

# FREE REAL PHOTO OF ARTHUR WYNS

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No. 1,100.)

THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending July 3th, 1922.]



## THE COLOURED CHALLENGER!

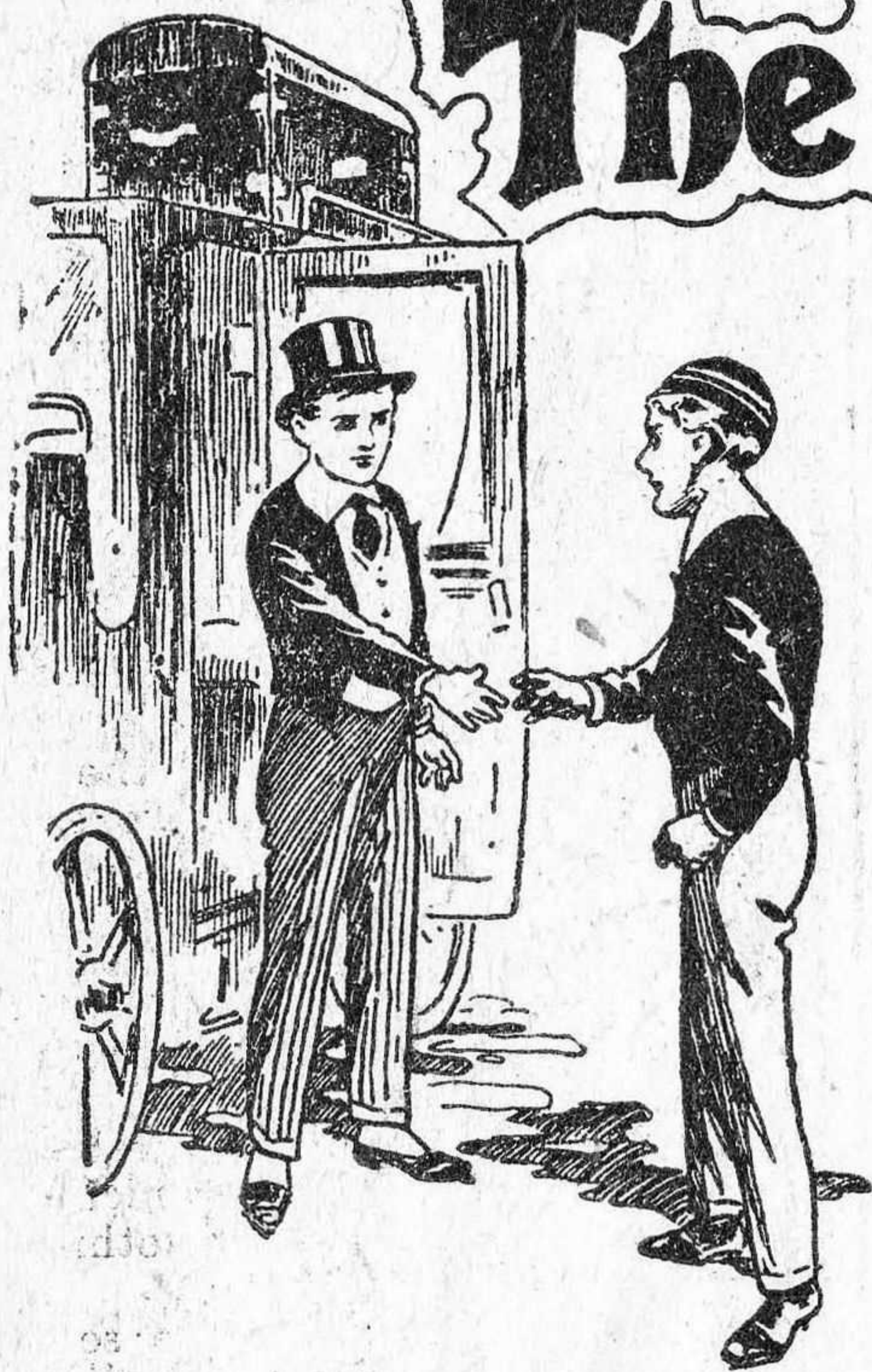
"Wild" Harry Dill, clad in a dressing-gown of many colours, entered the ring. He appeared to be confident and thoroughly at home as he waved his hand to the cheering spectators. (An incident in this week's magnificent story of the Clean-Sport Crusaders!)

Another Grand Story of Jimmy Silver & Co. and Valentine Mornington at Rookwood School.

The Rookwood Exile!

By Owen Conquest.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")



The 1st Chapter.

Exit Mornington!

"Rubbish!" said Lovell. "I'm going to try!"

"Rot!" Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Rookwood Fourth, did not heed his emphatic chum.

He left Lovell standing at the corner of the corridor, with Raby and Newcome and walked along to the door of the Head's study.

Arthur Edward Lovell indulged in a snort. Raby and Newcome looked very dubious. But Uncle James of Rookwood had made up his mind, and he was going serenely ahead.

Jimmy tapped at the door of the Head's study, and entered. It was close on time for lessons, and Dr. Chisholm was about to leave the study to proceed to the Sixth Form room.

He gave Jimmy a kind glance, however.

"What is it, Silver?" he asked.

Then Jimmy hesitated. What he had come to ask the Head was he realised a "check." He did not quite know how the headmaster would take it. But it was too late for retreat now, if he had wanted to retreat.

"It—it's about Mornington, sir!" he stammered.

Dr. Chisholm frowned.

"Mornington is leaving Rookwood at once," he said. "You will not see that miscreant boy again, Silver. In a very short time he will have ceased to disgrace Rookwood with his presence."

Jimmy drew a deep breath.

It was no wonder that the Head was incensed against Valentine Mornington, considering what that reckless youth had done, but it made Jimmy's task all the harder.

"I—I thought, sir—" he stut-tered.

"Well?"

"Mornny acted badly, sir," said Jimmy, "but—but he owned up at the last minute. If he hadn't owned up you'd have believed that I—I took the French master's watch, and would have sent me away from the school. I am sure that Mornny never really meant to make me out a thief. It—it was just his beastly temper, sir. He owned up before it was too late."

"Well?" said the Head grimly.

