowed along the main road, running south-east towards Cambrai. Five miles out of Arras Captain Matthews turned in his seat to speak to the juniors.

"That hill on the left is Monchy, close to where you on the right is Guenappe, and we are just about on the spot where the old English front line was."

"Tons of barbed wire here, sir!" said Johnny Bull.

"Yes, rather. The old Hun was very

"What's the matter?" inquired Billy Bunter, rolling up. "Wayside halt for a snack!"

"Dry up, porpoise!"

"Be a jolly good idea, wouldn't it? A snack after a jolly good run in the car. That's the way to enjoy a tour!"

"Kine off, Bunter!"

"But I'm all for—"

"This is what we will do," interrupted the captain, folding up the map. "We'll just walk round here for a bit, and have a look at the Canal de l'Escout. It runs through the town. We will then go in the cars again to Marcoing, and then on to Flesquieres. On the way there I shall be able to show you the spot where Lord Gort earned his Victoria Cross. We will then go on to Graincourt-lez-Havrincourt, and—"

"Graincourt, sir?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Yes; it's a village near Bourlon Wood. I'll—"

"Graincourt? Graincourt?" muttered Bob Cherry, endeavouring to extract a packet from his jacket-pocket. "Graincourt? I'm sure that's the place."

"Hallo! What's the matter with the duffer!" said Lord Mauleverer.

Bob Cherry pulled out a large envelope and drew out a few small packets.

"These are seeds, sir," said Bob. "They were given to me by a poor lady at Victoria Station when we were coming out here. She asked me to plant them on the grave of her son. His name was Chalmers."

"That's very vague, my dear fellow," said Captain Matthews. "What regiment was he in?"

"Grenadier Guards, sir."

"Grenadiers?"

"Yes, sir; and here's the name of the place he was buried in. She's written it on the packet. It's Graincourt."

"By Jove! That's a bit of luck."

"How ripping!" cried Alonzo Todd. "It will be very nice if you can find it, my dear Cherry."

"Well, it will add to the interest of our visit," said Captain Matthews. "Do you know when the poor fellow was killed?"

"Yes, sir. His mother said it was two years ago."

"Ah, then, he must have fallen in the attack in 1917. I dare say you can remember the German counter-attack after General Byng's army had broken through the Hun line. I will show you one of the tanks. I think it is still in the canal here. The British made a bridge of tanks here so that the cavalry could pass over."

"My hat! That'll be jolly interesting!"

"Yes," continued the captain, "we'll go and see that, and then we'll do Flesquieres and Graincourt, and then we'll go and see the Canal du Nord. The crossing of that canal was one of the wonders of the war, and I will show you the exact spot where Captain Frisby of the Coldstream Guards was the first to cross, and he was awarded the Victoria Cross for it."

"Jolly good show, sir!"

"Yes, I should think it was. Captain Frisby's example got the whole of his company across, and I believe the captain himself knocked out about half a dozen Huns who were holding a machine-gun post on the edge of the canal."

"I guess that's the stuff to give 'em!" said Fisher T. Fish. "There was an American soldier who captured four hundred prisoners single-handed!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Four hundred!" exclaimed Fish. "I

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guess it was four hundred! No more or no less, and all off his own bat!"

"Steady, Fishy!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then, just before that he shot the German general, and—"

"And captured two thousand guns, I suppose?" laughed Harry Wharton.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Captain Matthews. "I am afraid you have been misinformed, my good friend. Never mind, it's an interesting story, and now let's make a start."

The party walked down to the canal running through Maisieres, and inspected the old British tanks there, and then they motored to Marcoing, and continued their way through sunken roads and across shell-torn tracks of country towards Flesquieres.

About a mile from their destination Captain Matthews stopped the cars, and took the party of juniors to a sort of natural embankment running for over a thousand yards across country.

"This is the spot where Lord Gort, who was in command of the Irish Guards, earned his Victoria Cross," he said, as Harry Wharton & Co. crowded round in an excited group. "He had been badly wounded in the early stages of the battle, and his soldier servant fell back dead in his arms. But the gallant colonel did not give in. It was at this spot that he received such a dangerous wound that it was necessary for him to be placed on a stretcher and kept under cover of this bank in the ground."

