

SPECIAL 4-PAGE SUPPLEMENT IN THIS ISSUE!



No. 731. Vol. XXI.

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The Magnet ^{1¹/₂}

Library

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED
THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."



MR. BUNTER—FORM-MASTER!



THE NEW FORM-MASTER ARRIVES AT GREYFRIARS I

(A Humorous Incident from the Long Complete Story inside.)



FOR NEXT MONDAY.

"THE BUNTERS' CONSPIRACY!"

By Frank Richards.

That is the title of our next grand, long, complete school story of the chums of Greyfriars and Mr. Wally Bunter, the new master of the First Form.

Billy and Sammy Bunter, as you will have read, expected great benefits when their cousin came to Greyfriars as a master. Those benefits did not come, and they found themselves kept in their place by the master. Of course, Wally had to do that, or he would never have maintained respect.

So Billy and Sammy conspire to get rid of Wally. Their conspiracies take various shapes and forms—but of their success or failure, you must read in next week's issue of the **MAGNET LIBRARY**.

HARRY WHARTON'S PAPER.

There will be another issue of the "Greyfriars Herald" next Monday in the **MAGNET LIBRARY**, and for once Harry has not set himself the task of writing round one theme. He generalises—with the result that many contributors find their way into the paper, and a bumper number is sent to me for my readers of the **MAGNET LIBRARY**.

THE "POPULAR."

Every boy and girl reader of the **MAGNET LIBRARY** knows that the "Popular" is our week-end companion paper. Well, with next week's issue there is going to be a startling change—and for the better, if that is possible.

We are increasing the price of our week-end companion paper to two pence,

and for the extra halfpenny we are going to give our readers of the Companion Papers nearly half as much reading matter again. In fact, there will be no less than **EIGHT PAGES** added to next week's issue of the "Popular," which will surely make the paper the ideal one for the week-end, containing as it will no less than **TWENTY-EIGHT PAGES**.

Naturally, you would ask what the paper will contain. I append a list of the stories:

"VERNON-SMITH DECLARES WAR!" A story of Greyfriars, relating Harry Wharton & Co.'s early schooldays. This story deals with the time when Vernon-Smith was the real Bouncer of Greyfriars. Vernon-Smith says: "Give me my way, or I'll drive you and your pals out of Greyfriars!" Readers can well imagine what exciting incidents follow that declaration of war.

"HOLDING THE FORT!" This is a grand story of Jimmy Silver & Co., the chums of Rookwood, who are rebelling against the non-expulsion of Lattrey, the junior who was responsible for Valentine Mornington being rendered blind.

"WESTWARD BOUND!" This is the first of a grand series of stories of the schooldays of the world-famous author, Mr. Frank Richards. Frank Richards attended the school in the Canadian backwoods, and readers of the "Popular" will have the opportunity of learning how their favourite author fared at school.

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What more need be said? That is surely the finest value for money ever offered, and I am hoping that every reader of the **MAGNET LIBRARY** who does not already read the "Popular" every week, will make a point of getting next week's issue, and judge for himself if our week-end companion paper is not the best paper to be had for your leisure hours.

To get it, you will have to **ORDER** it! Over **TWO MILLION BOYS** will know this is the greatest number of the "Popular" ever published, for it is being largely advertised. In addition to the stories, there will be **THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF MAGNIFICENT PLATES PRESENTED FREE WITH EVERY COPY OF THE "POPULAR" NEXT WEEK!**

Your Editor.

NOTICES.**Correspondence.**

John Hirst, 26, Penn Street, Coppice, Oldham, Lancs, wishes to correspond with a French boy who is learning English, with a view to mutual improvement in both languages; ages 13-15.

Cyril Walch, c.o. "The Stage," York Street, London, W.C., wishes to hear from Companion Paper readers, ages 13-24.

Leonard Diggles, 20, Hougoumont Avenue, Waterloo, Liverpool, wishes to hear from readers interested in photographs of famous boxers and other sporting stars.

Ernest C. Ford, 176, Essex Road, Islington, London, N.1, wishes to hear from readers anywhere who are interested in amateur journalism. He edits the "Amateur Wireless."

Miss Sylvia Mullne, Box 3492, Cape Town, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers in England and America.

L. Stebbing, 2, Boutflower Road, Clapham Junction, S.W.11, requires members for his literary club.

Football.

St. George's United, 15, medium, require away matches; five-mile radius; ground Hackney Marshes.—D. Rogers, 220, St. George's Street, London, E.1.

Shamrock Athletic Club, 15-16, medium, require matches to be played on chance pitches on Hampstead Heath. The club failed to get L.C.C. permits. Church team.—L. Daniels, 331, St. John Street, E.C.1.

Football matches wanted for junior club; home or away; ages 14-16.—Write W. E. Hill, Secretary, Longden's Sports Club, 82, Bramwell Street, Sheffield.

Wested Lane Rovers, ages 11-12, want matches at home.—Apply Alfred Vaughan, 15, Wested Lane, Swanley Junction, Kent.

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THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.



Mr. Bunter — Form-Master!

A Magnificent, Long Complete Story,
dealing with the Adventures of Harry
Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A False Alarm!

WHICH the 'Ead wants to see Master Bunter!"

Trotter, the pageboy at Greyfriars, put his head round the door of Study No. 7 in the Remove passage and jerked out the message.

Billy Bunter was having tea with his study-mates.

The Head's summons could not have come at a more inopportune moment. There were still three jam-tarts on the dish waiting to be disposed of. Billy Bunter grabbed one of them and munched furiously.

"Better get a move on, porpoise!" advised Peter Todd. "The Head doesn't like to be kept waiting."

"What's he want to see me about, Trotter?" mumbled Billy Bunter, with his mouth full.

"Which I can't say, Master Bunter."

"Did he smile when he gave you the message? Did he say, 'Go and ask that charming boy Bunter if he will drop in and have a cup of tea with me'?"

"No, he didn't," said Trotter, with a grin. "He looked cross an' waxy, as ever was. Afraid it means a lickin', Master Bunter."

"Oh crumbs!"

Even the grim prospect of a licking, however, failed to destroy Bunter's appetite. He made a grab at the two remaining tarts, and proceeded to devour them as he rolled away to the Head's study.

Trotter went off to his own quarters, whistling.

Outside the door of the Head's study Billy Bunter paused in order to swallow the final portion of tart.

Whilst thus engaged he applied his ear to the keyhole.

A murmur of deep voices came to his ear.

The Head had visitors, and Billy Bunter wondered, with uneasy curiosity, who those visitors were.

Suddenly the door of the Head's study was opened from within.

Billy Bunter was taken completely by surprise. He lost his balance and fell through the doorway, landing, with a bump and a yell, on the Head's carpet.

"Ow! Yarooooop!"

Dr. Locke, seated in state at his desk, glared at the grovelling junior.

"Bunter!" he exclaimed sternly. "How dare you enter my study in such an unorthodox fashion?"

"Yow!"

"I strongly suspect, Bunter, that you were listening at the keyhole, and that when Mr. Quelch opened my door the action took you by surprise, and you were precipitated into my study. Is that correct, Bunter?"

"Nunno, sir! I should never dream of listening at a keyhole, sir. I'm not a thatchdropper, sir."

"A—a what?" gasped the Head.

"Bunter evidently means 'eavesdropper,' sir," murmured Mr. Quelch, with a smile.

"Get up, boy!" thundered the Head.

Billy Bunter tottered to his feet and set his spectacles straight. He then became aware, for the first time, that there were seven persons in the study besides himself.

It seemed to be an assembly of masters.

Standing respectfully around the Head's desk were Messrs. Prout, Hacker, Quelch, Capper, Twigg, and Lascelles.

Billy Bunter groaned audibly.

The masters, for the most part, were looking stern. They resembled an array of judges. And Billy Bunter felt like a Daniel come to judgment.

Hastily the fat junior ran over in his mind the various offences he had committed during the past week. Those offences were numerous.

There was the occasion when he had made some toffee in Study No. 7, and a mass of the sticky compound had stuck to Mr. Quelch's gown. Then there was the libellous article concerning Mr. Prout, which had just appeared in "Billy Bunter's Weekly." More recently, there was the midnight raid on the school kitchen.

Which of these offences was Bunter about to be charged with? He concluded that it must be the kitchen raid.

The Head's voice broke in upon Billy Bunter's reflections.

"I have sent for you, Bunter, in order to ask you a question."

Billy Bunter gazed wildly at the group of grave-looking masters. Finally, he stood blinking at the Head.

"It wasn't me, sir! You've made a mistake, sir—you've jumped to a wrong conclusion."

"Bless my soul! What ever is the boy

talking about?" gasped the bewildered Head.

"I know you think it was me, sir, who raided the school kitchen last night. But I assure you I was sleeping soundly in my bed, sir."

"What?"

"It was probably Skinner who went into the kitchen and helped himself to the apple-pie, sir. It would have been a fairly slim fellow, anyway. You see, sir, I'm such a size that I—I couldn't have squeezed myself through the kitchen doorway."

The masters exchanged glances and smiled grimly.

Dr. Locke frowned.

"Am I to understand, Bunter, that you paid a visit to the school kitchen last night and appropriated an apple-pie?"

"Nunno, sir! Not at all, sir! There wasn't an apple-pie there. All the cupboards were locked up, and there was only a German sausage on the table—left there for the cat, I suppose. You're quite wrong in thinking it was me that raided the kitchen, sir. You—you seem to have got hold of the wrong end of the stick, sir—"

"Enough!" said the Head sternly. "You have said quite sufficient, Bunter, to incriminate yourself. I knew nothing of this affair until you went out of your way to mention it."

"Oh crumbs!"

"I am now satisfied, however, that you attempted to obtain food from the kitchen by night. Fortunately, Mrs. Kebble had locked the cupboards. You will take five hundred lines, Bunter."

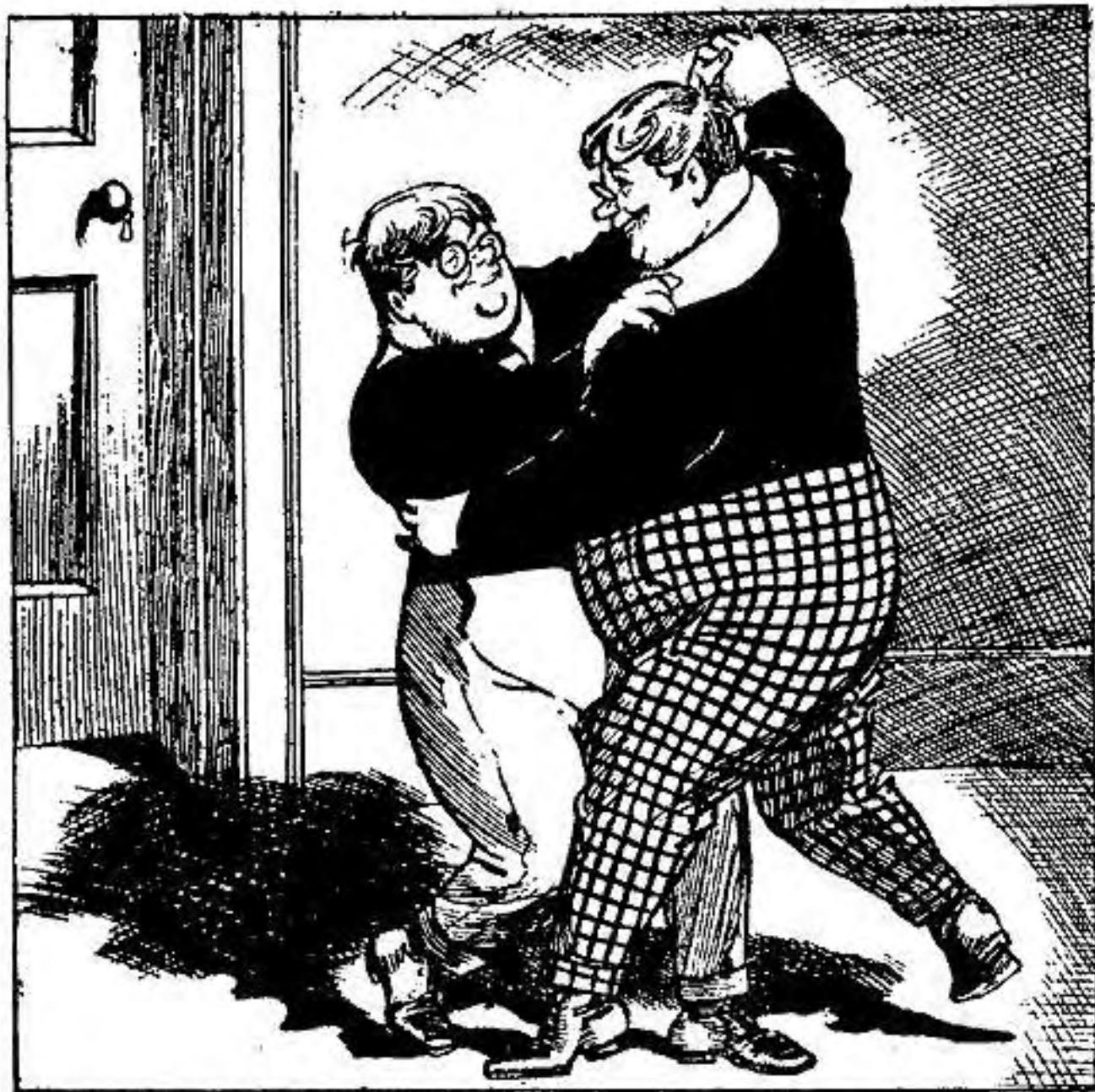
"Thank you, sir!"

Billy Bunter was genuinely grateful at having got off so lightly. He didn't greatly mind an imposition, even so heavy a one as five hundred lines. It was corporal punishment that Billy Bunter dreaded. He would rather have had five hundred lines than a single stroke of the Head's cane.

"And now, Bunter," said the Head. "I will explain why I sent for you. I have conferred at considerable length with the masters, and it has been decided to appoint a pupil-teacher to take charge of the First Form."

Billy Bunter digested this information with jaws agape.

It was something new, he reflected, for



"The fellows will treat us with new respect now!" said Bunter. "And we will have a glorious time, Sammy, my boy!" Then, without another word the two brothers, with beaming smiles, commenced waltzing joyously round the room. (See Chapter 2.)

the Head to take a mere junior into his confidence. It was strange that Dr. Locke could not appoint a pupil-teacher without sending for Bunter and telling him of his intentions.