"I—I was thinking, sir, that—that you might let him stay," faltered Jimmy Silver. "He did the right thing at the finish, sir, and he might—"

"I hardly expected you to speak for the iniquitous boy who nearly caused you to be sent away from Rookwood in disgrace, Silver."

"Well, sir—"

"It is true that Mornington repented at the eleventh hour, and confessed the truth regarding the dastardly trick he had played," said Dr. Chisholm. "Possibly he is not all bad. But I could not dream of allowing such a boy to remain at Rookwood now that I know his character. I could not run the risk of his playing such a trick a second time, when he might not repent."

"But, sir—"

Dr. Chisholm waved his hand. "I have allowed you to speak, Silver. You have said enough. My answer to your request is a most decided negative. You may go."

Jimmy Silver stood silent. He had more than half expected that answer. The Head could not overlook what Mornington had done. But Jimmy could think of many extenuating circumstances that were unknown to Dr. Chisholm.

Dr. Chisholm glanced at the clock. "Mornington is even now leaving the school!" he said. "There is nothing to be said, Silver. You may go."

Jimmy Silver, with a heavy heart, left the study. He had done all he could for the fellow who had been his enemy, and he had failed. Lovell & Co. met him at the corner of the passage.

"Well?" asked Arthur Edward Lovell grimly.

"Nothing doing."

"After all, Jimmy, he ought to go," said Raby slowly.

"I must say so, too, Jimmy," remarked Newcome. "You're a bit soft, old chap."

Jimmy nodded absently and walked on, and looked out into the green quadrangle. He could not help pitying Mornington, whose wilful, perverse temper had brought him down with a crash at last. Erroll of the Fourth was standing on the steps, and he glanced quickly at Jimmy.

"He's not gone yet?" he asked.

moment, held out his hand. Jimmy Silver shook it cordially enough. Then the expelled junior ran lightly down the steps after Bulkeley.

Erroll had not spoken. But he followed Mornington as he went. A dozen fellows were coming towards the School House, and they all looked curiously at Mornington.

There was no desire on the part of the Rookwood juniors for a demonstration. They were all down enough on what the reckless fellow had done, but his last act in owning the truth and facing the result did much to restore him in their opinion. He had acted like a rascal, but he had lacked the rascality to carry through his scheme.

So the Fourth-Formers, though they watched him curiously as he passed, remained silent and undemonstrative.

Erroll followed Mornington down to the gates, where the station hack was waiting with his box on it. There was a strange mingling of emotions in Kit Erroll's breast.

"With all my heart!" Their hands met. Mornny stepped into the hack. Bulkeley made a sign to the driver.

As the hack rolled away, Valentine Mornington glanced at his whilom chum from the window, and smiled. He could smile, even at that moment, when the gates of Rookwood were closing behind him for ever. Erroll waved his hand, and turned back into the quadrangle with an aching heart.

His chum was gone. And now that he was gone, Erroll realised how much he cared, in spite of all. If he had stood by his pal more resolutely, if he had been more patient, might not Mornny have been saved from that last mad outbreak that had wrought his ruin? Erroll wondered, with a pang at his heart.

Be that as it might, it was too late now to think of it. Valentine Mornington had gone from his accustomed place, the school gates had clanged after him, and Rookwood knew him no more.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Highcliffe Match!

During the week that followed, the expulsion of Valentine Mornington was the chief topic in the Lower School at Rookwood.

He was missed in the Classical Fourth.

Of late weeks, certainly, he had been in deep disfavour—he had been sent to Coventry by the Form, and he had deserved it.

Yet the juniors missed him from



MORNINGTON AT HIGHCLIFFE! The Rookwood cricketers stared in amazement as Erroll came up, dragging Valentine Mornington by the arm. The expelled junior was the last person on earth that they would have expected to see at Highcliffe.

"Just going, the Head says," answered Jimmy.

"Poor old Mornny!" muttered Erroll.

"I—I've spoken to the Head, but there's nothing doing. I—I can't wonder at it," said Jimmy. "I'm sorry, all the same. There's a lot of good in Mornny. But for his beastly temper—"

"Thanks!" said a drawing voice behind Jimmy Silver.

The captain of the Fourth spun round. Valentine Mornington, the expelled junior, was coming out of the House with Bulkeley of the Sixth. Bulkeley had the task of conducting him to his home, to hand him over to his guardian.

Jimmy coloured.

"I'm sorry you're going, Mornny!" he said.

"After I jolly nearly did you in?" grinned Mornington.

"Yes, even after that. You couldn't carry it through. You weren't bad enough for that," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "It was a rotten trick you played—awfully rotten—but you stopped in time. I can't forget that. You've got the sack by owning up."

"More fool little me—what?" said Mornington, shrugging his shoulders. "But I'm not sorry I owned up. I'm sorry for a good many things, but not for that. I wish we'd pulled better together here, Silver."

"I wish we had!" said Jimmy sadly.

Mornington, after hesitating a

He had broken with his chum, but now that Mornington was going for good, Erroll realised that the old friendship was not so dead in his breast as he had deemed.

Mornington did not look at him—did not seem aware of his presence. Old Mack opened the door of the cab, blinking curiously at Mornny. Mornny still held his head high. If he knew that he was the observed of all observers, the circumstance did not seem to affect him in any way. His look was quite indifferent.

"Mornny!" said Erroll, as the expelled dandy of the Fourth was stepping into the hack.

Valentine Mornington turned, and his face broke into a grin.

"I wondered if you'd speak before I went!" he said, with a laugh.

"You've done it, old bean."

"Wouldn't you have if I hadn't?" said Erroll in a low voice.

"No!"

Erroll sighed. "Then I'm glad I did, Mornny! Give me your hand before you go—let's part friends, at least!"

the place where they had been accustomed to the sight of him.

Rookwood, somehow, did not seem quite the same without Mornny, with all his faults and exasperating failings.

Erroll's face was very grave in these days; he had Study No. 4 in the Fourth to himself now, and he did not ask any other fellow to share it with him. Tubby Muffin offered to replace Mornington in Study No. 4—which would have been a great improvement for the study, in Muffin's opinion. Erroll declined without thanks.

Perhaps he had a lingering hope that somehow, some time, his chum might be permitted to return, improbable as it seemed.