"How splendid!" murmured the juniors.

"Even then Lord Gort refused to be taken back to a field-ambulance station. He insisted upon remaining with his battalion, directing the battle, although he was frequently on the point of fainting away from loss of blood."

"By Jove!"

"For that wonderful action King George gave him the Victoria Cross, and if ever there was one earned it was that one!"

"Rather, sir!" exclaimed Harry Wharton & Co.

"Well," said the captain, after a pause, "we must push on now. The time seems to fly, doesn't it?"

"Yes, sir, unfortunately," replied Harry Wharton. "I only wish the rest of the fellows from Gregfries were here! This is such a ripping tour!"

"Captain Matthews led the way to the waiting cars, and the party went through Flesquieres and then on to Graincourt, where they were fortunate in finding the next little cemetery containing the grave of Corporal Chalmers."

Bob Cherry chose Alonzo Todd to remain behind with him, whilst the rest of the party strolled through battered Graincourt.

The two juniors found a spade near the grave, and together they worked on the little mound of earth. Very solemnly Bob planted the packets of seeds he had been entrusted with, and at last their sad errand was completed.

Bob and Alonzo Todd took off their caps, and regarded the little grave with the simple wooden cross at its head.

"Poor fellow!" murmured Bob Cherry. "He did his duty!"

"And his mother's carrying on," added Todd. "It's hard and sad for those left behind, my dear Cherry."

"You're right, Toddy," said Bob after a pause. "Let's—let's come away. It's—it's too rotten!"

And the Gregfries boys left the next little enclosure in silence, and rejoined their chums.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

The Wonderful Canal!

"W HERE'S the water, sir!"

"My hat, what a depth!"

The party of sightseers were standing on the bank of the Canal du Nord, and peering down to the bottom of the neatly-bricked waterway.

But there was no water in the Canal du Nord. There never had been in this portion, as war broke out before the French Government had completed the task they had set out to perform in the piping days of peace.

Captain Matthews explained the matter to the juniors in answer to their questions.

"This part of the canal was under construction," he said. "It will not be ready for some time even now, as the locks the French engineers had made were very much damaged during the fighting last year, and, as you can see, the banks want new bricework in any amount of places."

"How deep is it, sir?"

"Well, I should say it's between thirty and forty feet deep."

"And our fellows had to charge across that!"

"Yes. It seems incredible, does it not? But, nevertheless, it's true. They not only had to climb down on one side of it, but had to scale the other side, and that under a hail of bullets and an intense barrage of artillery fire."

"My hat!"

"That concrete structure there on the left, where that temporary bridge is, is known as Lock No. 7, and it was at this spot where my division carried the position."

"But it seems impossible, sir!"

"Yes," said the captain, "looking at the place now, it does. Goodness knows how it was done. I was here myself, and got across somehow. And, as I have told you, the example set by Captain Frisby inspired the men, and they performed deeds that day that make one feel that General Wolfe's deed of scaling the walls of Quebec, and similar events in our military history, were mere child's play compared with the wonderful performances carried out in this war—the greatest war in history."

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll go along the bed of the canal, if you would care to?"

"Rather, sir!"

"About two miles along on our right is Moeuvres. I dare say you remember that place?"

"Wasn't there a Victoria Cross won there, sir?"

"Yes, Private Hunter, with about six men, held out in the village for nearly a week. It happened when we were preparing for our attack, and I cannot remember the details very clearly. But I think I'm right. Goodness, me! What's that fellow Bunter up to?"

Harry Wharton & Co. followed the direction of Captain Matthews' outstretched hand.

"My only aunt!" gasped Bob Cherry. "What's the fat idiot doing?"

Billy Bunter had gone down on his hands and knees, and had commenced to climb down the steep wall of the canal.

"Come back, Bunter, you duffer!" cried Harry Wharton in alarm.

"Or!"

Billy Bunter had placed one foot in a crevice in the brick-wall, and was feeling about with the other in order to find a second foothold.

"Come back, Bunter!" roared Captain Matthews sternly. "You'll break your neck!"

"Oh! Help!" gasped the Owl of the Remove. "I'm—I'm falling!"

