

36 PAGES OF EXCITING ENTERTAINMENT!

THE SILVER

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THE MAGAZINE
FOR BOYS

JACKET

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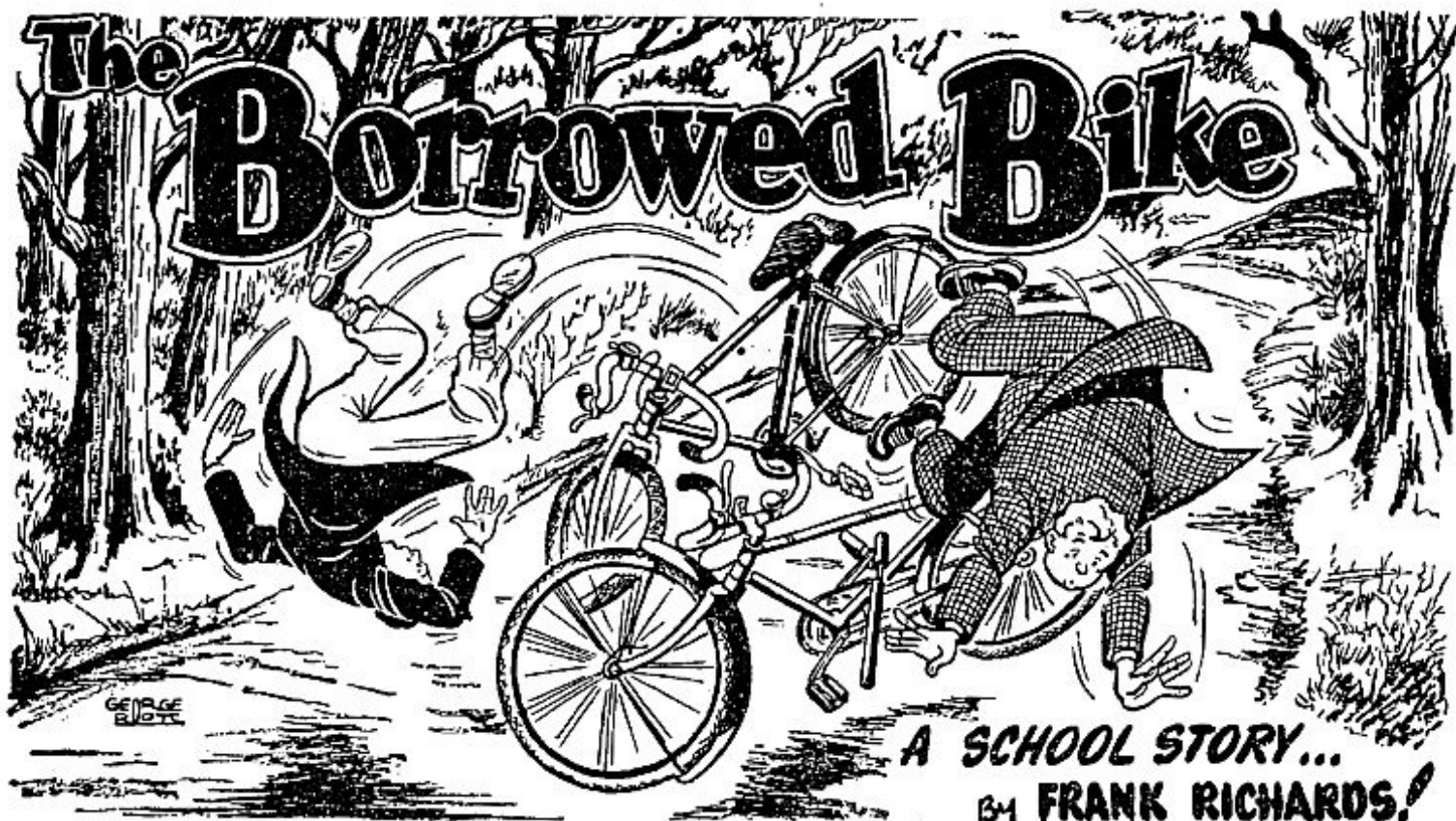
*Hopalong
Cassidy*

**COMES TO
AUSTRALIA!**



Inside HOW TO
GET YOUR
"HOPPY" BADGE!

THIS IS AUSTRALIA'S FAMOUS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS!



"WHERE'S my bike?"