But if Erroll kept Mornny's memory green, he was probably the only fellow who did so, after a week or two, with one exception.

Schoolboys have short memories, and in the course of time things went on much as if Valentine Mornington had never come to Rookwood at all.

For a week or more, certainly, he was the one topic among the juniors; even the seniors discussed the matter with some interest. As a rule, Fourth Form fags might come and go, without affecting the serenity of such mighty Forms as the Fifth and Sixth. But Mornny had been a little out of the common—there was not a prefect whom he had not checked, hardly a senior at all who had not had, somehow, to take note of the existence of the dandy of the Fourth.

But the seniors soon forgot Mornington; and the juniors proceeded to forget him—excepting Kit Erroll and one other. The other was little Herbert—Mornington secundus of the Second Form. More than once Snooks & Co. of the Second noticed signs of blubbing on the chubby little face of Mornington secundus. He missed his cousin sorely, though he had really seen little of Valentine Mornington during his stay at Rookwood—Mornny was not a fellow to chum with Second Form fags.

Sometimes, now, Mornington secundus dropped into Study No. 4 in the Fourth to see Erroll; oftener, in fact, than he had done when Mornny was at Rookwood. They talked of the absent junior, gradually forgetting his faults and follies, and remembering only his good qualities, as is usual in the case of the absent.

But, with those two exceptions, the Rookwood Fourth soon went on its way as if Valentine Mornington had never been at the school at all. He was not missed in the cricket team, for he had been out of the cricket for some time before he left, owing to his trouble with the Fourth. Only when Jimmy Silver was making up the list of the eleven for the forthcoming Highcliffe match, he thought of Mornington regretfully. Highcliffe was a new fixture with the Rookwood juniors. Jimmy Silver had met some of the Highcliffe fellows at Greyfriars on the occasion of a match there, and the fixture had been arranged later. Highcliffe were a strong team, and Jimmy was much exercised in his mind over the selection of the eleven that was to visit them. He wanted the new fixture to begin with a victory for Rookwood, and he would have been glad of Valentine Mornington—at his best. Still, he consoled himself with the reflection that Mornny was quite likely to be at his worst on any occasion when he was specially wanted.

"If—" Jimmy Silver remarked, as he sat with pencil and paper in the end study the day before the Highcliffe fixture.

Arthur Edward Lovell interrupted him.

"Rats!" he said.

"If—" repeated Jimmy.

"Cut it out!" advised Lovell. "I know what you're thinking. If Mornny was here, if he could be got somehow to play the game, and if he would condescend to keep in form, he would be jolly valuable in the match to-morrow. But he isn't here; he wouldn't play the game if he was, and he wouldn't keep in form if he didn't choose—so what's the good of 'iffing!' You're a soft ass, Jimmy!"

"Possibly!" assented Jimmy cheerfully. "All the same, I wish Mornny hadn't come such an awful cropper."

"He asked for it a dozen times and never got it!" grunted Lovell. "He got it at last; and serve him right!"

"Well, he's gone now, anyhow," said Jimmy. "What do you fellows think of this for an eleven? Little me—"

"Fairish!" grinned Raby.

"Fathead! And Lovell—"

"Ripping!" said Arthur Edward.

"The three Tommies of the Modern side—"

"So-so!" said Newcome.

"And Towle—"

"Too many Moderns!" said Lovell.

"Still, Towle's fairly good in the field."

"Conroy, Erroll—"

"Right as rain!"

"Raby, Newcome, and Van Ryn."

"Hear, hear!" said Raby and Newcome.

"Oswald will come over as a reserve," said Jimmy Silver. "Number's limited, as it's such a jolly long way and the railway fares are so steep. I don't suppose we shall have any followers, as far off as Highcliffe. But we'd better take an extra man."

"It's a good team," said Lovell, "and I don't see why we should miss Mornington. The extra place gives you a chance to play the whole of this study, too, and that's something."

"I think I'd rather beat Highcliffe," remarked Jimmy Silver.

Jimmy went down to post the list on the board—where it met the approval of the fellows whose names were mentioned in it, and considerable disapproval in other quarters, as was in the nature of things. Kit Erroll called to Jimmy as he was coming back to the staircase. Erroll was standing by a hall window, with a letter in his hand. Jimmy joined him there.

"News of Mornny?" he asked.

"Yes, if you'd care to hear."

"Certainly I would!" said Jimmy.

Silver at once. "I hope he's getting on all serene with his guardian."

Advertisement for Tommy Harrison, a popular boxer, with details of a free boxing photo available next Monday.

They used to have a lot of trouble, I believe."

"I'm afraid they have it still," said Erroll. "There's the letter, if you'd like to read it."

Jimmy read the letter with some interest. It was written quite in Morny's style.

"Dear Erroll,—Thanks for yours; why haven't you forgotten me? I fancy everybody else has—unless it's little Herbert. If you get any chance of doing that kid a good turn, I'd be glad. Might have done so myself while I was at Rookwood, only—too busy thinking about my worthy self."

"I've had a high old time at home. Uncle Stacpoole gave me two hours, by the clock, on the disgrace of being sacked from school. The effect was really spoiled by my lighting a cigarette in the middle of the lecture."

"The excellent old Johnny declines, at present, to send me to another school. He says I've thrown up my chances, and can take the consequences. I rather fancy he's not sorry to save the fees for a term or two. There's something very gratifying in being dependent on an uncle who hates the sight of one's merry chivvy."

"My Stacpoole cousins, luckily, are away at school. When they're at home I expect a regular beano."

"Will it surprise you to learn that I am fed up already with home comforts and avuncular affection? I'm going off on a little holiday on my jolly own. After you get this, my address will be G.P.O., Folkestone, till I write again. Dear old nunky is jolly glad to stand me a tenner and see the last of me for a week or two. We shall both get a rest."

"Kind regards to Jimmy Silver, and tell Lovell I'm sorry I didn't punch him before I left."

"Yours always,  
"VALENTINE MORNINGTON."

"Same old Morny!" said Jimmy Silver, with a smile. "We won't show this to Lovell. But, dash it all, Morny couldn't have expected his uncle to be pleased when he arrived home—sacked! It must have been a rather painful shock for the old gentleman."