Harry Wharton & Co. dashed forward. "Hang on, you fathead!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, flung himself on to his hands and knees, and reaching down to grasp Bunter's fat wrist.

"Ow! Look out, Cherry, you rotter!" gasped Billy Bunter. "You—you'll push me down!"

"Give me a hand here!" cried Bob. "Harry, old chap, you hang on to my legs."

Harry Wharton flung himself across his chum's outstretched legs.

"Hang on, Bob!"

"Right-ho!"

"Ow! Help!" roared Bunter, now thoroughly alarmed. "I—I'm falling! I shall break my neck!"

Captain Matthews was on the canal-bank now, and he reached out and caught Bunter by his other wrist.

"What in the dickens did you want to climb down for?" he muttered sternly.

"Ow! It's the packet, sir!"

"What packet?"

"The sandwiches, sir!" almost blubbered Billy Bunter. "They—they slipped out of my hand when I was looking down. Ow! Help! Murder! I'm falling!"

The Owl of the Remove's weight was too much for the precarious foothold he was relying on, and there was a little puff of dust as the loose brick fell out, and now the whole weight of Bunter was being sustained by Bob Cherry and Captain Matthews.

"Steady!" roared the Captain. "Don't wriggle, you idiot! We've got you!"

"I'll hang on!" gasped Bob Cherry.

"Get some ropes, you fellows!"

There was a wild scamper round as the remainder of the party scoured the ground for something to haul up Bunter with.

"Here's an old trace from a gun limber!" cried Mauleverer. "Hold on to him, you fellows!"

Lord Mauleverer dashed up with an old leather trace, and in less than a minute it had been passed under Bunter's arms.

"Ow!" gasped Bunter. "Steady, you idiots! You'll dislocate my—"

"Shut up, Bunter," snapped Johnny Bull. "or we'll put it round your neck!"

"Ow! Help!"

"Now, then!" cried Captain Matthews. "Mind none of you slip. Pull all together when I give the word."

"Right, sir!"

"Now, then! Ready—pull!"

"Ow!"

"Pull!"

Bunter was drawn up with a jerk, and he was able to throw his arms over the side of the bank.

"One more!" shouted the captain. "All together now! Ready—pull!"

Billy Bunter came over the top with a rush, and as the trace slipped from his fat arms the haulage-party went to the ground with a crash, and there was a whirling mass of arms and legs in a cloud of dust.

At last, with hair tousled and collars and neckties streaming down their backs, and trousers crumpled and dusty, the juniors sat up in a considerably dazed state. They blinked at Billy Bunter in a bewildered way that made Captain Matthews and Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry roar with laughter.

"Ow! You asses!" exclaimed Billy Bunter, groping round for his spectacles, which had come off in the rescue.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter staggered to his feet. He glared at the rest of the juniors as they scrambled up and dusted themselves

down. Bunter glared with a face that was red and wrathful.

"You—you cads!" he gasped.

"You've jolly nearly broken my back!"

"My hat!" gasped Frank Nugent.

"The ungrateful rotter! Let's bump him!"

"Good egg!"

"Yes, rather!"

The rescue party fell upon Bunter like a thunderbolt, and before the fat junior realised what was happening he was being bumped.

Bump!

"Oh!"

Bump!

"Ow!"

Bump!

"Yaroor!"

Three times was the ungrateful Bunter bumped before the juniors released him.

He struggled fiercely the whole time; but his struggles had no effect except upon his personal attire, which was considerably disordered thereby.

"There, I feel better now!" said Frank Nugent, with satisfaction.

"So do I, my dear Nugent," remarked Alonzo Todd. "I trust that Bunter is feeling more grateful now!"

"Ow! You cads!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! Groo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Billy Bunter staggered to his feet.

"Ow! You rotters!" he said. "Nice state I'm in now, ain't I? Just because of those rotten sandwiches!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Captain Matthews.

"Never mind, Bunter. We're going down into the canal, anyway, so you will be able to recover them. But I'm jolly certain you're going down the proper way. I'm not going to try to climb down the waller one!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the juniors.

"Well, come along, you fellows!" said the captain. "Let's go on now!"

"Yes, rather, sir!"

And the party continued their tour of the canal bed.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Home Again!

"IT'S rotten!"