And then a startling and a dizzy thought occurred to the fat junior.

A pupil-teacher was required at Greyfriars—a sort of juvenile Form-master.

Was it possible that he—Billy Bunter—had been selected to fill the post?

The thought took Bunter's breath away. At first, it seemed utterly absurd. But, after all, it would not require a very learned person to take command of the babes of the First. Just a smattering of general knowledge—that was all that was necessary.

Evidently the masters had met in conclave, discussed the matter at length, and unanimously decided upon Billy Bunter.

The fat junior drew himself up with an air of pride. He puffed out his chest with a new dignity.

"You couldn't have made a better choice, sir!" he said.

The Head looked astonished.

"How do you know, Bunter, whom we have chosen?" he gasped.

"The young rascal has undoubtedly been listening at the keyhole!" snapped Mr. Hacker.

"Oh, really, sir—As I said before, I shouldn't dream of doing such a thing!"

"Then how did you obtain the information, Bunter?" demanded the Head sternly.

The fat junior gave a chuckle.

"It's pretty obvious, sir, isn't it? You decide to appoint a pupil-teacher to take

charge of the First. Then you run over in your mind all the fellows who would be suitable for such a job. And finally, you send for me!"

"Good gracious!" gasped the Head. "Do you seriously imagine, Bunter, that you—an ignoramus, and an utterly incompetent boy—have been selected for this highly important post?"

"Of course, sir!"

"I am sorry to dash your expectations, Bunter," said the Head, smiling grimly.

"To be frank, you are the last person in the world whose name would occur to us in connection with such an appointment!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter's fond dreams of presiding over the infants of the First Form were ruthlessly dispelled.

"We had in mind your cousin Walter," said the Head.

"Oh!"

"As you know, Bunter, your cousin was at Greyfriars for a time, and we had an opportunity of estimating his worth and capabilities. He is intellectual; he is an athlete; and I have no doubt he would make an excellent disciplinarian."

"Oh, Wally's all right, sir!" said Billy Bunter. "There are no flies on Wally!"

The fat junior brightened up considerably. He would have liked the post of pupil-teacher himself, but since that was impossible, he was only too pleased to think that his cousin Walter had been chosen.

To have his own cousin at Greyfriars, as a master, would be truly delightful. The world would be a very pleasant place for Billy in those circumstances—also for his minor Sammy. What a crowd of privileges they would have! How they

would be able to loosen their tongues in proud boasting!

"We have gone carefully into every phase of the situation, Bunter," the Head went on, "and we are unanimously agreed that your cousin Walter will, to use a colloquialism, fill the bill. I have sent for you, Bunter, in order to ascertain your cousin's whereabouts. Where is Walter?"

"At Canterbury, sir!"

"He is still employed in an office there?"

"Yessir! He writes to me every week, and I believe he's getting fed-up with office-work. His salary's nothing great, either—anyway, he can never seem to afford to send me a postal-order!"

The masters smiled. Mr. Lascelles laughed outright.

"Give me the address of your cousin's lodgings, Bunter," said the Head.

The fat junior complied.

Dr. Locke jotted down the address.

"I will communicate with your cousin at once, Bunter," he said. "Thank you for the information. You may go!"

And Billy went, his eyes sparkling with delight, and his fat frame trembling with excitement.

Wally Bunter was coming to Greyfriars in the capacity of a junior Form-master.

It was the grandest news that had gladdened the heart of William George Bunter for many a long day. And as he quitted the presence of the Head and the masters, he seemed to be walking on air.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Amazing News!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

Bob Cherry hailed Billy Bunter as the fat junior of Greyfriars emerged from the Head's study.

Bob and his chums were in the corridor. They had heard that Billy Bunter had been sent for by the Head, and they were curious to know the why and wherefore.

Billy Bunter glanced at the Famous Five—looked them up and down in a scornful manner—and rolled past them with a lofty expression on his face, and with his nose tilted in the air.

"My hat!" gasped Harry Wharton. "What's the matter with Bunter?"

Johnny Bull reached out his arm, gripped Billy Bunter by the collar, and swung him back.

"Ow! Leggo, Bull, you beast—"

"Why are you giving yourself such airs, porpoise?" demanded Johnny.

"The Head hasn't given you the Freedom of the School, or the O.B.E., by any chance?" suggested Bob Cherry.

Billy Bunter found it difficult to be dignified, owing to the fact that Johnny Bull's grasp was still on his collar. But he mustered what dignity he could.

"Don't talk to me!" he said loftily.

The Famous Five exchanged glances of amazement.

"What the thump—" began Wharton.

"We have nothing in common," said Bunter. "We're not on the same level. It's a wonder I'm condescending to speak to you now!"

"Why, you—you—" spluttered Bob Cherry wrathfully. "What's come over you all of a sudden?"

"Bump the fat duffer!" said Frank Nugent impatiently.

"Let the bumpfulness be terrific!" added Hurree Singh.

Billy Bunter wriggled in Johnny Bull's grasp.

"Don't you dare to lay hands on a Form-master's cousin!" he exclaimed.

"My hat!"

The juniors stared blankly at Billy Bunter. It occurred to them that the fat junior was wandering in his mind.

"A—a Form-master's cousin?" gasped Bob Cherry, in amazement.

Billy Bunter nodded vigorously.

"You remember my cousin Wally?" he said. "A very refined and well-educated chap, something like me. Well, he's coming to Greyfriars as a Form-master. He's going to take the Sixth!"

"The—the Sixth!" stuttered Wharton.

"Yes. Up till now, the Head has always taken the Sixth, but he finds the work getting too much for him. So he sent for the masters—they're in his study now—and he had a confab with them.

"I want a new Form-master for the Sixth," he said. "Can any of you gents suggest somebody?" Then Quelchy said: "What about Wally Bunter? He'll make a ripping Form-master, old bean!" Those weren't Quelchy's exact words—"

"Ha, ha! I should think not!" chuckled Nugent.

"But, anyway, Wally's name was brought up, and when it was put to the vote as to whether he should be appointed, every master in the room held up both hands. Old Prout was so excited that he tried to hold up both feet, too, and came down wallop!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Famous Five could not help laughing at the absurdity of Bunter's statements. But they were angry, as well as amused. They had grown weary of the fat junior's fabrications.

"Well, I've heard Bunter tell some fibs in my time," said Bob Cherry, "but nothing comes up to the latest. It caps everything! Wally Bunter coming to Greyfriars as a Form-master! Ye gods! What a sensation—if it were true!"

"Oh, really, Cherry—" protested Bunter. "It's the solemn truth! Have you ever found me out in a lie?"

"I've found you out in billions of 'em!" said Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I certainly think that Bunter's latest yarn beats all his former fabrications hollow!" said Harry Wharton. "It's about the biggest whopper he's ever invented!"

"Bump the fat romancer!" growled Johnny Bull.

And the juniors closed in upon Billy Bunter.

"Stand back, you rotters! If you lay so much as a finger on me, I'll tell my cousin, and get you flogged and gated! You'll find it won't pay you to bully a Form-master's cousin!"

The juniors let go of Billy Bunter as if he had suddenly become red hot.

It was not Bunter's threat which had caused them to release him. It was the sudden opening of the door of the Head's study, and the appearance of the Head himself.

Dr. Locke had a letter in his hand. He beckoned to Bunter.

"Kindly drop this letter into the pillar-box, Bunter," he said. "I have written to your cousin, and I hope he will be able to take up his duties here in the course of a few days."

The Head's words were distinctly audible to the Famous Five. They fairly gasped.

"My only Aunt Sempronius!" murmured Bob Cherry, as the Head withdrew. "It—it's true!"

Billy Bunter turned triumphantly to the juniors.

"What did I tell you?" he said.

"You wouldn't believe me, but now you've got proof. You'll have to mind your p's and q's when my cousin arrives! Wally won't stand any bunkum. I shall tell him to keep a special eye on you, and punish you every time you're cheeky. But there! I don't know why I'm wasting words on fellows who are so far beneath me. Henceforth we are utter strangers!"

And Billy Bunter strutted away in order to post the letter to Cousin Wally.

To say that the Famous Five were amazed was to put it mildly. They were flabbergasted.

"Wally Bunter coming to Greyfriars!" gasped Wharton at length.

"As a giddy Form-master!" said Nugent in tones of awe.

"And he's a mere kid!" said Bob Cherry. "Not many years older than ourselves. This is a staggerer, and no mistake!"

"The staggerfulness of the esteemed and ludicrous tidings is terrific!" said Hurree Singh. "It deprivefully takes away the breathfulness."

"Of course," said Harry Wharton thoughtfully, as the juniors walked away. "Wally Bunter's no duffer. Except for the fact that he's such a youngster, he's got all the qualifications for a master's job."

"He's got no degrees," said Nugent.

"True. But I don't think degrees are absolutely necessary. And then, how do we know he hasn't swotted for his B.A., or something like that? We've lost touch with the fellow, and anything might have happened since we saw him last."

"Wally Bunter's quite capable of taking a junior Form," said Bob

Cherry; "but I can't picture him taking charge of the Sixth."

"And I can't picture the Sixth allowing it!" said Johnny Bull, with a grim chuckle. "There will be war, my friends—war to the knife—if Wally Bunter comes to Greyfriars as master of the Sixth."

"Yes, rather!"

"Ho will be kickfully ejected!" said Hurree Singh.

Bob Cherry nodded.

"Looks like breakers ahead," he remarked. "We shall see some fun."

The advent of Wally Bunter to Greyfriars formed the sole topic of conversation at the tea-table in Study No. 1.

Meanwhile, Billy Bunter had lost no time in spreading the news. Having posted the letter to his cousin, he went in search of Sammy. On his way to the fags' quarters, he passed quite a number of fellows, and he could not contain the news he was bursting to tell.

"You fellows will have to be jolly careful how you treat me in the future," he said. "It'll pay you to keep on the right side of a Form-master's cousin. If I have any check from any of you, I shall report you to Wally—Mr. Bunter, I mean—and he'll come down heavily. Don't say I didn't warn you."

The majority of the fellows thought that Billy Bunter was romancing, as usual. But when the Famous Five bore out Bunter's statements, there was no longer any room for doubt. Harry Wharton & Co. were not the sort of fellows to back up a statement unless there was truth in it.

After stopping on his way to relate the news to at least a score of fellows, Billy Bunter came across his minor.



"We have heard an extraordinary rumour, sir, to the effect that Walter Bunter is coming to Greyfriars as a master!" said Loder. "That is correct, Loder!" replied the Head. "I have offered Bunter the position here. Whether or not he will accept it remains to be seen." (See Chapter 4.)

NEXT
MONDAY!

"THE BUNTERS' CONSPIRACY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.

Sammy was in the fags' Common-room. He was grovelling in the fire-place, and he was holding before the flames a herring, impaled on a pen-holder. He looked round as Billy approached, and noted the excited flush on his major's cheeks, and the gleam in his little round eyes.

"What's up, Billy?" he inquired.

"I've news for you, Sammy—glorious, stunning news! Cousin Wally—"

"Eh?"

"Cousin Wally's coming to Greyfriars!"

Sammy was so startled that he dropped the herring into the fire, where it spluttered and sizzled as the flames surrounded it.

"Gammon!" said the fag.

"Not a bit of it, my son! It's a fact."

"Wally coming here! As a pupil, of course?"

"No; as a Form-master."

Sammy's eyes opened wide.

"Billy, you surely don't mean to say—"

"You know I've never told you a fib, Sammy. I sometimes exaggerate a little to the other fellows, but to my brother I always tell the plain, unvarnished truth. And the truth is that Wally's coming here to take a Form. At least, the Head's offering him the job, and he'll be a duffer if he doesn't jump at it."

Sammy's eyes sparkled. He had forgotten all about the spoiled herring.

"Think what it means to us, Sammy!" said Billy Bunter. "Heaps of freedom, crowds of privileges, free feeds every day in a Form-master's study!"

"You are taking it for granted that Wally will be decent to us," said Sammy.

"Eh? Of course he'll be decent. He's bound to be decent to his own kith and kin, isn't he?"

"I—I suppose so."

"Sammy, my boy, we'll have a glorious time! You don't seem to grasp it. You don't seem to cotton on to

what it means. Why don't you get up and dance a hornpipe?"

"It—it's sort of taken my breath away," said Sammy. "But I'm just as excited as you are, Billy. It makes me nearly dizzy to think of the great times we shall have. Late passes every evening, first-rate feeds in a Form-master's study, the protection of a master if anybody tries to bully us! Oh, it's ripping! We shall have the time of our lives!"

Billy nodded.

"The fellows will treat us with a new respect now," he said. "If we happen to be short of tin—and it's a state we generally find ourselves in—plenty of chaps will be willing to advance us loans. By standing well with us, they'll stand well with Mr. Walter Bunter, Form-master. Twig?"

Sammy "twigged." And he looked forward no less keenly than his major to the arrival of cousin Wally.

Had anyone opened the door of the fags' Common-room at that moment, he would have been entertained by the sight of the Bunter brothers, with beaming smiles, waltzing joyously round the room!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

A Shock to the Sixth!

"**H** EARD the news, old man?"

Faulkner of the Sixth asked the question of Wingate.

The captain of Greyfriars had finished his tea, and was reclining lazily in an armchair in front of the fire. Nugent minor, Wingate's industrious fag, was clearing the table.

"No," said Wingate drowsily, in reply to Faulkner's question. "Anything startling?"

Faulkner nodded, and advanced into the study. He glanced significantly at Dicky Nugent, and Wingate interpreted the glance.

"You can cut off, kid!" he said.

Faulkner waited until the fag had departed. Then he turned to his chum.

"We're going to have a Form-master!" he exclaimed. "There's a fellow being specially appointed to take the Sixth."

Wingate was wide awake now. He sat bolt upright in his chair.

"You mean to say the Head isn't going to take us any more?" he said.

"No; he finds the work too much for him."

"Then why doesn't he move all the Form-masters up one, and let Prout take the Sixth, Hacker the Fifth, and so on?"

"Goodness knows!" said Faulkner. "He seems bent on getting a new man. And who do you think the new Form-master is?"

"Haven't the foggiest notion."

"Wally Bunter!"

Wingate stared incredulously at his informant.