Erroll nodded. Jimmy Silver returned to the end study to tea, thinking a good deal over that letter. Under its careless perusal he recognised the chafing of a proud spirit—the bitter regret, too, of a fellow who had had chances, and had thrown them away in sheer perverseness—and understood his folly too late. And from the bottom of his kind heart Jimmy was sorry for the exile from Rookwood.

### The 3rd Chapter. Lovell Knows Best!

"If you'll stand the fare, Jimmy, old—"

"Eh?"

"I'll come."

Jimmy Silver grinned.

"I will, really," said Tubby Muffin. "I'm sure I could get leave if you tell Mr. Dalton that you specially want me as a reserve. And you fellows can whack out the fare."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"No takers, Tubby!" chuckled Oswald.

And the cricketers started, leaving Tubby Muffin disconsolate on the School House steps. Muffin had to go in to lessons with the rest of the Fourth, feeling greatly aggrieved. It was a good distance to Highcliffe, in Kent, and the cricketers had early leave, which was only extended to members of the eleven and one extra man.

Jimmy Silver & Co. walked down to Coombe in cheery spirits. It was a glorious summer's morning. They boarded the local train in a merry party, and ran on to Latham, where they changed for the express. All the team were in great form, and looking forward to their game with Courtenay & Co., of Highcliffe. At Latham Junction they secured a carriage to themselves, and Arthur Edward Lovell brought in a bag of tarts and another of scones for refreshment on the long run. He stood on the platform at the open carriage-door, and handed them round to the crowd inside.

"Better get in, old chap," said Raby. "Nearly due to start."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Lovell. "Don't you worry."

Arthur Edward Lovell had many virtues and good qualities, but he always knew best.

"Jump in, old man!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Bow-wow!" said Lovell. "Lots of time yet. My hat! I didn't pick up my change! Sha'n't be a tick!"

"Come back, you ass!" shouted Jimmy, from the doorway, as Lovell ran back to the buffet. "Blow your change!"

Lovell ran on fast. He had left the change out of a pound note behind—besides, he knew best! Jimmy sat down again, looking wrathful. He was not given to taking chances unless they couldn't be avoided.

"They're shutting the doors!" remarked Conroy. "Somebody yell to that ass Lovell! He'll get left behind at this rate."

"That wouldn't be a disaster, really," grinned Oswald. "You've got a jolly good reserve with you."

But Lovell's chums did not agree with Dick Oswald's view. Raby leaned out of the carriage and stared anxiously along the platform. He could not see Lovell.

He jumped out of the carriage, and put his hands to his mouth to make a trumpet, and shouted:

"Lovell! Fathead! Lovell! Buck up!"

Slam! Slam!

The guard was coming along fast. He had waved his flag as a signal to the engine-driver. He slammed the door of the juniors' carriage, and passed on.

George Raby spun back to the carriage—forgetting even Lovell in his anxiety not to be left behind himself.

"Stand back there!"

Heedless of the porter's warning yell, Raby clutched at the handle of the carriage-door, not even noticing that the train was already in motion.

The porter rushed at him, grabbed him by the shoulders, and spun him back so suddenly that Raby sat on the platform with a bump.

"You young fool! Want to be killed?" yelled the porter wrathfully. "Making a man's 'cart 'op in his mouth, you young idiot!"

The train was rushing out of the station—Jimmy Silver's dismayed face framed in the carriage-window. Arthur Lovell came speeding

"We'll rag Lovell when we get back!" suggested Towle.

"That won't win the match!" grunted Van Ryn. "We shall have to borrow a man from Highcliffe, Jimmy. A rotten resource."

"I suppose so!" groaned Jimmy Silver.

A good deal of the cheeriness departed from the Rookwood crowd during the long run to Courtfield, in Kent. If only Lovell had been left behind it would not have been so bad; but the loss of two members of the team was utterly disconcerting. Jimmy Silver felt quite nonplussed.

At Courtfield the Rookwooders found a brake waiting for them, and a handsome, cheery junior came forward to meet them. It was Frank Courtenay, the captain of the Highcliffe Fourth. Jimmy Silver & Co. piled into the brake and rolled away to Highcliffe School. Courtenay was obviously a little puzzled to see only ten men in the visiting party, and Jimmy explained what had happened.

"What rotten luck!" said Courtenay. "Of course, we can offer you a man if you like—plenty will be glad to play for you if you say the word."

Jimmy Silver nodded.

"I suppose that's the only way!" he said.

But he did not speak very cheerfully—he did not like the prospect. And if Jimmy Silver's arm could have stretched, telescopically, as far as the spot where Arthur Edward Lovell then was, Jimmy certainly would have punched Lovell's nose—hard! All would have gone so well—if only Lovell hadn't known best!

### The 4th Chapter.

#### Play Up For Rookwood!

There was already a crowd on Little Side at Highcliffe

"Morny!" exclaimed Jimmy.

"As large as life! What the merry thump is he doing here?" exclaimed Oswald. "There's Erroll yanking him this way!"

Jimmy Silver blinked at them. Erroll was hurrying back to the pavilion, almost dragging Valentine Mornington by the arm. The expelled Rookwooder was about the last person in the world whom Jimmy Silver would have expected to see on Little Side at Highcliffe. But he remembered Morny's letter, in which Mornington had mentioned that he was going for a holiday in Kent. Evidently the dandy of Rookwood, remembering the date of the Highcliffe match, had dropped in at Highcliffe to see his former schoolfellows play. He came up, rather breathlessly, with Erroll, and his cheeks coloured under the astonished gaze of the Rookwooders.

"Erroll's fault!" he said apologetically.

"What on earth are you doing here?" exclaimed Newcome.

Morny shrugged his shoulders.

"Nothin'! Killin' time at Folkestone, when I remembered the date—and I thought I'd run across and see the match, as it's not far. So I hired a bike, and here I am! I didn't intend to speak to you fellows—never thought I should be spotted in a crowd like this. Erroll seems to have the eyes of a hawk!"

"I noticed lounge clothes among the Etons," said Erroll, with a smile. "Then I saw your chivvy, old man."