"Much too short!"

"A week's no good. A fortnight's not bad! Three weeks would have given us a chance! A month would have suited us down to the ground!"

Thus spake Harry Wharton & Co.

The chums of Greyfriars were sitting round a big table in the Hotel Godbert in Amiens.

They had just finished dinner. A real, well-cooked French dinner which had satisfied even Billy Bunter.

He had gone from course to course until his shiny face had got even more shinier than ever, and his red cheeks a deeper hue.

The tour had finished.

It had finished much too soon if the conversation was anything to go by.

The boys had spent a very crowded day. They had started off from Cambrai at an early hour, and had motored through Bapaume, and then down to Albert.

From there Captain Matthews had taken them to Meaulle, the little shattered village where the Prince of Wales had spent month after month right through those wonderful days of the Somme battle of 1916.

From Meaulle they had gone to Mametz and Bazentin, where the whole country-side for mile after mile is made sad by the hundreds and hundreds of little wooden crosses that mark the resting-places of those brave fellows who gave their all for Britain and what she stands for!

From Mametz they went to Contalmaison, Thiepval, and Courcellette. They had then visited the famous Butte de Warlencourt, where that wonder monument stands out over the country like a sentinel to those splendid Australians who sleep there.

From Warlencourt the Greyfriars juniors went to Delville Wood—or what remains of it—and they walked over the ground that the South Africans fought over and captured after the sternest fighting ever known.

They had been to Leeboufs, where the glorious Guards had fought their sternest battle. The boys had seen the wonders of Beaumont-Hamel, where the Naval Division had struck terror into the heart of the Hun!

They had seen Comblès, that shell-shattered village where three armies had met in the heat of battle—the soldiers of France and Britain in deadly combat with the hated invader.

From there the boys came down to Peronne, and then back along the one-time beautiful Valley of the Somme.

And now Harry Wharton & Co. were in Amiens—that great town and railway centre, the possession of which for all those years of war had meant so much to General Haig and his Allies.

Captain Matthews was dining with the Greyfriars juniors, and he was listening now to their conversation with great interest.

"I've got an idea," began Billy Bunter, turning to Tom Dutton, the deaf junior, who was sitting next to him.

Tom Dutton turned to the Owl of the Remove with a pleasant smile.

"Do I know everybody here?" he said.

"Oh, no, Bunter, my dear fellow!" Bunter blinked.

"I said I've got an idea, idiot!"

"I don't see how you can expect me to know everybody," said Dutton pleasantly. "You see, most of the people at the other tables are French folk."

"Idea!" shrieked Bunter.

"What idea?" said Dutton. "I don't know what you're talking about, and don't shout! I'm a trifle hard of hearing, but I can hear you perfectly well!"

"Oh goodness!" puffed Bunter, turning to Bob Cherry. "Dutton's as ass! A first-class gilt-edged ass. Pass me the fruit, Bob, old man!"

"Here you are, porpoise!" laughed Bob.

"It's your last chance to-night. Hallo, hallo, hallo! Who are the parcels for?"

The waiter had brought three small packets to the table. They were neat little parcels, done up in brown paper, and they all looked very much alike.

"Meester Wharton!" said the waiter in English.

"Yes, here you are!" cried Harry, jumping up. "Pass it over. Merci!"

"And Meester Fish!" continued the waiter. "And Meester Hurree Singh!"

"I guess that's for me!" said Fisher T. Fish. "Pass that parcel right here!"

"If the honoured French sahib will hand the other over to me peacefully I will take it acceptably," said Hurree, in his best English.

"Yes, here you are!" cried Harry, jumping up. "Pass it over. Merci!"

"And Meester Fish!" continued the waiter. "And Meester Hurree Singh!"

"I guess that's for me!" said Fisher T. Fish. "Pass that parcel right here!"

"If the honoured French sahib will hand the other over to me peacefully I will take it acceptably," said Hurree, in his best English.

The parcels were handed across to the three juniors.

"Hallo!" laughed Captain Matthews.

"Who has been shopping in Amiens?"

Harry Wharton stood up.

"I should just like to say a few words, sir, if you please. I want—"

"I guess you must let me put my say in first, Wharton!" interrupted the Yankee junior. "It's most important!"