"You—you can't be serious," he gasped.

"I'm dead serious," was the reply. "I know it sounds incredible, but it's a fact. Wally Bunter is coming to Greyfriars to take the Sixth."

"But he's a mere kid!" exclaimed Wingate. "A decent kid, right enough, but only a kid for all that. Why, he's younger, I believe, than most of the fellows in the Sixth."

"But he's got a sound headpiece on him," said Faulkner. "I expect he's been swotting for ages, with a view to getting a Form-master's job."

"But, my dear man, the Head can't set a mere kid like that over the heads of people like Prout and Quelch, who have been at Greyfriars for donkeys' years!"

Faulkner shrugged his shoulders.

"The Head does some queer things at times," he said, "and I suppose that is just another weird whim on his part. Perhaps he thinks it better that the Sixth should be instructed by a youngster than by a hoary veteran. I don't profess to understand the workings of the Head's mind. But it's a fact that this fellow Bunter is coming here—a fact which we shall find it dashed unpleasant to swallow!"

"You amaze me," said Wingate. "Did you get this information from a reliable source?"

"I got it from Bunter of the Remove—"

"Then it means just nothing."

"But it was borne out by Wharton and his pals. They saw the Head give Bunter a letter, and they heard him say what the letter was. It was suggesting that Wally Bunter took up his duties here in a few days."

"My hat!"

Wingate was thunderstruck. He sat staring at Faulkner in mute astonishment.

Then the door opened, and Loder of the Sixth stalked in. He was scowling savagely.

"It's the custom," said Wingate, "to knock before walking into a fellow's study."

"Blow the custom!" snapped Loder.

"Have you heard the news?"

Wingate nodded.

"Well, why are you sitting there like a graven image? What do you think about it?"

"I don't quite know, yet. It's knocked me all of a heap."

"Do you realise what it means?" said Loder. "That beastly upstart—that rotten outsider—"

"Meaning Wally Bunter?"



"Have you written that imposition yet, Bunter?" said Wally sharply. "No." "No, what?" "No, I haven't!" replied Billy Bunter. Wally's hand descended on his cousin's shoulder in a firm grip. "You will say, 'No, sir,'" he commanded. (See Chapter 9.)

"Who else should I mean?"
 "Anybody but Wally Bunter, judging by your description," said Wingate. "Wally isn't an upstart, and he isn't an outsider. The description's all wrong. It's a misfit. Wally Bunter's a decent chap, and a good sportsman."

Loder sneered.
 "You're bound to say that!" he said. "I suppose you want the Sixth to be domineered and dictated to by a kid who's younger than ourselves?"

"No, I don't!"
 "Well, what are you going to do about it? I might tell you that the majority of the prefects feel very strongly on the matter. They won't tolerate this Bunter fellow at any price."

"If he's appointed by the Head," said Wingate, "I'm afraid we shall have no choice in the matter. And I don't think for one moment that Wally Bunter would be domineering or dictatorial. He's not that sort."

Loder glared at the captain of Greyfriars.

"You're going to take it lying down?" he asked.

"I think I'll call a meeting of the Sixth, and see what the general opinion is," said Wingate.

"You'll find that the general opinion is dead against Bunter coming to this school."

"We shall see."

Wingate lost no time in assembling the Sixth-Formers. They met in the senior Common-room.

Some were smiling good-humouredly; some were looking dazed; others were openly hostile.

Loder took up his position by the fireplace. He leaned his elbow on the mantelpiece, and faced the assembly.

"This is an indignation meeting," he began, "to protest—"

"One moment, Loder!" interposed Wingate quietly. "You can speak when your turn comes—not before. As captain of the school, it naturally follows that I take the chair at this meeting."

Loder scowled, and subsided.

"Now, you fellows," said Wingate, "we've just received some altogether startling news. Wally Bunter—whom most of you know—is coming to Greyfriars to take the Sixth Form, unless rumour's a lying jade."

There was a murmur of disapproval.

"We're not going to be bossed by a kid!" growled Carne.

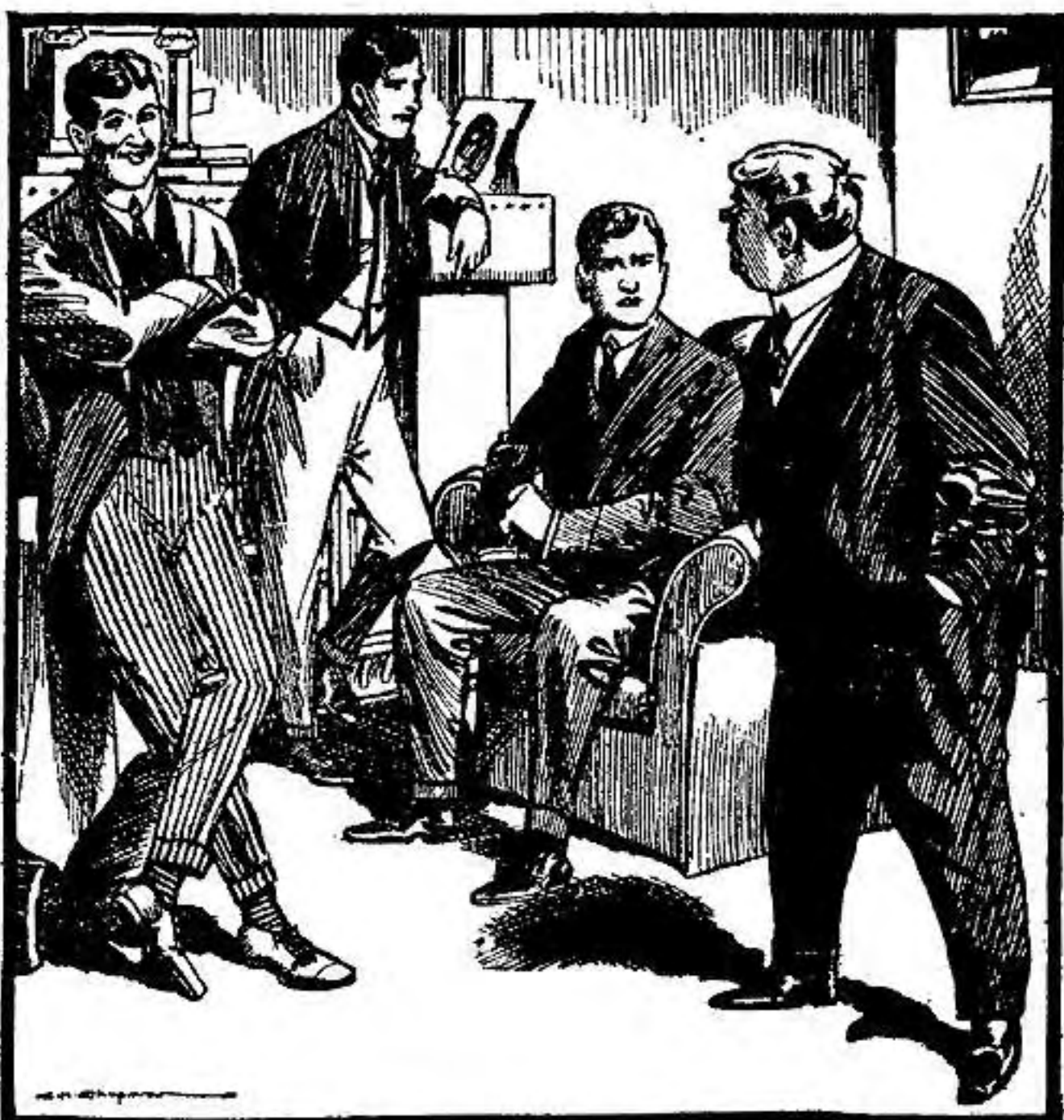
"No jolly fear!"

"Greyfriars is suffering from too much Bunter already," said Walker. "We don't want another young blackguard planted on us!"

"There you make a mistake," said Wingate, with some warmth. "Wally Bunter isn't a blackguard. He's a rattling good fellow!"

"Tell us his history," said Tom North. "I seem to have heard it once, but I've forgotten."

"There isn't much to tell. It appears that young Wally Bunter was a clerk in an office at Canterbury. He had the luck and the pluck to save his employers from losing a large sum of money—thwarted an attempted robbery, I believe. On the strength of this, he was given a public school education. He was here for a time, and he's also been to St. Jim's. He's been lost sight of for the last year or two. I fancy he's back again in the Canterbury office, and that he's been devoting all his spare time to



"I think there's been enough of this melodramatic talk!" said Wally. "Leave my study instantly!" The seniors did not budge. "We'll leave when we want to leave!" said Walker, "not before!" Wally glanced at the clock. "I'll give you two minutes to obey my order!" he said. (See Chapter 9.)

swotting. He has brains; in fact, he's a totally different fellow from Bunter of the Remove."

"Played games rather well, didn't he?" said Gwynne.

Wingate nodded.

"He's a jolly good all-rounder, and for all we know to the contrary, he may be fully qualified to take the Sixth, kid though he is."

"Rot!" snarled Loder.

"I, for one, sha'n't protest against his appointment," said Wingate. "The Head's seen fit to select him, and he wouldn't do it without jolly good reasons."

Loder gave a snort.

"If the young upstart comes here, we'll make life so dashed unpleasant for him that he'll be only too glad to quit, and go back to his office!" he said.

"Hear, hear!" said Carne.

Wingate expressed strong disapproval of Loder's plan.

"Fair play's a jewel," he said. "What I suggest is that we give the kid a fair chance. If he proves capable and decent, all well and good. If he doesn't, then we can take some action to get him removed."

"Faith, an' that's a ripping plan," said Gwynne. "Personally, I'm not very keen on this Bunter fellow ruling the roost, but we'll at least give him a chance."

The majority of the seniors agreed with this view. There were only three who didn't.

Loder, Carne, and Walker were bitterly opposed to Wally Bunter's appointment.

Had Wally been a shady customer, they would doubtless have welcomed him with open arms. But Wally was straight and decent, and Loder & Co. had no use for a fellow who possessed these qualifications.

The meeting broke up. But Loder and Carne and Walker remained in the Common-room, talking the matter over with scowling faces.

"There's only one thing for it," said Loder.

"Well?" said Carne.

"We must go in a deputation to the Head, and tell him we flatly refuse to be bossed by a Bunter. We won't put it quite so bluntly as that, of course. But we'll give the Head to understand that the Sixth is dead against the appointment, and we'll urge him to cancel it. Come along! Let's strike while the iron's hot!"

Walker hesitated.

"What are you hanging back for, man?" demanded Loder impatiently.

"I—I was thinking that the Head might not relish our criticism—"

"Rot! He can't eat us. Let's go and beard him in his den."

And the three seniors proceeded to the Head's study. Loder grim and determined, and Carne and Walker looking rather uneasy, and wondering how the Head would receive the deputation.

NEXT
MONDAY!

"THE BUNTERS' CONSPIRACY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF "THE JUNIORS OF GREY FRIARS."

By FRANK RICHARDS
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Bad for Billy Bunter!

"COME in!"

In response to the Head's call, Loder pushed open the door of the study, and entered.

Carne and Walker followed, looking rather sheepish.

Dr. Locke pushed aside his papers, and looked up.

"Well, Loder?"

"We've heard an extraordinary rumour, sir, to the effect that Walter Bunter is coming to Greyfriars. Would you mind telling us if it is correct?"

"It is quite correct, Loder," said the Head. "At least, it is correct in so far as Bunter has been offered an appointment here. Whether or not he will accept it remains to be seen."

Loder scowled, and was silent for a moment. Then he gave vent to a fierce outburst.

"I object, sir!"

The Head frowned.

"I shall be glad to hear on what grounds your objection is based, Loder," he said coldly.

"Well, to begin with, sir, Bunter's not at all a desirable sort of fellow—"

"As to that, I think I am the better judge of his desirability," said Dr. Locke. "Unless Walter Bunter's character has changed considerably since he was here, he is in every way a desirable young fellow."

"You don't know him so well as we do, sir. You only saw the best side of him. In many ways he's just like his cousin in the Remove—fat and greedy, and with precious little regard for the truth. I strongly object—we all strongly object—to such a fellow coming to Greyfriars!"

The Head raised his hand.

"Enough!" he said sternly. "You appear to forget, Loder, to whom you are speaking. I will not allow you to malign Walter Bunter in this way. I would also point out that it is not in your province to criticise any arrangements I may choose to make for the welfare of this school."

Loder flushed.

"The Sixth Form feels very strongly on the matter, sir," he said. "If Bunter is given a Form-master's appointment here, there will be trouble."

"Loder!"

"I don't mean to be disrespectful, sir. But I think it right to warn you. The Sixth won't allow themselves to be bossed by this fellow Bunter!"

"There is no suggestion of the Sixth Form being 'bossed,' as you call it," said the Head. "You will be required to treat Bunter with respect, but you will not be under his jurisdiction."

Loder gave a gasp. So did Carne and Walker.

"We—we understood that Walter Bunter was coming here to take the Sixth, sir!" stammered Carne.

"Bless my soul!"

"And we didn't like the idea of being domineered by a fellow who is no older than ourselves, sir," said Walker.

The Head looked astonished.

"It has not been suggested for one moment that Walter Bunter should take charge of the Sixth Form," he said.

"Oh!"

"He is coming here in the capacity of a junior Form-master—a pupil-teacher, to be precise. The master who has hitherto had charge of the First Form has gone to the North of England to take up a better appointment. And

Walter Bunter is to take his place at Greyfriars."

"My hat!" murmured Loder.

"So you see," said the Head, "you are making much ado about nothing. I shall continue personally to instruct the Sixth Form."

The seniors looked decidedly crest-fallen, and Loder regretted his ill-timed outburst.

"You will be well advised in future, Loder, to pay no attention to idle rumours," said Dr. Locke. "I have no doubt that Bunter of the Remove is responsible for spreading the story that his cousin was to be master of the Sixth Form."

Loder & Co. had no doubt on that point, also. And they made a mental resolve to make things warm for Billy Bunter.

The Head waved his hand towards the door.

"You have wasted my valuable time," he said curtly. "Go!"

And the three seniors, nettled at the rebuke, hurriedly left the Head's study.

Out in the passage they exchanged grim glances.

"What a sell!" said Walker.

"We'd got hold of the wrong end of the stick—thanks to Bunter!" said Carne savagely.

"Let's go and find the fat fibber, and make him sit up!" said Loder.