Jimmy Silver's eyes danced. He realised at once what was in Erroll's mind, and what Morny's presence meant to the Rookwood eleven—or, rather, ten. Erroll gave him an anxious look.

"As soon as I spotted Morny I thought—" he began.

"I'm jolly glad!" said the Highcliffe junior skipper heartily.

Courtenay won the toss, and elected to bat. Mornington was ready in a remarkably short space of time, and he went into the field with Jimmy Silver & Co. His handsome face was very bright. The cordial welcome he received from every member of the team had a curiously exhilarating effect on him. No one, seeing him now among the Rookwooders, would have guessed that a few weeks before he had been the out-cast of his Form, and had been expelled from Rookwood. It was like wine to Morny to find himself among his schoolfellows again, playing the grand old game for Rookwood. His eyes were bright, his step was elastic; he seemed to be walking on air. And a catch that deprived De Courcy, of Highcliffe, of his wicket, soon showed that Morny was in his best form. Jimmy Silver, with a delighted grin, gave him the ball, and Morny bowled as he had done in his best days at Rookwood. It was to his bowling that Frank Courtenay fell at last after putting up forty for his side.

When Highcliffe were all down for seventy, Jimmy Silver clapped Mornington on the back.

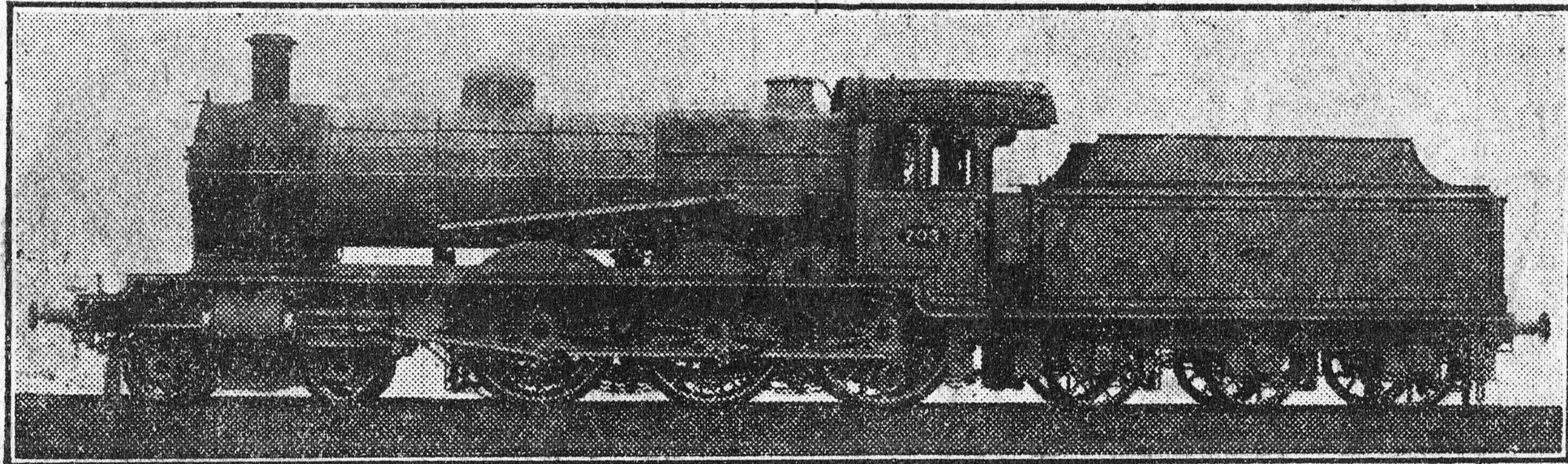
"Jolly good man!" he said heartily. "You've kept in form since you left Rookwood! I hardly think I'm sorry that Lovell lost the train now!"

And Mornington chuckled.

Mornington opened the innings for Rookwood with Jimmy Silver, and stood up to the bowling in great style.

All down for sixty was the result; but a third of the sixty belonged to Morny. Morny's was the ninth wicket to fall; and last man in passed him as he went out. Morny, with a flushed face from run-getting, came back to the pavilion with his bat under his arm, and came face to face

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back—his change in his hand, and a blank look on his face.

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated.

"Hi! Stop that train! We—"

"Likely!" jeered the porter.

Raby staggered up.

"You ass! You've got both of us left behind! You crass chump!"

And for once Arthur Edward Lovell hadn't a word to say for himself—a most unusual circumstance.

In the crowded carriage where the Rookwooders congregated, already out of sight of the station, there was wrath and dismay. Instead of twelve Rookwooders, there were now only ten. Instead of a reserve in excess of the required number, Jimmy Silver had a man short.

Jimmy's feelings were too deep for words.

He sat down again, breathing hard. Arthur Edward Lovell was his chum, but the captain of the Fourth could have punched his nose with pleasure at that moment.

"You'll want me, anyhow!" said Oswald, trying manfully not to derive any personal satisfaction from the disaster.

"Just like a Classical ass to get left behind!" remarked Tommy Dodd, of the Modern Fourth, disparagingly.

"Oh, just!" said Tommy Cook.

"Might really have expected it, almost!" observed Tommy Doyle, in a reflective sort of way.

Jimmy Silver did not heed the little jokes of the Modern trio. He was too dismayed for that. He groped for his time-table at last, and consulted it desperately. He knew that there was no train by which Lovell and Raby could come on in time for the match, but perhaps he hoped, by a savage scrutiny of the time-table, to discover one. If so, he was disappointed. The blackest and grimmest scowl could not discover a train that wasn't there.

"When's the next?" asked Conroy.

"Two hours!" said Jimmy.

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

"Then—"

when Jimmy Silver & Co. arrived. The Highcliffe cricketers were ready; and most of the Fourth and the Shell were there to see the game. Among the onlookers was a stranger within the gates, a handsome, slim fellow in elegant grey lounge clothes, whom some of the Highcliffians regarded with surprise.

It was not uncommon for strangers to drop in to see senior matches; but junior games, naturally, were seldom so honoured. But the handsome youth in grey had secured a good place, and evidently meant to see the proceedings through. Jimmy Silver & Co. followed Courtenay to the pavilion, unheeding the glances the Highcliffians turned upon them, or the comments upon the fact that they numbered only ten. Jimmy Silver had not settled his little problem yet, and it had to be settled now! He consulted Newcome and Conroy and Tommy Dodd.