Hurree Singh was the next to bob up in his chair.

"Honoured sahib," he began, addressing Captain Matthews, at the head of the

tabia. "These few words I have to say to you respectfully will—"

"Shut up, Inky!" cried Harry Wharton. "I—"

"I guess you can put the stopper on besides Inky!" said Fish, glaring across at Wharton. "I have a few—"

"I—" began Harry Wharton.

"I—I—" commenced Hurree Singh. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the remainder of the Removites, as the three standing juniors started off against one another.

"I tell you—"

"I guess—"

"Honoured sahib, I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now, then!" cried Captain Matthews. "This will never do! You must take it by turn. It's no good talking against one another like that!"

"I—" began Harry Wharton.

"I guess—" interrupted Fisher T. Fish.

"Most highly esteemed sahib captain, I—" purred Hurree Singh, in his weird and wonderful English.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the captain. "This won't do! Now, Wharton, you got it off your chest first. What have you got to say?"

Harry Wharton's face had gone a deep crimson.

"I—I want to ask you to accept a little present from us, sir," he said. "You have been so kind to us on this tour that I thought the fellows here would be pleased if I got a little memento for the occasion. I asked the manager of the hotel to send out for something. I don't know what it is, sir; but if you will accept it as a little gift from us all as a token of esteem, and as an expression of—of our gratitude for your many acts of kindness to us during the tour."

"Hurrah!" roared the juniors, as Harry Wharton sat down.

"You loop-sided jay!" cried Fisher T. Fish, leaping up angrily. "I tell you I

thought of this scheme. I—I told the manager to get something as well!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, what is it?" laughed Captain Matthews. "Wharton has just very kindly presented me with a very beautiful leather pocket-case!"

"Just half a tick, sir!" cried Fish, tearing the brown-paper cover off.

"This—this—Oh, my stars and stripes, this—is a leather pocket-case. Hi! Where is that loop-sided, hare-brained hotel-manager. I guess—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, what's yours, Inky?" shouted Bob Cherry.

"I will remove the paper tearfully, my ludicrous chum."

The little packet was unwrapped, whilst Hurree Singh explained how he also had asked the hotel-manager on the quiet to send out for a small suitable present for the English officer.

"My hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "It—it—"

"Yes!" shrieked the juniors. "It's a leather pocket-case!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind!" cried Captain Matthews, when the laughter had subsided. "It's—it's a curious coincidence.

Or, rather, I should say the manager has not used much common-sense; but I shall, nevertheless, greatly appreciate your little gifts—more especially shall I appreciate the spirit in which the gifts are made. I have greatly enjoyed the tour. It has been a great pleasure to me to show you round the battlefields, and I think it is a pity the authorities concerned have not granted us a little more time. It has been rather rushed; but, notwithstanding, I hope most sincerely you have all enjoyed your visit, and have been interested and impressed by what you have seen."

"Rather, sir!"

"Well, thank you very much for your little presents. It is very good of you. Thank you!"

"Come on, you fellows!" cried Harry Wharton, leaping to his feet. "Three times three and one for luck! Hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!"

"Hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!"

"Hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!"

"Now one jolly good one for luck, you chaps! Let her rip! Hip, hip—"

"Hurrah!"

The next morning, like all things do, came to an end at last. Harry Wharton & Co. had to bid farewell to Amiens, and to board the train that was to bear them back to the northward, to Boulogne, to England, home, and school.

And though they were by no means sorry to see the Old Country and the old school again, it was not without regret that they bade farewell to Amiens and to Captain Matthews.

"It's a ripping place," said Billy Bunter, at the station. "In spite of the war, France has more first-class grub-shops than any place I've ever been in. I shall come back here again some day, I hope."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the train rolled away, and late that night the juniors were in their old quarters at Greyfriars, and their excursion to the battlefields of France and Belgium was a pleasant memory.

THE END.

(Don't miss "BUNTER'S TYPING AGENCY!"—next Monday's *Grand, Long, Complete Story of Greyfriars School*—by FRANK RICHARDS.)

NOTICES.

Correspondence, etc., Wanted.