A few moments later the three seniors resembled sleuth hounds on the trail.

Loder had obtained his ashplant, and he stalked through the building in quest of Billy Bunter. Walker and Carne accompanied him.

The fat junior was eventually run to earth in Bolsover major's study. He was telling Bolsover what a stunning time he would have when cousin Wally arrived.

"Life will be one long picnic," he was saying. "With Wally to back me up and take my part, everything in the garden will be lovely."

Then, hearing a snarl from the doorway, Billy Bunter spun round, and found himself face to face with Loder of the Sixth.

"Hallo, Loder!" he said feebly, blinking at the tall prefect, and shivering a little at the sight of the ashplant. "Do you want Bolsover?"

"No. I want you! What do you mean by telling everybody that your cousin was coming here to take the Sixth, you fat fraud?"

"Oh, really—"

"I'm going to tan your fat hide, and make you understand that it doesn't pay to spread lies through the school!" said Loder grimly.

"I wasn't! I didn't! I never!" exclaimed Billy Bunter wildly.

Loder turned to his two lieutenants.

"Sling him across the table!" he commanded.

Billy Bunter backed away in great alarm as Walker and Carne stepped towards him.

"Hands off!" he panted. "If you harm a hair of my head, I'll report you to Mr. Bunter—when he comes!"

The seniors were not a bit impressed by this threat. As for Bolsover major, he burst into a chuckle, and leaned against the mantelpiece to watch the fun.

Walker and Carne laid hands upon Billy Bunter without ceremony, and slung the fat junior across the table as if he were a sack of coals. Then Loder proceeded to make merry with the ashplant.

Swish!

"Ow! I'll tell my cousin of this, Loder, you brute! I'll tell him you bullied me, and tried to cut me in three halves!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bolsover.

The ashplant sang through the air.

Swish, swish, swish!

"Yow-ow-ow! I'll get you sacked from the school for this!" cried Bunter wildly.

He struggled frantically to free himself, but the strong arms of Walker and Carne pinned him down.

"Drag 'em off, Bolsover!" yelled Bunter. "Are you going to stand there and see me half-killed?"

Bolsover grinned.

"I'm a fairly good fighting-man," he said, "but I'm not taking on three Sixth-Formers, thanks!"

Meanwhile, Loder continued to wield the ashplant until he was scant of breath. And with each stroke he delivered a homily on the folly of telling fibs.

By the time the ordeal was over Billy Bunter scarcely knew whether he was on his head or his heels. He slipped down from the table and rolled on the carpet, groaning with anguish.

"Cousin Wally shall hear of this!" he moaned.

"If cousin Wally gives us any check we'll give him a dose of the same medicine!" growled Loder.

"As I remarked before, Greyfriars is suffering from too much Bunter already!" said Walker. "And your precious cousin will get short shrift if he doesn't behave himself!"

Having wreaked vengeance upon Billy Bunter, and greatly eased their feelings thereby, the seniors strode out of the study, leaving Bolsover major to administer first aid to the Owl of the Remove.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Wally Accepts!

"I'M fed-up!"

Wally Bunter made that remark with emphasis.

He was having breakfast at his lodgings in Canterbury, and he addressed the remark to Mr. Slimson, his former tutor, who was staying with him for a few days.

"What, exactly, are you fed-up about, Walter?" asked Mr. Slimson, as he decapitated his egg.

"Everything!" Wally's tone was almost savage. "The monotony of this existence will drive me potty, I think."

Mr. Slimson looked sympathetic, but said nothing.

"I've got into a groove," Wally went on. "A hopeless rut. I don't think I was ever cut out to be a clerk. There's no adventure in the job, and precious little fun. Each day is exactly like the previous one. It's a cut-and-dried sort of existence, and, as I said, I believe the monotony of it will drive me potty."

"It is a comfortable billet, Walter," murmured Mr. Slimson.

"How I hate that word 'comfortable'!" said Wally. "It suggests old age and carpet slippers. What I want is a job with a few thrills in it and a spice of adventure."

Mr. Slimson smiled.

(Continued on page 13.)

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY PRICE 2:

CONSPIRACY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY FRIARS. 11 By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT MONDAY: **"THE BUNTERS"**
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.



EDITORIAL!

By Harry Wharton.

So far as this particular issue of our little paper is concerned, I am merely a figurehead

Dick Penfold, the Remove's tame poet, is responsible for the bulk of the contributions.

Pen's clever parodies of popular poems have proved a source of keen delight to many thousands of my chums, and I have been asked over and over again to publish a Special Parody Number of the "Greyfriars Herald."

I took Dick Penfold to the tuckshop, stood him a feed, and talked it over with him. Feeling very generous and obliging whilst under the influence of food, Dick consented to set his wits to work and to prepare a number of choice parodies. The first fruits of his labours appear in this issue, and I think you will all agree that Pen has excelled himself.

Unfortunately there is a fly—or, should I say a prize porpoise?—in the ointment.

Billy Bunter, listening to our conversation from the doorway of the tuckshop, overheard our intentions. So you can guess what is going to happen. Billy will bring out a Special Verse Number of his "Weekly."

Without wishing to be conceited, I must say that the great W. G. B. will have all his work cut out if he wishes to produce a number that will rival this.

Personally, I have no gift for versifying. I am content to take a back seat on this occasion, and I am giving Dick Penfold practically a free hand with this issue.

Pen is not doing the whole of the work, of course. Indeed, there are some verses in this number which, though less brilliant than Pen's, are even more amusing. When fellows like Horace Coker start bursting into poetry, you can be assured of some fun.

You will be doing me a favour by dropping me a line—a postcard will do—telling me what you think of this number. I hope to get sufficient messages of appreciation to paper the walls of Pen's study.

HARRY WHARTON.

Supplement i.]

THE POETRY LESSON!

By Mark Linley.

"Now, Bull," said Quelch, "who was Chaucer?"

"Your question makes me quake with awe, sir!"

"Skinner! Recite the works of Spenser!"

"I can't. I've got no common-sense, sir!"

"Bunter! What do you know of Hood?"

"It's put on prams, to make kids good."

"Now, tell me, Russell, what was Moore?"

"Please, sir, what Oliver Twist asked for!"

"Nugent! Recite to me from Browning!"

"I can't, sir, while you stand there frowning!"

"Bolsover major! Who was Keats?"

"A chap who manufactured sweets!"

"Newland, pray tell me, who was Scott?"

"Forgive me, sir, I've clean forgot!"

"Wun Lung! Who was the man Rossetti?"

"Me velly solly—me for-gettee!"

"Brown! Where was the abode of Pope?"

"He lived at Rome. I'm right, I hope?"

"Stott! Tell us what you know of Shelley."

"He lived on apple-tart and jelly!"

"Todd, pay attention! Who was Gray?"

"I'm sorry, sir—I couldn't say!"

(Complete collapse of Mr. Quelch!)

HOW I SEE OTHER FELLOWS!

By Frank Nugent.



BILLY BUNTER.

DOES POETRY PAY?

By Tom Brown.

If ever I wish to find a short cut to the workhouse, I shall become a poet.

Of all the professions, I think that of a poet is the least profitable.

I had occasion to be in London during the last vacation. I was returning from the theatre one night when a shabby, dilapidated, down-at-heel specimen of humanity got on the bus, and seated himself opposite me. The conductor approached the poor wretch.

"Fare, please!" he demanded.

The passenger groped in his pockets. Then he heaved a deep sigh, and faced the impatient conductor.

"I wish to get to Marble Arch," he said, "but unfortunately I have no money."

"The fare's tuppence!" growled the conductor.

"Shall I write you out a cheque?" murmured the shabby passenger.

"Don't be funny! Get off this bus, or I'll give you in charge for travelling with intent to defraud!"

The poor wretch rose shakily to his feet, and my heart went out to him in compassion.

"Sit down," I said. "I'll pay."

And I handed twopence to the conductor.

"You are indeed a Good Samaritan!" said the seedy-looking individual. "You have saved me a long tramp."

"That's all right," I said. "I'm only too glad to be able to help a fellow who is down on his luck. You're one of the unemployed, I suppose?"

"No, my young friend."

"You've got a job?"

He nodded.

"Then how is it you can't afford your bus fare?"

The stranger smiled sadly.

"I am a poet," he said.

That explained everything, of course.

"How much do you make by writing poetry, if it isn't an impertinence to ask?" I inquired.

"Oh, about five shillings a poem."

"And how many poems do you write a week?"

"About fifty."

"My hat! Then I don't see what you've got to grumble at!"

The stranger smiled.

"I ought to add," he said, "that only about five of the fifty are published. So now you can understand, my young friend, how it comes about that I can't afford the luxury of a bus fare. Take my advice, and never become a poet."

I most certainly sha'n't! Unless, as I remarked at the commencement of this article, I wish to find a short cut to the workhouse!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.



Our Tame Poet

— Interviewed —

By Our Special Representative.

"It is many a long day," said the editor, "since you interviewed anybody for the 'Greyfriars Herald.' For weeks past, you scoundrel, you have been drawing a salary, and doing no manner of work!"

"Whose fault is that?" I growled. "You haven't commissioned me to do any interviewing stunts. You've kept me out of the paper. It's a wonder your circulation hasn't gone to pot. The readers simply rave about my stuff!"

"I know they do," said the editor. "But not in the sense you mean. They rave about it because it's such piffle!"

"Look here——"

"I'm not going to argue with you," the editor interrupted. "I don't believe in arguing with my serfs and vassals. You will proceed forthwith to Dick Penfold's study and interview him."

"He's your long-haired idiot of a poet, isn't he?"

"You'd better not use that remark in his presence. Penfold combines poetry with pugilism. There's power and punch in his straight lefts, as well as in his poetry."

"Oh!"

"So you'd better mind your eye. Be nice to him, and he'll be nice to you in return."

"Will he stand me a feed, do you think?"

"It's quite possible."

I went along to Dick Penfold's study in a happy frame of mind. And I could not have arrived at a more opportune moment. The table was laid, and Pen was just starting tea.

"Sit down," he said genially, "and tuck in!"

I promptly obeyed. Being in the state known as stony, having blued my last instalment of salary paid me by the editor, I had not had a good feed for many moons.

There was a choice assortment of cakes and pastries on the table, and I fell to with a good appetite.

"This is ripping!" I mumbled, with my mouth full of jam sponge.

Penfold smiled at me across the table. "You're scoffing that stuff as if you were starving!" he said.

"I am! For days past I've had to get all my meals in Hall, and, as you know, the grub one gets in Hall isn't sufficient to keep body and soul together. You're a Good Samaritan to stand me this feed!"

It was not until only a few crumbs remained on the table that I desisted. Then, leaning back in my chair, I addressed Dick Penfold.

"I want to chat with you about your poetry," I said.

"Go ahead!"

"I think it's really wonderful!" I exclaimed. "You're a born poet!"

"Rats! I hate that expression. No fellow is a born poet, or a born actor, or a born genius."

"You don't think so?"

"No, I don't. Take the case of a good cricketer. You often hear people say, 'So-and-so was born with a bat in his hand.' What rot! The fellow became a good cricketer by constant practice, and by sticking to it. He wasn't born a cricketer. Neither can anybody be born a poet."

"But it might run in the family?" I suggested.

"Rats again! My father's a cobbler. My grandfather was a gardener."

"So you think anybody may become a poet?"

"Yes—always provided he has education and imagination."

"That's worth knowing," I said. "I think I'll become a poet myself."

Penfold smiled.

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"I shouldn't, if I were you. Poets nearly always finish up in the workhouse. They can't get a living wage, poor beggars! It's a starvation game. I know a chap in Friar-dale who's engaged as a crossing-sweeper; he gets two shilling an hour. I also know a struggling poet in Friar-dale; he's lucky if he gets two shillings a day!"

"My hat, you surprise me!"

"Yes, it is rather surprising, isn't it? Take my advice, and shun poetry as you would shun the plague. Stick to prose, or start keeping rabbits. You'll find it much more profitable."

I jotted down Penfold's remarks in my notebook.

"How many poems have you written in your time?" was my next question.

"Hundreds," was the reply. "The 'Greyfriars Herald' has been running well over a year, and I've had a poem in practically every issue. 'Billy Bunter's Weekly' is also more than a year old, and I've appeared in it almost every week. And, quite apart from my contributions to these two papers, I write about half a dozen poems every day."

"My only aunt! What on earth do you write about?"

"All manner of things, for all manner of



There was a choice assortment of cake on the table, and I fell to with a good appetite. Penfold smiled at me across the table.

people. Fellows bring me their autograph-books, and get me to inscribe verses in them."

"Why not save yourself trouble by writing the same poem in each book?"

"I never duplicate," said Penfold. "I believe in being original. Have another cup of tea? I think I can squeeze sufficient out of the pot."

"Thanks! Tell me more about your poetry. I'm interested."

"Well, I get all sorts of odd jobs. The other day Bulstrode told me his grown-up girl cousin was getting married, and he wanted me to write an ode to send her on her wedding-day."

"Did you do it?"

"Of course! I heard afterwards that the bride chuckled over it no end. I'll tell you of another job I tackled. It was Mr. Prout's birthday a short time back, and the Fifth-Formers decided to make a presentation to him. They bought him an alarm-clock—Prout always used to oversleep in the mornings—and they asked me to write a little ditty, so that they could present it to him with the clock."

"Can you remember what you wrote?"

"Oh, yes! It went like this:

"Dear Sir,—You're ninety-three to-day (At least, you're getting on that way!) And we, the members of your Form, Decided last night in the dorm To make to you a presentation— A token of our admiration. Coker suggested a new hat, But funds would hardly run to that. Besides, we didn't know the size Of your bald head which is so wise. So, finally, we all agreed That an alarm-clock was your need. We've bought you one for one-and-four; It will disturb your morning snore. And wake you up, sir, with a jerk (We hope the beastly thing will work!) We trust that you will have no scruples In taking it. And all your pupils Send you their greeting most sincere; May you go strong for many a year!"

"You—you didn't really present Prout with a poem like that?" I gasped.

Penfold laughed outright.

"Of course not. I was merely pulling your leg," he said. "What I actually wrote was much nicer than that. And the alarm-clock, as a matter of fact, cost thirty bob."

"But—but that doggerel that you've just recited to me——"

"I made it up as I went along," said Penfold.

"My hat! And yet you say you're not a born poet!"