"Most likely Lovell will come on by the next train, though he will be two or three hours late," he said.

"If he does—"

"Lovell mayn't come on at all, after he's looked out the trains," said Conroy. "Still, as he's got his ticket—"

"What about borrowing a man from Greyfriars?" said Oswald. "It's near here, and a chap could borrow a bike and scoot over; and Wharton or Bob Cherry would jump at it to oblige us—"

"That's the best idea so far!" said Jimmy, brightening a little. "And I think—"

"Great Scott!" shouted Erroll suddenly.

"Hallo! What's the row?"

Erroll did not answer. He suddenly quitted the group before the pavilion, and cut away across the field. Jimmy Silver & Co. stared after him in astonishment.

"What on earth's biting him now?" exclaimed Jimmy irritably. "There's no time to waste!"

"He's speaking to a Highcliffe chap!" said Conroy, staring after Erroll. "A chap not in Etons—why, my hat! I know that chivvy! Morny!"

"Right as rain!" said Jimmy Silver. "Morny, we're a man short, owing to two duffers getting left behind. Like to play for Rookwood again?"

"Good egg!" said Newcome heartily. "Dash it all, let bygones be bygones! Even if Morny isn't fit, he's better than a man short!"

Mornington flushed. For a moment his eyes had sparkled; but now he seemed to hesitate.

"You—you want me?" he stammered.

"I thought of it at once!" said Erroll.

"You see, we're a man short," explained Jimmy. "Highcliffe would lend us a man, or we might get one from Greyfriars; but, of course, I want to play a Rookwood team—"

"I'm not a Rookwood chap now!" muttered Mornington, with a gloomy brow. "I might have been—if you hadn't dropped me from the team a few weeks back, Jimmy Silver. That led to it all."

Jimmy compressed his lips. In his delight at finding a recruit at the last moment, he had forgotten everything else. Was it, after all, the same old perverse and obstinate Mornington he had to deal with now? Had he, after all, learned nothing and forgotten nothing?

"Very well!" he said quietly. "It's as you like! I was willing to forget old troubles, Mornington. But—"

"Hold on!" said Mornington coolly. "I simply mentioned that I'm not a Rookwood chap. But I'm willing to play! I'd be jolly glad to show up in Rookwood colours once more. But the Head—"

"It's nothing to do with the Head."

"He mightn't approve—"

"Stuff! Will you play for Rookwood?"

Morny nodded.

"Yes."

"Good man; that settles it! We've got Lovell's things, luckily. Enough said—you're in the team!"

Jimmy Silver crossed over to Courtenay.

"Ready now! We've found a man—an old Rookwooder happened to be on your ground. All serene."

with two fellows who had just arrived there. Arthur Edward Lovell and George Raby stared at him as if he had been a ghost.

"Morny!" ejaculated Lovell.

"Morny!" gasped Raby. "Playing for Rookwood?"

"Little me!" smiled Mornington.

"What the thump are you doing in the Rookwood team?" demanded Lovell.

"Taking the place of a silly ass who got left behind at a railway-station," answered Mornington sweetly. And he walked on before Arthur Edward could think of a suitable rejoinder.

Lovell and Raby were spectators of the rest of the match. They had come on as soon as they could, wondering what Jimmy Silver had done, certainly not dreaming that the expelled junior of Rookwood had filled the vacant place. And Lovell, at least, was not pleased. His brow was grim. He did not even smile when Morny captured Frank Courtenay's wicket in the second Highcliffe innings. Lovell could not forgive quite so easily as Jimmy Silver.

Highcliffe were all down for 74 in their second innings; leaving Rookwood with a considerable leeway to make up. At tea Lovell happened to be next to Mornington, and did not speak a word to him. Morny did not seem to notice it, however—if he did, he was indifferent. He chatted with the other Rookwooders, ignoring Arthur Edward. And he came up cheerily for the Rookwood second innings after tea.

"Opening the innings with the bouncer!" Lovell murmured indignantly to Raby. "What's Jimmy thinking of?"

"Morny seems to be in great form!" remarked Raby.

"B-r-r-r-r!" grunted Lovell. Which remark, if not very intelligible in itself, at least expressed Arthur Edward's feelings at the moment.

"Eighty-four wanted to tie, eighty-five to win!" said Lovell, when the first wicket went down for a duck's egg. "Looks promising—I don't think!"

The Highcliffe bowling was deadly. At 20 runs, Rookwood had five

(Continued on page 624.)

STICKING IT OUT!

By ERNEST SCOTT. (Continued from page 621.)

Lowden, eh?" he said. "You don't like the people to think you a spy?" "Would you, sir?" "Eh? What's that? Would I? Oh, no, of course not! No, most decidedly not!"

"You are the one person who can put things right for me; you know the truth of the affair. And I should be very much obliged if you would do so. There—there seems a movement afoot in this mill to drive me out of it. But I—I've got to earn my living, and so long as I manage to give satisfaction, to do my work all right, I do not intend to be driven out!"

Len's mouth set as he spoke those words. Perhaps they would have been better unspoken. But there was no guile about them; he spoke just what was in his heart—what he meant!

He would not be driven away, not by Warner or anyone else! Nothing could have been more kindly than the way the manager put a hand on his shoulder, however.

"I don't blame you, my dear Lowden," he said. "I certainly think you are doing your work very well. You should make a success. I remember that your father had a most wonderful head for figures; he was truly a genius where accounts were concerned."

Len was conscious that the blood was mounting to his face just then. Was this a sneer? He rather fancied it was. He rather fancied that this man was taking the rise out of him all the time!

But he kept a control over himself. "Then will you do that, sir?" he asked. "Will you make that all right for me?"

"I'll think it over, Lowden. I am not so certain that I shall be doing you such a good turn as you think, if I do so. They may possibly form the conclusion then that you are 'in' with everyone. It is absurd, really, that they should set themselves against you or believe you guilty of anything without more proof. But I will do all I can for you."

"Thank you, sir! Oh, there was one other thing I wanted to speak to you about!"