George Butler, 30, Britania Road, Islington, N.1, wants to hear from readers interested in draughts, especially those who have books on the game to dispose of.
Miss Ruth Bond, 29, Winchester Avenue, Brondesbury, London, N.W., wishes to form a "Gem" League in her district, and would be glad to hear from readers.
Miss Amy Knight, Crossways Farm, Bolton, Great Yarmouth—with gift readers, 15-16, anywhere.

W. G. Sanderson, 408, Coldharbour Lane, Brixton, London, requires 25 members for Stamp Club Magazine twice monthly.
Miss G. Poole, Hinesme, Blackwood, Monmouth, South Wales—with readers in United Kingdom, 17-18.

Walter Maybury, of Manchester, is requested to communicate with John Wm. Mayor, 556, Oudham Road, Bardsley, Ashton-under-Lyne.

H. Marshall, 14, Union Road, Clapham, S.W. 4, offers a cricket-bat (last season's), 2 pairs of white pads, a pair of wicket-keeping gloves, and 2 balls. Best offer.

Back Numbers Wanted.

H. K., 197, Friars Road, East Dulwich, S.E. 12—"Magnum," 3-10. Write first.
H. Titchener, 108, Osborne Road, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne, wants offers for back numbers of "Magnet," "Gem," and "Penny Popular"; a great many early ones, in fair condition, id. each and postage.

Philip McTaggart, 72, Grosvenor Street, Glasgow—"Bob Cherry's Barring Out," and No. 5 of the "Gem." Would exchange "Gussy's Guest," "Cut by the Form," "Tom Merry & Co.," "Out West," and "Billy Bunter's Minor."

George Mooney, 65, Main Street, Dundee—3d. each offered for "Through Thick and Thin," "Boy Without a Name," "Hinton of the Rovers," "Last in the League," "The Secret of the Ring," "Well Played!"
Miss L. Dinn, Glynwood, Clarendon Road, West Kirby, Cheshire—"The Taming of Harry Wharton." 3d. offered.

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The Editor's Chat.

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Every Monday. Every Wed. Every Monday. Every Friday. Every Friday.

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS.

For Next Monday:

"BUNTER'S TYPING AGENCY!"

By Frank Richards.

Mr. Frank Richards has supplied us with one of the most humorous stories of Greyfriars ever written for next week's number of the MAGNET. To say that Billy Bunter is the central character in the story is to ensure my readers a real, hearty laugh.

Billy Bunter engages in a little of his usual keyhole tactics, followed up by some rather smart examples of sharp practice.

Unfortunately for the Owl of the Remove, however, everything goes smash at the finish, after some wonderful work with a typewriter.

"BUNTER'S TYPING AGENCY"

is a story which cannot fail to create roars of laughter, so don't miss it on any account.

OCTOBER!

Practically every moment of my time since I wrote to you last week has been spent in discussing plans and schemes for the forthcoming first number of the new edition of the "Greyfriars Herald."

When I say "every moment," I mean, of course, every moment that has not been taken up on the Annual and the Companion Papers.

THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD"

is going to be absolutely outstanding in the way of a school journal. Of that you may rest assured.

Numbers of suggestions have been made to me during the past few days, and these have been carefully considered and discussed. Some have been adopted, and many have been rejected; for nothing but the very best will find its way into the "Herald."

Unless I can feel certain that an idea is going to turn out to be just what my readers want, I cannot think of entertaining it.

GREAT PROGRESS!

The past week has seen considerable progress in the preparation of No. 1 of the "Greyfriars Herald," and I am beginning to feel quite excited about what my readers will say when, at length, they procure the first issue.

If they don't agree that it is the finest thing of its kind that has ever been done, it will be the biggest surprise I have ever had in my life.

However, I don't think I am likely to be mistaken in my forecast of its reception, for I have been editing papers for boys too many years to be out in my calculations as to what is required.

A SUDDEN THOUGHT!

During this very busy time, however, a thought has suddenly come into my mind several times: "I wonder whether my MAGNET readers are doing anything to make the new edition of the 'Greyfriars Herald' a success?" Are you doing anything?

Perhaps you think that what I asked every reader last week to do is of no real importance. I made the request that all MAGNET readers would tell their chums that the "G. H." is coming out again, and I can assure you that that is of the very utmost importance.