"Any ass can spout doggerel," was the reply. "Look here, I hope you don't mind, but I must ask you to leave me now. I've got a love-sonnet to write this evening for Lord Mauleverer. It's to be sent to the charming young daughter of the Mayor of Courtfield."

"Is Mauly in love?"

"Of course not! This is just a little romance of his. He has about a dozen a week, on an average."

"And you have to write his love-ditties for him?"

Pen nodded.

"I hope he pays you well?" I ventured.

"I never accept payment for my poems—except from the editor of the 'Herald.' I'd accept it from the editor of 'Billy Bunter's Weekly,' too, if I could get it. But his postal-order hasn't arrived yet!"

I laughed heartily, and then took my leave of Dick Penfold, after a stunning feed and an entertaining chat.

Penfold's an awfully decent sort, and I hope his Parody Number will be a big success. But there! It's bound to be, with my contribution in it!

?

**ARE SPECIAL
NUMBERS POPULAR?**

YES!

**THERE'S another Special
Number of "The Greyfriars
Herald" next week. H.W.**

[Supplement ii.]



OUR PARODY PAGE!



Specially Compiled for this issue of the "Greyfriars Herald,"
By **DICK PENFOLD.**

Ride a cock horse to Banbury Cross,
But don't put Bunter on your horse.
For Billy's weight is half a ton,
And your poor old steed will be undone!

Little Sammy Bunter sat in a shunter,
Eating a railway lunch,
When Billy espied him, and sat down
beside him—
And soon there was nothing to munch!

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he.
But he wasn't so merry as old Bob
Cherry,
Who's always bursting with glee!

Old Mother Hubbard, she went to the
cupboard
To get her poor dog a bone.
But when she got there she found, in
despair,
Billy Bunter inside on his own!

Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water;
But Pussyfoot had got there first—
You should have seen the slaughter!



Coker had a motor-bike,
His very own, you know;
And everywhere that Coker went
That bike refused to go!

Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
"At Greyfriars I can find a Rake,
At Plymouth there's a Hoe!"

Higgledy-piggledy, my black hen,
She lays eggs for gentlemen.
Her eggs are much preferred at home
To Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient
Rome."

Tom, Tom, the piper's son,
Stole a pig, and away he run.
(Such shocking grammar, I declare,
Would make old Quelchy tear his hair!)

I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls,
And I dined on a fragrant kipper.
I awoke to the sound of Bob Cherry's
bawls
And the lusty whack of his slipper!

Supplement iii.]

The boy stood on the burning deck
When Sawbutter had fled.
(This is how Rake recited it,
And Bulstrode punched his head!)

Of all the girls that are so sweet,
There's none like Bessie Hunter,
Who grimly sets herself to eat
Whatever may confront her!



Jack Spratt could eat no fat:
Bunter said, "All serene.
You can digest my Sunday hat,
I'll scoff your fat, old bean!"

Little Jack Horner sat in a corner
Eating a priceless pie.
The pie was "priceless," for, you see
He'd stolen it—that's why!

How doth the busy Billy B.
Improve each shining hour?
By writing yards of balderdash
In some secluded bower.

Under the spreading chestnut-tree
The Greyfriars Smithy stands,
Fishing for trout, without a doubt,
But only reeds he lands!



Sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of
rye,
Bunter's postal-order is coming by-and-
bye.
When the letter's opened, the chaps will
start to sing:
"Bunter's cash has come at last—what a
curious thing!"

'Tis the voice of the sluggard,
He says, with a frown,
"This early 'getting up'
Will soon 'get me down!'"

Tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor,
Rich man, poor man, beggar-man,
thief.
The chap who tries to be all at once
Is pretty certain to come to grief!

Simple Simon met a pieman
Going to the fair.
The pieman had no pies to sell,
For Bunter had been there!

Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John,
Went to bed with his trousers on.
When the prefect came to see lights out,
Poor John was badly knocked about!

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
On some sad and shipwrecked Tar
Stranded on the ocean foggy,
Minus grog, yet feeling groggy!

Georgie Porgie, pudding and pie,
Kissed the girls and made them cry.
Georgie Bulstrode can't do this—
He can find no girls to kiss!



"Mother, may I go out to swim?"
"Yes, my little grub,
For many a year has passed, I fear,
Since you had a morning tub!"

Hey diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon.
The Greyfriars porpoise jumped over a
fence,
And collapsed like a pricked balloon!

Bunty, Bunty sat on a wall,
Bunty, Bunty had a bad fall.
Not even a score of sturdy men
Could lift poor Bunty up again!

There was an old woman who lived in a
shoe,
I think old Quelchy should live there,
too.
For (I hate to say such things in rhymes)
He himself's an "old woman" at the
best of times!

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 751.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS!

As described by that Comic Card, HORACE COKER.

It was the skooner Hesperus
That drifted on the rox
One savvidge, stormy winter nite,
And gave the skipper shox!

The skipper's daughter was on board,
"A lass! A lass!" she sobbed.
A reely charming maid was she,
Although her hare was bobbed.

The thunder rolled, the brakers broke,
The waves dashed oar the deck.
And the skipper he blue a wiff from his
pipe,
And he looked a totle wreck!

"Oh, father! Look at the angry waves
Which dash upon the skooner!
Are we to dye within an hour,
Or shall we perish sooner?"

The skipper shook in every lim,
He clutched his pretty daughter;
The pear of them (they couldn't swim)
Pitched headlong in the water!

"Oh, father! Shall we both be sunk
Beneath this angry sea?"
But the skipper was in a horrible funk,
And never a word spake he!

"Help! Reskew us!" the maiden cried
In axxents of despare.
And then a deep base voice replied,
"Ahoy! We'll soon be there!"

The lifeboat rushed with frantick speed
To save the drowning pear,
The skipper of the Hesperus
And his daughter yung and fare.

The reskew work was quickly done,
And not a sole was drowned.
The skipper and his worthy maid
Were landed safe and sound.

It was the skooner Hesperus
That drifted on the rox.
Let's hope the skipper and his maid
Will have no further shox!

MY POETIC GENIUS!

By BILLY BUNTER.

DICK PENFOLD isn't the only fellow in the Greyfriars Remove who has pretensions to being a poet.

Personally, I consider I am streets ahead of Pen as a poet. But I don't find a great deal of time for writing verse.

You see, I have my "Weekly" to run, to say nothing of multifarious duties in other directions. (Good word, "multifarious." I've just turned it up in Peter Todd's dictionary.)

I come of a poetic stock. I have been making a study of my ancestry, and my family-tree make very interesting reading. It proves conclusively that I am a direct descendant of William Shakespeare, the merchant who wrote "The Wreck of the Light Brigade" and "The Charge of the Hesperus." He also wrote, if I remember rightly, "The Burial of a Country Churchyard" and "The Elegy of Sir John Moore."

The editor of the "Herald" has graciously allowed me to publish my family-tree in these columns. It's a bit xiz-zag, and I hope you will understand it. Here it is:

W. SHAKESPEARE

Susan Shakespeare married Sam Milton

Molly Milton married Percy Pope

Penelope Pope married Bertie Byron

Bessie Byron married Bartholomew Bunter
(late Poet Laureate of the Philippine Islands.)

William Samuel Bunter

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER

In case this family-tree is not clear (Bob Cherry says it's about as clear as mud!) I will explain it in detail.

My father is Mr. William Samuel Bunter. My father's father was Mr. Bartholomew Bunter, who was elected Poet Laureate of the Philippine Islands, at a salary of two-and-fourpence a year. My father's father's father was Bertie Byron, the fellow who wrote "The Adam of Waterloo"—or was it the "Eve"? I forget. My father's father's father's father was Percy Pope. My father's father's father's father was Sam Milton, who wrote something about Paradise. But he couldn't have had much of it himself, for I believe he was blind. And Sam Milton's father was the great William Shakespeare. So there you are! You have the direct line of descent.

If you doubt the truth of my statements, go to the British Museum, or the College of Arms, and verify the facts for yourselves.

IMPORTANT
Notice Below.

My first poem was written at the age of five. It was an "Ode to a Chocolate Finger," and began something like this:

"Choklit finger, choklit finger,
May your luvily flaver linger
On my lipps for menny a day;
May it never pass away!"

Quite good for a kid of five—what! Of course the spelling leaves much to be desired; but you can't expect a fellow to be well versed in spelling at the tender age of five!

Two years later, my "Ode to a Mutton Cutlet" was published in the "Weekly Glutton," and I became quite famous. The editor sent me a shilling postal-order for my contribution. It was the first postal-order I ever handled, and I shall always remember with what joy I rushed round to the post-office to get it cashed.

From that time my reputation as a poet grew bigger and bigger. The "Weekly Glutton" commissioned me to write them a poem each week; and at the age of eight I had my own banking account.

But do not imagine for one moment that I write poetry for greed of gain, like Dick Penfold does. I write for posterity!

Long after Dick Penfold and his works have been forgotten the poems of William George Bunter will be devoured with avidity by an eager public.

The majority of Penfold's verses are not poems at all. They are parodies. And any ass can write a parody. You simply take a verse, and alter the sense of it. For example:

The shades of night were falling fast
As through the tuckshop entrance passed
A podgy youth named Billy Bunter,
Who felt as hungry as a hunter!

Penfold can turn out that sort of stuff like sausages from a machine. But when it comes to writing poetry—real poetry—I've got him beaten to a frazzle every time.

If you want to see a sample of my work, I advise you to obtain the next issue of my "Weekly," which appears in the "Popular." It is a Special Verse Number. Even my editorial is written in verse, and rattling good stuff it is, too!

I hope one of these days to have a fat volume of poetry on the market, entitled "The Bunter Ballads." The ballads are already written, and I have dangled them under the noses of various publishers; but the beasts won't bite!

However, I hope very soon to find a publisher for them, and then I shall make my fortune. I shall buy a two-seater car, and lots of other useful toys, and I shall be a power in the land.

As for the fellows who laugh and jeer at me, and treat my poetry with scorn, they will have to take a back seat. They shall not share my prosperity. And all I can say is that it will serve them jolly well right! They will feel very sick to think that they ever doubted my poetic genius!

? GREATLY ENLARGED "POPULAR"! ?
SEE PAGE 2.

Grand Coloured Plates. :: Splendid New Features.

Mr. Bunter—Form-master!

(Continued from page 8.)

"Then I suggest you become a steeple-jack or a tight-rope walker," he said. "Seriously, though, Walter, you ought to be quite contented with your lot. Your employers have treated you well."

"Oh, absolutely!" said Wally heartily. "And your prospects of promotion are rosy—"

"True. But what about all this extra swotting I've been putting in? Night after night I've come home and studied until the small hours of the morning. What's it all going to lead to? Am I going to benefit by it? Or is it simply wasted energy?"

"You must not expect results too quickly, Walter," said Mr. Slimson mildly. "Patience, my boy, patience! Sooner or later a good position will turn up, and your qualifications will enable you to take it."

"The sooner the better!" grunted Wally.

He pulled the toast-rack towards him, and was silent.

Wally Bunter was not usually a groanser. He was the soul of cheerfulness. But at last he was growing weary of the humdrum life he was leading at Canterbury. The dreary routine of the office was beginning to pall. Even at his lodgings he was not happy. He knew exactly what the next meal would consist of, and the meal after that—in fact, he could have recited the bill of fare for the whole week. His landlady never varied it. On Sunday there was the conventional roast beef and Yorkshire pudding; on Monday and Tuesday the joint was finished up; on Wednesday there was Irish stew; on Thursday steak-and-kidney pudding; on Friday ham and tongue; and on Saturday pressed beef. For breakfast each morning there was the eternal boiled egg. For supper there was cold meat and salad.

The only thing which had happened to break the monotony of this existence was the arrival of Mr. Slimson.

Wally was very fond of his old tutor, to whom he owed much of his success as a scholar.

But what was the use of being scholastic, Wally reflected, if he could not turn his knowledge to advantage? A knowledge of Latin and Greek was no earthly use to him in the office. Nor did a knowledge of English history and English poetry assist him in any way. His employers never wanted to know on which date the Battle of Hastings was fought, or the name of the gentleman who wrote "Excelsior."

And so Wally, to use his own expression, was fed-up. He wanted something to happen—something that would lift him out of the rut. And it happened that very morning, whilst he was still at breakfast.

The postman beat a merry tattoo on the door, and the next moment Wally's landlady shuffled into the room with a couple of letters, both addressed to Walter Bunter, Esq.

One of the letters was of no consequence. The other bore the Friardale postmark, and Wally looked hard at it.

"It isn't from Billy or Sammy," he murmured to himself. "The handwriting's much too good."

Greatly wondering, Wally ripped open the envelope. He drew out the letter, and as he read it a flush came into his

cheeks, and his eyes gleamed with excitement.

"Good news, Walter?" inquired Mr. Slimson.

"Yes, rather! You were saying that, sooner or later, a good position would turn up. Well, here it is!"

Wally handed the letter to his companion.

Mr. Slimson adjusted his glasses, and read the epistle, which ran as follows:

"Greyfriars School,
Friardale, Kent.

"My dear Bunter,—A vacancy has arisen at this school for a junior assistant master, to give tuition to the First Form. I have discussed the matter with my staff, and we have come to the conclusion that you are eminently fitted for such a post.

"It may not be your wish to give up your present occupation, but I am making you the first offer, and if you would care to accept the post, and will let me know, I will write you further as to salary, etc.

"Yours sincerely,
"HERBERT H. LOCKE."

Wally Bunter had risen to his feet, and he paced to and fro while Mr. Slimson perused the letter.

"What do you think of it?" he exclaimed.

"I think it is splendid, my boy!" said Mr. Slimson, with a smile. "It is an extraordinary coincidence that this letter should follow on the heels of our conversation."

Wally nodded.

"You advise me to take the job?"

"Most certainly! It is the very thing you want. You will get much more fun out of life at a public school. And all the knowledge you have amassed during the past year or two will stand you in good stead."

"I'll send Dr. Locke a telegram on my way to the office," said Wally.

His face was radiant now. The thing for which he had longed had come to pass.

Good-bye to the dreary office! Welcome to Greyfriars!

In the first flush of jubilation it did not occur to Wally Bunter that there might be breakers ahead—that possibly there were fellows at Greyfriars who would not take kindly to his coming.

**Something
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"THE BUNTERS' CONSPIRACY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREY-FRIARS.