"Yes." "The old ledgers of three years back. You wanted me to look up that Egyptian contract entry. I find that they have all been removed to the store-house. I was wondering whether you would think it worth while bringing them over; we may want at least half a dozen."

Silas Warner sat back in his chair again.

"And they are big and old and dusty, aren't they, Lowden?" he said. "And you want to save yourself such an unpleasant job as carting them all over here. Yes, yes, I can understand you quite well—only too well! So you suggest that you should get the particulars over there, eh? But didn't I tell you most decidedly that they were so important that I should have to check them myself?"

Len flushed again. "I know," he said. "I could get them all down, and then—"

"Then I could come and check them myself?"

"I thought you wouldn't mind, sir."

Warner paused for a few seconds. Then:

"All right," he said. "Perhaps that will be the best way. I sha'n't be able to get over before closing-time, though. You go along directly

you leave the mill, and get them all down; and then I'll call in on my way home, and check the particulars. I'll be there about half-past six, if you'll wait for me."

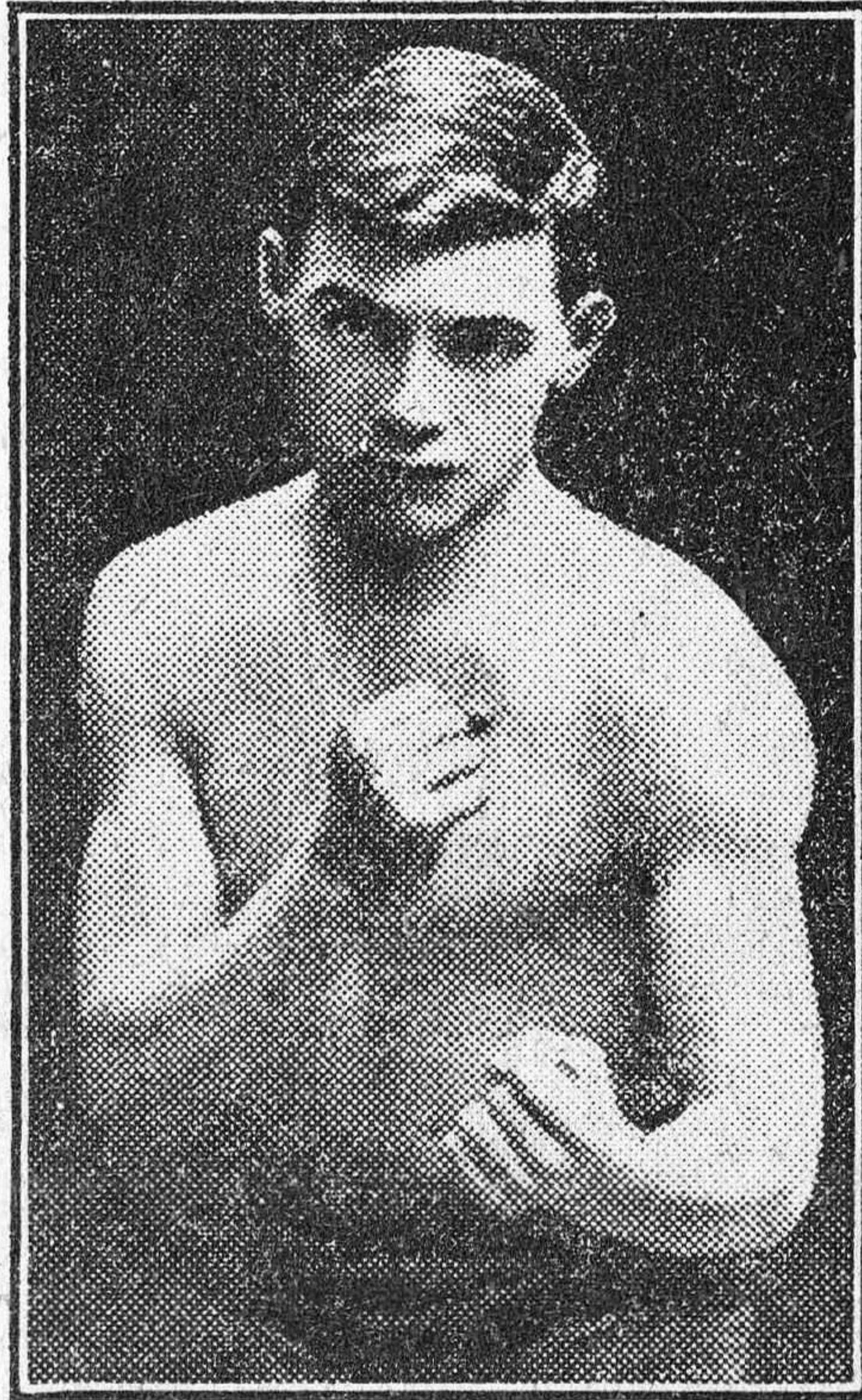
"Very good, sir." Len bowed and went out, but it was as much as he could do to keep from shouting out in his triumph.

This meant that his scheme had come off—he had succeeded!

From the time that he had left his father he had worried and puzzled his head as to how he should manage to get Silas Warner over to that store-house—to bring him face to face with his father.

And then the idea of the old ledgers had occurred to him. He had been given instructions to get them; to bring them back to the office and get out the various entries and have them checked by the manager himself. In the ordinary way he would never have thought of suggesting that Warner should go to the store-house himself; it would have been quite simple to have brought them

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here. A little dusty, perhaps, necessitating a couple of journeys, but it was the general thing.

He had seized on the idea as the best excuse, however, not by any means sure that it would come off—thinking that the manager would decline to go—and in all probability would tell him not to be lazy, and to bring the things over, in which case he would have had to think of something else.

But it had not happened. Silas Warner had agreed. He could scarcely believe his good fortune.

Poor Len!

He would not have been nearly so well satisfied with himself if he could have seen Silas Warner just then. For the manager was lolling back in his chair, chuckling hugely.

"Ho, ho! That's fine—that's very fine indeed!" Warner muttered to himself. "Yes, I think I can say that that's really funny! I'll be there! Oh yes, my dear, simple young Lowden, I'll be there without any doubt whatsoever! But if I don't come alone—well, well, we never made any bargain about that, did we? You will never be able to say that I did not play fair with you on that score, young Leonard! I never promised that I would come alone! Ho, ho, ho!"