JUST THINK FOR A MOMENT!

whether you have a chum, either boy or girl, who may not have heard about the reappearance of the "Greyfriars Herald"; then, when you have thought of one, go along straight away and tell him or her all about it. By doing this you will be taking a real part in making the journal a thorough success.

PLAY THE GAME!

I have again received several letters from readers complaining that they have written to other readers in response to invitations in our Correspondence Column and have received no replies.

A reader, of Congleton, Cheshire, says: "I had occasion to reply to a reader who wanted a copy of 'Cousin Ethel's Schooldays,' sd, offered, write first. I had a copy, and wrote first," and, needless to say, I am waiting for an answer yet."

Two other readers write as follows: "We have taken the 'Magnet' in for eight years, and have at different times written to girls and boys who wished for correspondence, and have in both cases received no replies."

Now, I don't like to hear of this sort of thing. It is not fair to take advantage of the Correspondence Column to have a notice inserted and then ignore the correspondence which it brings forth.

I give due warning that if these complaints continue to come in I shall have to drop the feature for good and all. I should be very sorry to have to do such a thing, but that will be the only remedy.

THREE CHEERS FOR THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

A chum at Cowes assures me that the folks in the Isle of Wight are as sporting as anywhere, that the trains are just as good as in many places; they well may be!—and that it is a mistake to run down the island. There was, I am sure, never any serious intention of doing such a thing. The island is the favoured spot of most people. You can spend as pleasant a holiday there as anywhere within easy reach of town—not, perhaps, so easy these times; but so matter. Personally, I like the sleepy old trains—beg pardon, their swift express, which travel so fast that one thinks they may forget the place is a little land. Thanks to my Cowes friend for his reminder.

A DELIGHTFUL LETTER.

A married lady writes from the North to tell me that she never could persuade her father to read the Companion Papers. It was N.G., but she read them on the Q.T., and she was more than pleased when the "P. P." reappeared. I hope she will be just as pleased about the news of the "G. H." There will be no obstacles put in the way of her little boy reading the tales. I fancy if she could have persuaded her father it would have been all E.P. with his objections. So it has been with many fathers.

YOUR EDITOR.



Goggs Grammarian
By Richard Randolph

SYNOPSIS.

Johnny Goggs comes to Rylcombe Grammar School from Frankingham with his chums Frickett, Blount, and Waters.

Goggs is a jiu-jitsu expert, and a clever impersonator. He leads an expedition of Grammarians to St. Jim's on a night raid.

Gerald Cutts of St. Jim's falls foul of Bingo, the butcher, and after a scrap, in which Cutts is worsted, Bingo picks a quarrel with Goggs.

The eleventh round sees Goggs land a well-aimed blow at his adversary's chin. Bingo falls, and lies still.

Goggs accepts the challenge, on behalf of Bingo, to a return match on the last day of the term. Snipe conceals a plan to kidnap Goggs, the object being to make Goggs appear a funk.

(Now read on.)

Cutts Agrees!

"W HATS this mean, by gad?" Cutts, of the Fifth Form at St. Jim's, spoke thus, turning over in his hands a typewritten letter.

"Not knowin' what it is, can't say what it means," replied his chum Gilmore.

"Let's have a squint of it, old top!" said St. Leger.

But Cutts thrust the letter into his pocket. "Never mind," he said. "I expect the dashed thing is only a hoax. I shall take no notice at all of it."

But he did not mean that. His exclamation had been uttered before he had read through the letter; and the last paragraph of that letter told him that it would be better he should say nothing to anyone about it, and warned him particularly against saying anything to those two.

Gerald Cutts had no notion who the writer of the letter was. He was hardly aware of the existence of Snipe, and certainly had no reason to fancy that any Grammarian was concerned with his money troubles.

That letter referred to the troubles, and said that the writer might be able to suggest something to the advantage of the recipient if Cutts would meet him under a tree—a lightning-blasted oak which everyone knew—near the Rylcombe side of Wayland Moor, at half-past five that afternoon.