Wally's mind was completely taken up by the prospect of becoming an assistant master at a big school.

"The Head will give me a test, I expect, before I take up my duties," he muttered. "But I've no doubt I shall get through all right."

"Of course you will!" said Mr. Slimson. "You have all the necessary qualifications. The boys may prove rather difficult to handle—"

"I'm not going to have any bunkum!" said Wally grimly. "If they think that I'm cast in the same mould as my cousin Billy, and that they can pull my leg ad lib, they'll find they've woke up the wrong passenger! I'm going to be strict—not a martinet, or a bully—but I mean to keep discipline."

Mr. Slimson nodded approvingly.

"You have my heartiest good wishes, Walter," he said. "You know that."

Not for many mornings had Walter Bunter walked to the office with so light a tread.

On the way, he popped into the post-office and wired Dr. Locke, accepting the post.

Later on, he interviewed his employers, put the whole position clearly before them, and made arrangements for his departure. The employers were very reluctant to lose his services, but they realised that it would be a change for the better, so far as Wally was concerned. He was told that if at any time he wished to return to the Canterbury office, a place would be found for him.

The headmaster of Greyfriars replied promptly to Wally's wire, asking him if he could arrange to take up his duties at the beginning of next week.

This arrangement suited Wally down to the ground. And it was with a light heart and a keen sense of anticipation, that he packed his belongings into a gladstone bag and prepared to start on his adventure.

In going to Greyfriars he would not be treading on unfamiliar ground. He knew the old school well, and he was fond of it. He had some staunch friends there, too. He was not exactly bursting with eagerness to see Billy and Sammy, but he looked forward with real pleasure to meeting Harry Wharton & Co. And his only regret was that he would not be able to meet them on the same level. He would be a master; he would wear a gown and mortar-board. He would be greeted respectfully, by all the decent fellows, as "Mr. Bunter."

Wally blushed at the thought.

"I hope everything works out well," he reflected. "Don't see why it shouldn't. I'm rather a youngster, of course, and that might excite a certain amount of jealousy. But I'm awfully bucked at having got the job. Life will be worth living again. And methinks there are some adventures looming on the horizon."

Had Wally Bunter foreseen the nature of some of those adventures, he might have spoken a little less jubilantly.

But it is not given to any of us to know what the future holds in store. Which is perhaps just as well.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.**The First Adventure!**

"SISTER ANNE, Sister Anne, do you see anyone comin'?"

Ponsonby of Highcliffe glanced along the road, and his cronies—Gadsby, Monson major, Drury, and Vavasour—followed Pon's glance.

A plump figure came into view, carrying a bag.

THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.

NEXT
MONDAY!

"THE BUNTERS'

"Billy Bunter!" said Gadsby.

"Not so, my son!" chuckled Ponsonby.

"Eh? If that's not Billy Bunter, I'll eat my hat!"

"Then I hope you'll find it digestible! You'll never make a detective, Gaddy. Take another look at the oncomin' figure. To begin with, the fellow walks with an athletic stride—an' you've never seen Billy Bunter do that! Secondly, the fellow's carryin' a bag, which suggests that he's just arrived in this charming locality. An' thirdly, he's not wearin' spectacles."

"Then who the thump is he?" asked Gadsby, bewildered.

"He's a Bunter right enough, but not William George. Unless my aged eyes deceive me, it is Walter. You remember Wally Bunter?"

"Egad, yes!" said Monson. "We've crossed swords with the bounder on several occasions, an' he's generally managed to get the better of us."

"Exactly!" drawled Ponsonby. "An' here, my friends, is a glorious opportunity of gettin' our own back. We are five to one, an' we hold all the cards!"

The Highcliffe Nuts grinned, and waited for Wally Bunter to draw level with them.

Wally could easily have dodged them, had he chosen, by taking to the fields. But that was not Wally's way. He knew that the Highcliffe fellows meant mischief, but he was not afraid of them. He came on, swinging his bag in his hand and humming a merry tune.

Ponsonby made a mocking bow.

"Welcome to your rotund majesty!" he said.

And the rest of the Nuts bowed also, and chanted, in chorus:

"All hail!"

Wally Bunter paused, bowed in return, and then walked on.

"Not so fast, my beauty!" said Ponsonby. "You're not goin' to shake off the society of your old pals just yet!"

"Sorry I can't stop," said Wally, "but I happen to be in a hurry."

"You're goin' to Greyfriars?" said Pon.

Wally nodded.

"Then we'll see that you arrive in style!"

Ponsonby glanced significantly towards the bank. Lying there was a tattered coat and a battered hat—evidently the cast-off property of a tramp.

The coat was a very ancient one—a relic, it seemed, of early Victorian days. The hat was of the slouch variety, perforated with holes and plastered with mud.

"We're goin' to dress you up, so that your arrival will make somethin' of a sensation," chuckled Ponsonby. "Your present togs are far too respectable—too conventional, don't you know! We want to make you look distinctive!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" cackled Pon's cronies.

Wally Bunter set down his bag in the roadway, and proceeded to pull off his coat.

"He's submittin' like a little lamb!" said Drury. "Pavin' the way for us, by gad!"

"Absolutely!" said Vavasour.

Wally Bunter, however, was not removing his coat in order that the tramp's coat might be put on him. He had quite another object in view. He found himself, within a few moments of his arrival, with a fight on his hands; and although he knew that he must eventually be overpowered, he meant to do some damage before he was compelled to give in.

He shot a swift glance along the road, in the faint hope that some Greyfriars

fellows might be in sight. But the road was deserted.

Then, with a sudden and unexpected spring, Wally was in the midst of the Highcliffians, hitting out right and left.

Unlike his cousin Billy, Wally Bunter was a first-class fighting-man. When roused—and he was roused now—nothing could hold him.

Biff!

Ponsonby recoiled from a smashing straight left to the jaw, and he collapsed in the roadway with a yell of anguish. Before he could pick himself up, Gadsby, floored by a hefty punch, came floundering on top of him.

"Ow!"

"Yow!"

Wally Bunter was going great guns. He dealt Monson major a blow in the chest which bowled him over like a skittle.

But Wally's advantage was short-lived. Drury and Vavasour attacked him from the rear, and tripped him up.

Wally came heavily to earth, and his assailants swarmed on top of him.

"We want some rope!" panted Ponsonby.

"Haven't got any," muttered Gadsby. "But we can tie a couple of belts together, an' make the bounder's arms fast, so that he won't give us any more trouble!"

"Good wheeze!"

Gadsby and Monson took off their belts, and tied them together. Then they secured the victim's arms to his sides, and Wally was helpless.

The tattered tramp's coat was then thrown over his shoulders, and buttoned in front with the solitary button. After which, the battered hat was clapped on to Wally's head, and he looked a very complete wreck.

In spite of the injuries they had received, the Highcliffians could not help cackling at Wally Bunter's appearance. The lower part of him was respectable; from the waist upwards he looked as sorry a specimen of humanity as it was possible to conceive.

"What a guy!" gurgled Monson.

"He'd take first prize in any male beauty contest!" sniggered Drury.

"Oh, absolutely!" said Vavasour.

Wally Bunter had not given in without a struggle. He had kicked out fiercely, but to no purpose.

"This is your idea of fair play, I suppose?" he said bitterly. "Five fellows crowding on to one! You've got the laugh of me now, but perhaps I shall turn the tables sooner than you think!"

A mocking laugh greeted Wally's outburst.

"Bring him along to Greyfriars!" commanded Ponsonby. "We'll see that he arrives in state!"

Wally groaned. He realised that such an undignified arrival at the school would be a very bad beginning. It was not usual for Form-masters to turn up in tramps' attire.

But there was no help for it—no way of escape.

Wally hoped against hope that a party of Greyfriars fellows would come along, and rescue him from the hands of the Philistines. But the only person in sight was a stolid country yokel, who broke into a slow guffaw on catching sight of Wally.

"Ho, ho, ho!"

Wally glared at the rustic, but he was powerless to do anything more than glare.

Ponsonby & Co., their faces beaming with delight, frog-marched their captive in the direction of Greyfriars.

Wally fervently hoped that nobody

would witness his arrival. But when the school came in sight, he saw to his dismay that quite a number of fellows were strolling in the Close.

"Get a move on, tubby!" said Ponsonby, giving Wally Bunter a series of pushes from behind. "Left, right—left, right! Step it out, there!"

Wally nearly choked as he stumbled forward.

"Oh, you'll be sorry for this some day!" he muttered.

When the procession reached the school gateway, Wally tried to break away from his captors and take to his heels. But he was being jealously guarded, and had no chance.

"In with him!" rapped out Ponsonby.

And Wally Bunter was sent whirling through the gateway.

It was at this precise moment that a figure in gown and mortar-board emerged from the gate-porter's lodge.

Wally, unable to check himself, owing to the impetus he had received from the rear, cannoned violently into no less terrible a personage than the Head of Greyfriars!

Dr. Locke staggered backwards, and only just saved himself from falling.

Ponsonby & Co., awed at what they had done, stood petrified. And before they could muster sufficient presence of mind to take to their heels, the Head called to them:

"Come here, you young rascals!"

The Highcliffe juniors, looking very scared, slouched forward. The Head eyed them with stern displeasure.

"Am I to understand, Ponsonby, that you are responsible for this unwarranted treatment of Mr. Bunter?"

Ponsonby gasped. He was so thunder-struck at hearing Wally referred to by the Head as "Mr. Bunter" that he was at a loss for words.

"Did you waylay Mr. Bunter on the road, and place that deplorable coat and hat upon him?" thundered Dr. Locke.

Ponsonby remained tongue-tied.

"Your silence, Ponsonby, is the silence of guilt!" said the Head sternly. "You will untie those belts, and loosen Mr. Bunter's arms, and then follow me to my study!"

Ponsonby sullenly set Wally Bunter's arms free. And Wally hastily removed the objectionable coat and hat. He then took his own coat from Drury, who had been carrying it.

"I am very sorry this has happened, Bunter," said the Head, as he shook hands with Wally. "It is fortunate that I came on the scene, and saved you from the humiliation of appearing before all the boys in that hideous guise. I will see that justice is administered to these young rascals!"

"Thank you, sir! But I think it was only a joke on their part," said Wally.

The Head frowned.

"I trust I am not devoid of a sense of humour," he said. "But I quite fail to see any humour in this outrage. It was a dastardly affair!"

Dr. Locke turned to the cowering Nuts.

"Follow me!" he repeated.

In great trepidation, Ponsonby & Co. followed the Head to his study.

"He can't lam us!" whispered Monson.

"But he can report us to Voysey," groaned Ponsonby.

On arriving at his study, the Head went to the telephone, and rang up Highcliffe School.

Ponsonby & Co., standing sheepishly in a row, exchanged doleful glances.

"Now we're for it!" muttered Gadsby.

Dr. Locke spoke into the transmitter.

"Is that you, Dr. Voysey? Locke speaking. I am reluctant to trouble you.

but a very serious matter awaits your attention. Can you possibly come across to Greyfriars immediately?"

"I will come at once," was the reply.

Half an hour elapsed before the Headmaster of Highcliffe appeared on the scene.

It was a very painful half-hour for the Nuts. They suffered all the tortures of morbid anticipation. And they felt certain that there were physical tortures to follow.

Dr. Voysey looked very surprised on seeing five of his pupils in the study. He glanced inquiringly at Dr. Locke.

"I have to bring to your notice the very grave conduct of these boys, Dr. Voysey," said the Headmaster of Greyfriars. "Had the offence been less serious I should not have troubled to summon you. These boys made an unprovoked attack upon one of my Form-masters!"

Ponsonby & Co. nearly fell down. They could scarcely credit the evidence of their own ears.

Had the Head of Greyfriars suddenly taken leave of his senses, that he should allude to Wally Bunter as a Form-master?

"They waylaid him on the road," continued Dr. Locke, "and, after binding his arms, they clothed him in the attire of a tramp!"

"Bless my soul!" gasped Dr. Voysey. "I trust the victim of this outrage was not Mr. Prout, or Mr. Quelch?"

"No. It was a junior Form-master whom I have just appointed—a young gentleman named Bunter."

"Great pip!" muttered Ponsonby under his breath. Then he added aloud:

"We had no idea that Bunter—I mean, Mr. Bunter—was a Form-master, sir!"

"Not the foggiest notion, sir!" said Gadsby.

"To tell the truth, sir," said Drury, with a flash of inspiration, "we thought it was Bunter of the Remove!"

"Do not tell lies!" said Dr. Locke sternly. "I place this matter entirely in your hands, Dr. Voysey, and I trust you will deal with these young rascals as they richly deserve."

The headmaster of Highcliffe nodded grimly.

"I will deal with them here and now," he said. "Would you be good enough to permit me the use of your cane?"

"Certainly!" said Dr. Locke.

Cold shivers ran down the respective spines of Ponsonby and his cronies. They always dreaded corporal punishment, and they had particular reason to dread it now.

Dr. Voysey instructed the Nuts to hold out their hands in turn.

Four stinging cuts on each hand was the sentence, and the Head of Highcliffe carried it out with great energy.

Ponsonby & Co. did not take their gruel with stoical fortitude. They were not of the stuff of which heroes are made. Their yells of anguish, as the cane bit into their palms, fairly awakened the echoes.

"I trust," said Dr. Voysey, when the slaughter was complete, "that this well-merited chastisement will teach you the folly of molesting people on the highway! In addition to the flogging I have administered you will each take five hundred lines! I thank you, Dr. Locke, for bringing this affair to my notice, and I wish you good-afternoon!"

So saying, the Highcliffe Head swept out of the study.

Ponsonby & Co. followed at a discreet distance, wringing their hands together, and groaning audibly.

"Who ever would have thought that



Wally Bunter planted himself right in the path of the seniors. "You will get back to the school at once!" he ordered. "Look here——" began Loder. "I'm not going to argue with you. If you do not obey me at once I will take the matter further!" replied Wally. (See Chapter 8.)

Bunter was a giddy Form-master?" moaned Gadsby.

"It beats the band!" said Drury.

"Absolutely!"

The Famous Five of the Remove were standing in a group in the Close waiting for Wally Bunter to appear. They grinned as the Nuts of Highcliffe went limping past.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Bob Cherry. "Did the merry chopper come down, Pon?"

"Ow! Yes!"

"Serves you jolly well right!" growled Johnny Bull. "You'll give Mr. Bunter a wide berth in future!"