Trapped!

The rest of the day passed fairly uneventfully for Len. He heard that Hetty Freeman had disappeared, and that search was being made for her. This upset him very much indeed, and he knew in advance that he would get the blame for it all. That followed almost without saying. Whatever happened to her they would say he had driven her to it.

He had made up his mind that he would go up to Mr. Freeman and tell that man the whole truth, but he could not do it to-day. To-day he could think of nothing save his father.

Besides, with the optimism of youth, he was hoping against hope that to-night's interview between the two men would alter things very considerably—that in some way or the other his father would be able to force the truth from the cunning manager, and so clear his own name. If he could only do that, then everything would be changed automatically. Exactly how it was to be done Len did not figure out, however.

Immediately work was over for the day at the mills Len made his way to the store-house. This excited no comment, and he was able to let himself in at the front way, seeing that he was here on business for the firm.

His father was eagerly waiting for him, and as they clasped hands the first question on his lips was:

"Did you manage it for me, lad?" And Len nodded.

"Yes, dad! I've managed it! He's coming!" Mr. Lowden's eyes gleamed. "Good lad! Good lad!" he exclaimed. "You're very clever, Len, though I didn't expect that you would be able to do it."

Len laughed. "I did not expect that it would be so easy," he said. "And yet it was."

And he told of the way that he had done it. "The books are up in the room above," he said. "I will get all the necessary ledgers out to make the thing appear more real. Then I will ask him to come down here on some pretence afterwards. Dad, you'll let me be present?"

"I shall want you to be present as a witness to all that is said between us." "And you—you'll remember mother? I mean, you won't let your anger get the better of you? You won't do anything desperate?"

Mr. Lowden shook his head. "No," he said. "I will make you a definite promise on that point. I will not do anything desperate. I will remember your mother and you, Len lad!"

The time went by. Len got the books out; he marked off the various entries. But every now and then he glanced at his watch. Six o'clock—ten past six—quarter-past.

Would Silas Warner come? Or was there a chance that he would forget about the appointment, or be too busy to keep it?

Len prayed that nothing like that would happen.

And just on the stroke of the half-hour he went down to his father again.

He should be here very shortly

now, dad," he said. "I—I have got everything ready above, and as soon—"

"S'h!" Lowden senior held up his hand, and sure enough from above there was the sound of a door being opened. Then it slammed. A moment's pause, and then—

"Lowden! Lowden! Where are you? Have you got those books ready?"

It was Silas Warner's voice right enough, and involuntarily the other man's hands clenched themselves. "At last!" he muttered. "At last, Len! Bring him down here!"

So Len called up: "I'm down here, sir, looking up files!"

"All right, I'll come down! Jove, what a dusty old hole this is to be sure! Keep where you are for a moment. Lowden, I'm coming down!"

Footsteps, but quiet ones. And neither Len nor his father suspected the truth at that moment.

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Even when Silas Warner appeared they did not suspect. John Lowden had sprung up—he had made a movement towards his enemy, and then it happened.

Warner stood slightly on one side, and there behind him was a constable and an inspector of police.

Silas Warner pointed direct at John Lowden.

"There he is!" he said. "I denounce that man as John Lowden, escaped convict. The man the police have been looking for! Do your duty! Arrest him at once!"

(Another splendid instalment of this true-to-life industrial story will be given next Monday. Also free boxing photo of Tommy Harrison!)

THE ROOKWOOD EXILE!

By OWEN CONQUEST. (Continued from page 620.)

wickets down; but Mornington was well set and going strong. Batsmen came and went, but he seemed impregnable. Jimmy Silver joined him at last, and then the fur began to fly, as Raby expressed it. The score took a big jump as the partners, both at the top of their form—ran and ran, and piled up the runs. And it was in a gallant attempt at 4 that Jimmy Silver received his quietus at last.

"Six down for seventy!" said Lovell. "Looks better! But—"

"Mornny's doing well!"

"Blow Mornny!"

Two other wickets fell without adding to the score. Lovell's face lengthened. And yet another!

"Last man in—and it's Oswald! All up!" grunted Lovell.

"Mornny's got the bowling!"

"Bless Mornny!"

"Wait and see!" said Jimmy Silver.

Mornington had the bowling, and all eyes were feverishly fixed on him. Four—and four—and four! There was a yell of delight from the Rookwooders looking breathlessly on.

"Bravo!"

"Good old Mornny!"

Lovell's face changed. His eyes brightened.

"Great pip! Is Mornny going to do it?" he gasped. "I—I say, Jimmy, what—what luck that he turned up here!"

Jimmy Silver laughed. "Go it, Mornny!" roared Lovell.

The ball came down again—the best that Highcliffe could send. Mornington cut it away, and the batsmen ran—and ran. A roar from Rookwood announced the tie. And they were still running. The ball was coming in. Lovell gasped with anxiety.

Jimmy Silver clenched his hands. Whiz! Crash! But the bat was on the crease.

"Not out!"

Lovell was the first to reach Mornington and bang him on the shoulder. Mornington gasped—and laughed.

"Good man!" roared Lovell. "Oh, good man! Mornny, old man, I'd give a term's pocket-money if you were coming back to Rookwood with us!"

And Arthur Edward Lovell meant it.

The Rookwood cricketers and Mornington parted at the station. Every fellow in the team shook Mornny's hand hard. They were sorry to leave him. He had won the match for Rookwood, but that was not all. They were sorry to part—but it had to be!

"See you again some day!" said Jimmy Silver at last.

"At Rookwood, perhaps."

"I—I hope so; but—"

"One never knows!" said Mornington, with an odd smile. And then he was gone.

During the run home to Rookwood Jimmy Silver thought a good deal of Mornington's words, and of the smile that had accompanied them. What was it the exile of Rookwood had in his mind? The Head was adamant. He could never return. And yet—

From the bottom of his heart, Jimmy Silver hoped that, somehow, some time, he would see Valentine Mornington in his old place in the school.

THE END.

(“Gunner's Deep Game?” is the title of next Monday's grand story of Rookwood School. The free boxing photo will be of Tommy Harrison!)

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