Cutts thought the letter might come from some enterprising moneylender. Those fellows did come out things, he told himself. He was inclined to credit the moneylender—if any—with a dash of recklessness as well as with plenty of enterprise; for Cutts doubted very much whether any money he borrowed would ever be paid back. On that account

(the question is solved)—which said quite to be charged on some unaccountably heavy gear—did not break him at an important moment.

There was a deep expression on his face as he came to one's hands and giving it to some clerk of a money-lender, Cutts held.

And there was St. Ledger and Gilmore were not high-minded and generous persons; but they would have forgiven Cutts the debt to them rather than force him to extremity. No money-lender was likely to consider him so far.

But Cutts' pride recoiled against the idea of being left off to them; and he preferred to cheat a money-lender rather than cheat them—chiefly, perhaps, because they were uncomfortably near at hand.

They had no objection to taking the money if they could get it, however, and they knew that Cutts' people were well-to-do.

"I say, Gerry," remarked St. Ledger now, "I don't want to bother you about that little of course."

Grant from Cutts. "I can wait till next term for the bulk of it at a pinch, but I should like a bit of account—twenty or so—say a franc or two."

"Name here," said Gilmore. "You're a little bit of a fellow," asked Cutts, in surprise.

"Practically," replied Gilmore. "Absolutely, me!" said St. Ledger.

Then what the blazes do you mean by getting with me? You couldn't have shelled out if you had lost."

"That was carrying the war into the chemical camp with a vengeance."

But it was a false name. St. Ledger's eyes glinted nastily, and Gilmore's lips curled into a sneer.

"Not much good your riding the high horse with us like that," Cutts said St. Ledger.

"Not a dashed scrap of good!" Gilmore said.

"What do you want? Would you like to put me down an' go through my dashed clobber?" snarled Cutts. "You might and twopenny, or thereabouts; but I understand, when talking about a hundred quid, well, you shall have the dibs. Some way or another I'll get hold of them, if I have to rob a dashed bank! But I shan't forget this, I can tell you."

He swung out of the study, and the two left behind looked hard at one another.

"I suppose in the end we shall have to make the crusty boulder a present of it," said Gilmore.

"Seems rather like that," St. Ledger replied. "Well, I could do with it; but I can't say I ever really counted on touchin' it. We were silly mugs to bet, for we should have had to shell out if we had lost."

That was what rankled most with them, but Cutts did not understand that, and certainly did not understand their real feeling in the matter.

Cutts was a few minutes behind the time his anonymous correspondent had mentioned. He thought it would make the writer of the letter less sure of him if he had to wait a bit.

As he drew near the tree he was annoyed to see two Grammar School juniors standing under it.

He passed them, walking quickly, went on a hundred yards or so, and then swung round and returned.

They were still there. Cutts left very impatient.

Again he turned, and walked away. This time he went further, but he did not go in a few minutes.

He glanced at his watch. He did not know to what he should have been doing. He was looking for a money-lender; and neither Larking nor Snipe quite seemed to fit that role.

Better speak to him, Larking whispered. "Better do it yourself!" growled Larking. But it was Cutts who spoke.

"Look here," said the Fifth Farmer arrogantly, "if you kids happen to be waiting, something in particular."

"Why I've ask that," returned Snipe. "Because I've an appointment here, and you are decidedly in the way—that's all!"

"I really don't think so," Snipe answered, looking to Cutts.

"Oh, don't you?" snarled Cutts. "An' why don't you?"

"Because I rather fancy your appointment is with us, you know!"

Cutts glared at Snipe. He saw a sneaky, cunning, shuffling creature, with an unpleasant, pimply face. But he read cunning in that face, and he was not minded to despise Snipe so much as he might have done.

He looked at Larking. In Larking he saw at a glance a bolder spirit than Snipe, though possibly a less crafty one. Larking was much more to Cutts' taste than Snipe. But Snipe seemed to be the one to speak.

"I want some proof of that before I talk to you," said Cutts sharply.

"You received a letter this morning, signed X. Y. Z.," Snipe replied.

"I did—that's true enough. An' I suppose you must have written it, or you wouldn't have known it. I don't see, though—"

"How are you going to help you out of your money?" asked Cutts. "I don't see how to do it."

"You must have written it, or you wouldn't have known it. I don't see, though—"

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had looked at him and said the same old thing, "I don't see how to do it."

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