"Blow Mr. Bunter!"

"Hang Mr. Bunter!"

"How did we know he was a blessed Form-master?" groaned Ponsonby.

And the unhappy practical jokers, uttering loud lamentations, staggered away in the direction of the school gates.

As Johnny Bull had truly remarked, they would give Wally Bunter a wide berth in future!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

The New Master!

WALLY BUNTER was smiling cheerfully as he stepped out into the Close.

He was feeling none the worse for the rough handling he had received; and it was good to see the familiar faces of Harry Wharton & Co. once more.

On his arrival Wally had fallen among foes. He now felt that he had fallen among friends.

The Famous Five sprinted up to him,

and everybody tried to shake his hand at once.

"Hallo, Mr. Bunter!"

"Welcome to Greyfriars, sir!"

"The warmfulness of the esteemed welcome is terrific, honoured sahib!"

It seemed odd to address Wally Bunter as "sir" and "Mr. Bunter." In former days it had been "Wally, old man," or "Dear old boy."

The Famous Five, however, did not lose sight of the fact that Wally Bunter was now a Form-master, and that he was entitled to be addressed with respect. They were firm and fast friends of Wally's, but they did not intend to take any liberties on that account.

Wally was somewhat overwhelmed by the heartiness of the welcome. It was some time before he could speak.

"I'm very pleased to be amongst you fellows once again," he said, at length. "I don't suppose we shall see so much of each other as in the old days. I'm here in a very different capacity. But you must come and have tea sometimes in my study——"

"Thanks awfully, sir!" said Harry Wharton. "That will be ripping!"

Wally flushed.

The novelty of being called "sir" took a great deal of getting used to.

Wally was tempted to tell the juniors to dispense with the "sir," but he realised that such a course would be unwise, and bad for discipline. If he were to permit certain fellows to address him as "old bean," or "old fruit," he would have to extend the same privilege to everyone. He would have fellows like Nugent minor greeting him with "Hallo, old top." And that would never do. It would be

inconsistent with his dignity as a junior Form-master.

"We hope you'll drop in and have tea with us, sir," said Bob Cherry. "We're in funds, and there's a ripping spread in Study No. 1."

"That's very kind of you, Cherry," said Wally. "But I must decline the invitation. I'll look in to-morrow, if I may. This afternoon I shall be busy unpacking and getting things shipshape in my new quarters. Hallo! Here come some old friends. How are you, Vernon-Smith. My word, Linley, you're looking very fit! How do you do, Brown? Very pleased to see you all again."

Wally Bunter shook hands all round, and thanked his lucky stars that a kind Fate had brought him to Greyfriars. At that moment he stood surrounded by friends. It did not occur to him that he might soon make enemies—and dangerous enemies at that.

As the new Form-master stood chatting with the juniors there was a sudden scuffling of feet, and up raced Billy and Sammy Bunter. Their objective was Wally, and Billy reached it first, beating his minor by a short neck, so to speak.

Billy Bunter cannoned into his cousin with such force that Wally was nearly swept off his feet. He recovered himself, however, and surveyed his cousin sternly.

"What do you mean, Bunter, by being so clumsy?" he demanded.

Billy Bunter gave a gasp. He blinked at Wally through his big spectacles.

"M-m-my hat! Were—were you speaking to me, Wally?"

"I was!"

"But—but you called me 'Bunter'!"

"That is your name, isn't it? I presume you haven't changed it by deed of poll since I was here last?"

"Oh, really, Wally— Don't be funny, you know, in front of all these fellows! I'm not 'Bunter' to you. I'm 'Billy.'"

Wally Bunter frowned.

"You may be 'Billy' to your intimate friends—if any," he said. "To me you are 'Bunter of the Remove.'"

"Great Scott!"

"Whilst on the subject," went on Wally quietly, "I would point out to you that it is customary to address a master—even though he be merely a junior master—as 'sir.'"

Billy Bunter's face was a study. For quite a moment he stood blinking at his cousin in perplexity. Then it dawned upon him that Wally must be joking. He began to cackle.

"He, he, he! You will have your little joke!" he said.

"I can assure you, Bunter, that I am quite serious," said Wally.

Billy Bunter's jaw dropped. So did Sammy's.

The precious pair had counted upon an affectionate greeting from their cousin. They had expected to link arms with him, and to be escorted to the tuckshop. They had expected to be treated to a first-class feed, and to be made much of. But great expectations have a habit of not being realised.

"I am pleased to see you," said Wally Bunter gravely, shaking hands with his two cousins. "But I must insist upon being addressed with respect, or I shall find it necessary to punish you."

"Pip-pip-punish us?" gasped Billy Bunter, scarcely able to credit the evidence of his ears.

Wally nodded.

"The fact that I happen to be your cousin," he said, "makes no difference to our relative positions. You, Bunter major, are a pupil in the Remove Form.

And you, Bunter minor, belong to the Second Form. As for myself, the Head has seen fit to appoint me master of the First. I have no wish to be snobbish, but you will readily see that there is a wide gulf between us. I cannot allow either of you to take liberties."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" murmured Sammy.

Harry Wharton & Co. were grinning. The discomfiture of the two Bunters tickled them.

Billy Bunter became mightily indignant. He glared at Wally.

"Look here, none of your airs and graces, Wally!" he exclaimed. "You needn't think that because you've come here to take charge of a kindergarten you're Lord High Everybody! It's like your cheek—"

"Silence, Bunter!"

"I won't be silent!" Billy Bunter's voice rose clear and shrill. "I'm not going to be bossed about by my own cousin! You can domineer the babes of the First, but you're jolly well not going to domineer me!"

Wally Bunter looked grim.

"You will take a hundred lines, Bunter, for impertinence!"

"W-w-what?"

Billy Bunter nearly fell down.

Events were taking an altogether unexpected turn.

Billy had expected his cousin to fawn on him, and be very gushing to him. Instead of which, Wally was treating him as if he were an unruly fag. He had actually awarded him an imposition! The cheek of it! The utter audacity of it!

Billy Bunter was nearly choking with rage and chagrin.

"I know what it is!" he spluttered. "This new job of yours has turned your head. You're simply stuffed with conceit!"

Wally frowned.

"Your imposition, Bunter, is doubled!"

"Oh crumbs!"

The expression on Billy Bunter's face was so comical that the onlookers could not refrain from laughing outright.

The Owl of the Remove stepped forward and flourished a fat fist in perilous proximity to cousin Wally's nose.

"You've no right to give me an impot!" he hooted.

"I have every right," answered Wally quietly. "Do not shake your fist at me in that threatening manner! I have no wish to commence my career as a master by caning my cousin; but if you utter another insolent word or make another insolent gesture I will cane you severely!"

That was the last straw.

Billy Bunter tried to find words, but he was tongue-tied.

He had gone crazy with delight when he had heard that Wally was coming to Greyfriars as a Form-master. But there was no delight in his expression now. He was utterly taken aback. It was perfectly clear to him now that Wally was not joking—that he meant to make the most of his position, and maintain discipline at all costs.

Sammy Bunter faded away into the background. Billy, with a dazed look, followed suit.

"You will bring your imposition to me to-morrow, Bunter!" Wally called after him.

Billy Bunter muttered something under his breath. And that which he muttered was the reverse of complimentary to the new Form-master.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

War Declared!

HAVING shaken off, with some difficulty, the attentions of the throng of juniors, Wally Bunter went into the building.

He had been allotted a special study, and on his way to it he encountered Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove.

Mr. Quelch stopped short and extended his hand, with a pleasant smile.

"I am delighted to see you, Bunter!" he said. "I trust you will soon settle down to your new duties, and be very happy with us."

"I'm sure I shall," said Wally, as he shook hands. "I owe you my sincere thanks, Mr. Quelch. I'm certain you put in a good word for me when the question of engaging a new master arose."

"Of course I did!" said Mr. Quelch. "I recognised that you were eminently suitable for the post. Mr. Slimson, your former tutor, has written to me from time to time, telling me that you were making splendid progress with your studies. You should experience no difficulty in controlling the First Form. It is far from being the most unruly Form at Greyfriars. The Remove answers to that description."

Wally laughed.

"Fellows of fourteen are generally a big handful," he said.

Mr. Quelch nodded.

"By the way, Bunter," he said, "you have friends in the Remove Form, if I am not mistaken?"

"That is so."

"Well, I should like to say a word in season. Don't think that I am sermonising. But I trust you will realise that your present status is very different from that which you held when you were here before. You are now a master. You must not allow your former friends to become too familiar. Converse with them, by all means—have tea with them—but insist upon being treated with proper respect."

"My friends are not likely to treat me otherwise, Mr. Quelch," replied Wally a little stiffly.

"Excellent!" said Mr. Quelch. "But I thought it as well to mention the matter. You must keep a tight grip on the reins of discipline. There are some boys who if you give them an inch will take a yard. I trust you will be very happy and comfortable here, and that things will run smoothly."

Mr. Quelch nodded pleasantly and passed on.

Wally Bunter proceeded thoughtfully to his own quarters.

He found that his study was a very desirable little den. It was already furnished.

Wally set down his bag and gazed round the apartment with a critical eye. He was very exacting as regards the position of furniture. After all, he was to live here indefinitely, so it was up to him to make his quarters as comfortable as possible.

He altered the position of the sofa; he moved the desk nearer the window, in order to get more light; he removed from the wall a couple of pictures that did not appeal to him and stowed them away in the cupboard.

"I'll hang a couple of football groups in their places," he reflected. "By Jove, this is a jolly cosy room! A good fire going, and tea already laid. What more could a fellow want? I'll have tea first, I think, and then I'll unpack. After which I'll take a stroll."

Wally sat down to tea in solitary state. He was in a very cheerful mood.

The weary routine of the Canterbury office seemed like a bad dream. It was as if a miracle had happened, and Wally had been suddenly transplanted from a wilderness to a paradise.

How decent everybody was! Harry Wharfon & Co. had been glad to see him, and Mr. Quelch had greeted him cordially. Everything in the garden was lovely.

Had Wally Bunter been able to peep into Loder's study, however, and to hear the conversation that was taking place there, he would have felt less jubilant.

Loder and Carne and Walker, of the Sixth, were seated at tea together. They were doing more talking than eating, and the subject of their conversation was the new Form-master.

"It's a bit thick," said Loder, "to plant a kid like that in authority over us!"

"He won't interfere with the Sixth," said Walker.

"He'd better not!" said Loder grimly.

"The fact remains," said Carne, "that he's a master. Fancy a kid of our own age being put in charge of a Form! The Head must have been clean off his rocker to propose such a thing!"

Loder gave a grunt.

"Personally, I sha'n't dream of calling him 'sir,' or 'Mr. Bunter,'" he said. "Dash it all, one must consider one's pride! It's all very well for fags in the First to kow-tow to this beastly upstart; but we're not going to!"

"No jolly fear!"

The three seniors were unanimous on that point. They bitterly resented the presence of Wally Bunter at Greyfriars, and they determined to make the new master's position very unpleasant, if opportunity arose.

"We might manage to make the place too hot to hold him," said Loder. "I, for one, should like to see the jumped-up bounder go out on his neck!"

Walker and Carne agreed. And in Loder's study that afternoon, war was declared upon the new master.

After discussing Wally Bunter in a manner that would have made that youth's ears burn, Loder & Co. began to speak of other things.

"By the way," said Loder, "I've planned a little expedition for this evening. A mild flutter, you know, at the usual place."

Loder's companions nodded their approval.

"We'll leave the school about nine," Loder went on. "Wingate's on duty to-night, and he'll have to see lights out."

"What time shall we be back?" inquired Carne.

"Oh, about midnight!" said Loder carelessly.

"Seems rather risky," was Walker's comment.

"Shucks! It's as safe as houses. Nobody will see us go; nobody will see us return."

In that, however, Loder was mistaken.

The three seniors carried out their excursion to the village, and it was considerably after eleven o'clock when they returned.

They did not anticipate meeting anybody on the way. The darkness was intense, and a storm was raging. It was highly improbable that any of the school authorities would be abroad on such a night.

Loder was humming a merry tune. He stepped short abruptly, however, as a

plump figure loomed up in the darkness, and stood in the path of the Sixth-Formers.

"What the thump—" began Loder, in amazement.

Then, peering through the gloom, he recognised the features of Wally Bunter.

"Hallo, Bunter!" he said, a trifle uneasily. "Stand out of the way, if you don't mind. You're taking up the whole giddy thoroughfare!"

For Wally Bunter was standing with arms and legs-akimbo, and the lane was very narrow at that part.

"One moment, Loder!" Wally's tone was stern. "I know you have no wish for my society, but I must ask you a question. Where have you been?"

"Mind your own business!" snapped the prefect.

"This is my business—very much so. I am waiting for your answer."

"We've been to the village, if you want to know," said Loder sullenly.

"That will do. I don't need to be told to which particular haunt in the village you went."

"It's got nothing to do with you, anyway!" flashed Walker.

"It has everything to do with me. You will get back to the school at once!"

"Look here—" began Loder offensively.

"I'm not going to argue with you," said Wally quietly. "I have given you an order. If it isn't obeyed immediately, I shall take the matter further."

There was no mistaking the threat conveyed in the new master's words.

Loder & Co. realised that there was only one thing to do, and that was to obey. Later on, when they were safely under the Greyfriars roof, they would have an opportunity of getting their own back.

Wally Bunter stood aside, and without a word the seniors strode on in the direction of the school. Wally followed at a short distance. His face was set and stern. He knew that there was going

to be war between Loder & Co. and himself; and he was fully determined to gain the mastery.

The seniors were furious. In savage silence they tramped back to Greyfriars.

They proceeded straight to Loder's study.

Loder switched on the light, and faced round upon his companions.

"Well, what do you think of it?" he asked.

"I think we ought to have rolled that cheeky young cub in the ditch!" said Carne fiercely.

"He'd have reported us—"

"He'd have had no proof to offer the Head. There would have been no witnesses."

"I vote we go along to his study," said Walker, "and tell him we're not going to put up with his old buck any longer. We've given in to him to-night—we obeyed his order like little lambs—but in future we'll put him in his place, and keep him there!"

Walker's speech took instant effect.

"That's a good idea," said Loder. "We'll tell the bounder exactly what we think of him. We'll give him clearly to understand that he's not wanted here, and that the sooner he clears out the better!"

"Hear, hear!"

Inflamed with fury, the three seniors strode away to Wally Bunter's study.

It was war to the knife now, and Loder & Co. had no doubt that they would conquer and subdue the new Form-master.

But Wally Bunter was made of sterner stuff than they supposed.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

Defying the New Master!

WALLY BUNTER, having taken a belated evening stroll, returned to his study in a happy mood, despite his recent encounter with the black sheep of the Sixth.

The fire still burned brightly in the grate. Wally did not feel like going to



Wally unlocked the door of the study and entered. The three seniors sat huddled up in their chairs, white and shivering. "Good-morning!" said Wally Bunter. "You don't appear to be happy. It would have been better for you had you obeyed my order over-night!" (See Chapter 9.)

NEXT
MONDAY!

"THE BUNTERS' CONSPIRACY!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.
THE MAGNET LIBRARY.—No. 731.

bed just yet. He selected a novel from the bookcase, gave the fire a poke, and then settled down in the cosy armchair, intending to read for an hour.

He had barely commenced the novel, however, when there was a tramping of feet in the passage.

The footsteps halted outside the door of the study.

Wally laid down his book.

"Queer time of the night for visitors," he murmured. "Wonder who it is?"

His question was answered the next moment.

The door was thrown open without ceremony, and Loder of the Sixth stalked into the study. Carne and Walker followed. All three of them stood glaring at Wally Bunter.

Wally glanced calmly at the clock on the mantelpiece. It was past midnight.

"Time you fellows were in bed," he remarked.

"It's time you were in bed, come to that," said Loder insolently. "Children under sixteen aren't usually allowed to stay up so late."

"True," said Wally. "But you see, I'm not a child, and I'm not under sixteen. So the restriction doesn't apply, does it? By the way, might I suggest that when visiting my study on future occasions, you knock on the door? It's the custom, you know."

Wally Bunter spoke lightly enough, but there was a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

"What do you want with me?" he added abruptly.

"Look here," said Loder, "we're not going to put up with your confounded interference any longer!"

"Indeed!"

"We don't mind being given orders by responsible people, such as the Head or a senior master. But we're not going to be patronised by a whipper-snapper like you!"

Wally said nothing. The seniors misunderstood his silence. They imagined it was the silence of fear, and it encouraged them.

Walker strode up to the new master. He was a tall fellow, and he towered over Wally.

"The best thing you can do," he said, "is to clear out! We've no use for you at Greyfriars. You've no right to be here, teaching kids. You're only a kid yourself!"

"That's so," said Carne. "Take my advice, young Bunter, and go while the going's good!"

Wally still remained silent. But the dangerous gleam was still in his eyes. The seniors were too obtuse to notice it.

"You'd better clear out, if you value your skin," said Loder. "If you stay here your life won't be worth living. We've got a lot of influence in this place, and we sha'n't scruple to use it against you. In other words, if you don't go voluntarily you'll be pushed out."

"Hounded out of Greyfriars!" said Carne.

Wally Bunter spoke at last.

"Have you quite finished?" he asked.

"Not quite," said Loder. "You interfered with us this evening, and we were fools enough to do your bidding. But if you decide to stay on at Greyfriars, in spite of our warning, and interfere with us again, we'll smash you!"

Loder's face was livid. His words were menacing.

Wally Bunter rose leisurely from the armchair.

"I wonder what the Head would have

to say, if he heard of these delightful threats?" he murmured.

"He sha'n't hear of them," said Loder. "Anyway, if he does, we shall deny having made them. You've no witnesses, which will make it rather awkward for you to prove your case, you see."

"I see," said Wally, nodding. "So you want me to clear out and leave you to carry on your shady games in peace—is that it?"

"Yes, that's it!" said Walker eagerly.

"You know what my answer is going to be, I suppose?"

"If you've a spark of commonsense you'll pack up your traps and clear out at the first opportunity," said Loder.

Wally Bunter looked the speaker straight in the eyes.

"I shall do nothing of the sort," he said. "That's my answer! And I consider it unheard-of cheek on your part to dare to come to me with such a suggestion! As for your threats, you will find me quite capable of fighting my own battles. I'm not afraid of you. Yes, I know you're three to one, and that you could overpower me at this moment, if you choose. But your threats and bluster leave me cold."

The seniors were furious. They had fondly imagined, a few moments before, that Wally Bunter was yielding—that he was awed by their threats, and that he would take the first opportunity of leaving Greyfriars and resuming his position as junior clerk in a Canterbury office.

Never had the seniors made a bigger mistake. They had completely misunderstood Wally Bunter's temperament.

"You—you're going to stay on at the school?" spluttered Loder.

"Yes."

"And you'll continue to interfere with us?"

"When necessary."

"Then you must take the consequences!" said Loder savagely. "We sha'n't spare you!"

Wally Bunter yawned.

"I think there's been enough of this melodramatic talk," he said. "You suggested just now that I cleared out. I now suggest to you—or rather, command—that you do the same. Leave my study instantly!"

Wally spoke in a tone of authority.

Had it been Mr. Prout or Mr. Quelch who gave the order, the seniors would have obeyed without hesitation. But the bare idea of being dictated to by a mere youth like Wally Bunter made their blood boil.

"Leave my study!" repeated Wally.

The seniors did not budge.

"We'll leave when we want to leave," said Walker. "Not before."

Wally glanced at the clock.

"I'll give you two minutes to obey my order," he said.

The Sixth-Formers in spite of their fury, grinned. They wondered what Wally Bunter could possibly do, at the end of the two minutes, to enforce his command. If he started to use physical violence against three of the biggest fellows in the Sixth, he would be sorry for it.

The seconds ticked by. Wally Bunter stood looking at the clock with a perfectly grave countenance.

"Only half a minute to go," he said at length. "You'd better make up your minds."

The seniors exchanged amused glances. Carne broke into a guffaw.

When the time-limit was reached,

Wally Bunter acted with swift and dramatic suddenness.

The seniors were utterly unprepared for what was to follow.

The new master walked to the door, calmly switched off the light, and stepped out into the passage.

A key grated in the lock, and the seniors stood still in the darkened study, listening to Wally Bunter's retreating footsteps.

"M-m-my only aunt!" muttered Loder.

"We—we're locked in!" gasped Carne.

"Prisoners, by Jove!" said Walker.

The seniors were utterly dazed. They had not foreseen Wally Bunter's strategy. They felt extremely foolish as they blundered into one another in the darkness.

"Switch on the light!" growled Loder.

"Can't find the switch," grumbled Carne.

"Hellup!" yelled Walker, as he caught his foot in the carpet and pitched forward.

In falling, Walker knocked his head against one of the legs of the table.

The table-leg survived the concussion well. Walker's head didn't!

The prefect lay groaning on the floor, and at the same instant Loder tripped over his legs and went sprawling.

"Ow!"

"Yow!"

"Gerroff my chest!"

"What did you stick your legs in the way for, idiot?"

It was some time before Loder and Walker managed to sort themselves out. They succeeded at last, and meanwhile, Carne had discovered the switch, and he turned on the light.

The first thing Loder did was to try the door. It was locked, of course.

"That cheeky cub has deliberately gone off and left us!" snarled Loder.

"Not for the night, surely?" said Walker. "He wouldn't dare—"

"Oh, he'll come back and let us out soon, I expect," said Carne. "But it's frightful cheek on his part, all the same. We're prisoners, and there's no way out."

Loder crossed to the window. He opened it and peered down into the Close.

It so happened that the window of Wally Bunter's study was a considerable distance from the ground. There was no rain-pipe which would assist anybody to descend to terra-firma. Descent by means of the window was impossible.

"We might bash the door down," suggested Walker.

But the suggestion was absurd on the face of it.

The door of the study was a particularly stout one, and the only implement which could be brought to bear upon it was the poker. And, as Loder pointed out, the noise would arouse the whole building.

"We don't want anybody to come along and find us shut up like rats in a trap," he said. "We should be the laughing stock of the school!"

"What are we going to do, then?" asked Walker.

"Stay here until Bunter chooses to come and let us out. We might as well make ourselves comfortable," added Loder, dropping into the armchair and picking up the novel which Wally Bunter had left there.

"Wonder if there are any cigarettes lying about?" murmured Carne, his glance roving round the study.

"No such luck," said Walker. "Bunter doesn't smoke."

"Fancy being a giddy Form-master, and not taking advantage of the privilege of being allowed to smoke!" said Loder. "Can you fellows understand it? Dashed if I can!"

He started to read the novel. Carne and Walker drew chairs up to the fire and sat down. They stared moodily at each other. There seemed to be nothing to do.

"Hope we're not penned up like this for long," growled Carne. "I'm fagged out. I want to get to bed."

"That cheeky bounder will be along directly," said Walker.

But the time passed, and there was no sign of Wally Bunter—no sound of footsteps in the passage.

Boom!

The school clock struck one. The solitary note reverberated on the night air.

Loder tossed the novel aside. The story did not interest him. He shivered, and turned up the collar of his coat.

"It's beastly cold," he said. "And the fire's nearly out."

"What's more, there's no coal," said Walker, gazing into an empty scuttle.

"We shall be in a fine old fix if we have to stay here all night!" grunted Carne.

The seniors paused, listening intently for footsteps that never came.

At last it dawned upon them that they were prisoners for the night—that Wally Bunter had no intention of releasing them until the morning.

They were furious, but at the same time they were impotent. They could do nothing.

Slowly, as if on leaden wings, the time dragged by.

At two o'clock the light failed. It had been turned off at the main.

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Walker. "That's done it!"

With the study in darkness, and the fire out, the plight of the seniors was not a happy one.

Huddled up in their chairs, and shivering with the intense cold, they awaited the arrival of dawn.

But it seemed that dawn would never come. Each hour resembled an eternity.

At about four o'clock Loder rose up from the armchair, and stretched his cramped limbs. Sleep was out of the question.

"And to think of that fellow Bunter tucked up in his bed and sleeping soundly!" said Loder savagely. "My hat! I shall feel like slaughtering him when he does come!"

"Same here!"

And so, through the long night, the three Sixth-Formers remained in captivity.

It was their own fault. They had been ordered to leave the study. They had refused to go. Whereupon Wally Bunter had calmly left them to their own devices. Wally was determined to teach them a sharp lesson—to show them that he was not to be trifled with. Either they must respect his authority, or they would suffer.

Wally did not pass a sleepless night on account of Loder & Co. He dismissed them entirely from his mind, and was asleep almost as soon as his head touched the pillow, for he had had a strenuous and eventful day.

He awoke shortly before rising-bell,

and remembered, with a grim smile, that three Sixth-Formers were imprisoned in his study.

"I'll go down and turn them loose!" he murmured.

Putting on his dressing-gown and slippers, he went downstairs.

He paused outside the door of his study.

Hollow groans came from within. Wally unlocked the door and entered.

Loder and Walker and Carne, white-faced and shivering, were huddled in their chairs.

The seniors were so utterly exhausted and so miserable and numbed with cold that they could not have attacked the new master at the moment, even had they been reckless enough to wish to do so.

"Good-morning!" said Wally Bunter. "I trust you have had a pleasant night?"

The only reply was a further series of groans.

"You don't appear to have been deliriously happy," said Wally. "It would perhaps have been better for you had you obeyed my order overnight. You may go now."

Loder & Co. tottered to their feet. They lurched towards the door.

"We will consider this incident closed," said Wally Bunter. "Let me have no more of this. You evidently mistook me for a fool. You thought you could easily intimidate me by your threats. Let me assure you that I am not easily intimidated. You will be well advised to respect my authority in future."

The Sixth-Formers staggered away to their own quarters.

(Continued on page 20.)



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The Flavour Lasts!

Mr. Bunter—Form-master!

(Continued from page 19.)

Wally had undoubtedly scored. He went upstairs and splashed contentedly in his early-morning tub. By the time he came down again, dressed and groomed, the majority of the fellows were up, and Wally received many cheery greetings and salutations.

"I say, Wally, old chap—"

Billy Bunter rolled up to his cousin in the Close, and nudged him affectionately. The fat junior hoped that Wally's mood of the previous day had been just a temporary one. But he was disappointed.

"I don't want to have to tell you again, Bunter," said Wally, "that you are no longer privileged to address me as 'Wally, old chap.' You appear to forget your position—and my own. Have you written your imposition yet?"

"No."

"No, what?"

"No, I haven't."

Wally's hand descended upon his cousin's shoulder in a firm grip.

"You will say, 'No, sir!'" he commanded.

"Ow! Nunno, sir!"

"Very well. If that imposition is not handed in to me by dinner-time, Bunter, I shall double it!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Billy Bunter rolled away in a dejected mood.

As for Wally, he strolled in the Close in order to get an appetite for breakfast.

Presently he became aware of the fact that the Head was leaning from his study window, beckoning to him.

"Good-morning, Bunter!" said Dr. Locke. "May I trouble you to step into my study for a moment? I wish to speak to you."

Greatly wondering, Wally made his way to the Head's study. The doctor was looking grave.

"I have just seen Loder, Walker, and Carne—" he began.

"Yes, sir."

"I noticed that they were looking very ill, and I questioned them as to the cause. They tell me that you locked them in your study all night, Bunter. Is that correct?"

"Quite correct, sir."

The Head frowned.

"Such conduct calls for an immediate explanation," he said.

Wally told the Head what had happened over night.

The Head's face cleared.

"In that case, Bunter, their punishment was not unmerited," he said. "But I must say you chose a very novel method of punishing them. Would it not have been better to have reported their insolence to me?"

"No, sir, I think not. It's up to me to fight my own battles. That's the only way I can keep my self-respect. If I keep running to you with complaints every time a fellow insults me, I shall not command respect."

The Head nodded.

"There is a lot in what you say, Bunter. You have made a good beginning, and I trust you will continue to be successful in your efforts to maintain discipline."

Wally Bunter felt on very good terms with himself as he left the Head's presence.

It was not surprising that the new master had come up against Loder & Co. of the Sixth. Perhaps it was not surprising that he had mastered them.

THE END.

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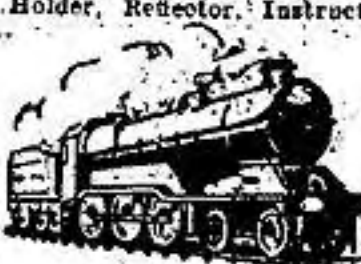
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