Harry Compton, the captain of the Carcroft Fourth, asked that question. He stared at an empty stand as he asked it.

Bob Drake and Dick Lee stared also.

Harry Compton's handsome jigger should have been there, on its stand in the bike-shed, when he came for it. But it was not there. Drake's was there—Lee's was there—Vane-Carter's was there. But no other bike was to be seen. Apparently there was a run on bikes at Carcroft that afternoon. Almost every fellow who had had one, had taken it out: and it looked as if some fellow who hadn't one had taken Compton's out. For it had vanished.

"Gone!" said Bob Drake. "Some cheeky ass must have borrowed it."

"That fat ass Turkey, I shouldn't wonder," said Dick Lee, "I heard him asking Vane-Carter to lend him his bike—and you can guess V.C.'s answer."

"By gum! If that fat villain has walked off with my bike—!" breathed the captain of the Fourth, "I'll burst him all over Carcroft! I can't get out without a bike."

Dudley Vane-Carter, of the Fourth, came into the bike-shed. He glanced at the Co. as he lifted his machine from the stand, and grinned. Bob called to him.

"Seen Turkey, V.C.?"

"Yes; he went out half-an-hour ago."

"On a bike?" exclaimed Harry Compton.

"Yes! Yours. I noticed it was your Starbeam." Vane-Carter laughed, "Didn't you lend it to him?"

"You jolly well know I didn't!" exclaimed Compton, angrily, "And you might have stopped him, seeing him walk off with another fellow's bike."

Vane-Carter shrugged his shoulders.

"No business of mine," he drawled.

Harry Compton breathed hard. Vane-Carter seemed amused: but the captain of the Fourth was far from sharing his amusement.

"The fat sweep!" he said. "What the dickens am I going to do? Look here, V.C., if you're not going anywhere special—"

"Only a spin," answered Vane-Carter, "Why?"

"Well, look here, we're going over to St. Jim's, about the cricket. I can't go without a jigger. If you're not going anywhere special, will you lend me yours?"

Vane-Carter raised his eyebrows.

"Did you say lend you my bike?" he asked.

"Yes, I did!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Vane-Carter. Compton stared at him angrily.

"Well, what are you sniggering at?" he snapped.

"Your little joke!" said Vane-Carter, "I'm not lending you my bike! Not so's you'd notice it!"

"I've got to get to St. Jim's—"

"Walk it!" grinned Vane-Carter: and he wheeled his machine out of the bike-shed, and departed.

"Not much good asking that swob!" growled Bob Drake, "And there isn't another jigger in the place. That cheeky fat scoundrel Turkey—!"

"I'll burst him!" breathed Compton, "But I'd almost as soon punch V.C.'s head as Turkey's! I'm dished now."

"Oh, there's always a way round," said Bob, cheerily, "Look here, I'll give you a lift on the back of my bike, as far as Thorney—you can stand on the foot-rest and hold on to me. We can hire a bike at the cycle-shop there."

Compton made a grimace. A bicycle hired at a village cycle-shop was not likely to prove a very satisfactory mount, especially in the place of his own handsome Starbeam.

"It's the only way," said Lee.

"Well, if you think you can pull up Thorney Hill with my weight on your jigger, Bob—!"

"If I can't, we'll walk the hill. Let's get going."

"I'll smash that fat villain into ten thousand little pieces—"

Bob Drake laughed.

"Afterwards!" he said. "Let's get going now."

"Oh, all right!"

Two bikes were wheeled out. Lee mounted his machine, and Bob took up his passenger. Compton, standing with his left foot on the foot-rest, his right knee on the mud-guard, and holding to Bob's broad shoulders, was carried along quite comfortably, as Bob's sinewy legs drove at the pedals. It was the only

solution of the problem: but Harry Compton's feelings were deep, as they bowled along leafy lanes in the sunshine.

"BLOW!" grunted Turkey Tuck.

He plunged to the right, almost toppling off Harry Compton's bike. Righting himself with a tremendous effort, he plunged to the left, and almost toppled off again. Keeping his seat by a miracle, he lurched onward.

Turkey had expected to enjoy that spin on a borrowed bike. But he was not enjoying it. The machine was a good deal too high for the fat Turkey's comfort. His little fat legs were short of the pedals. He reached them with his toe-tips, and missed them, as they whirled, with high frequency.

The fattest fellow at Carcroft School had been more than half-an-hour on the road. But he had not covered a great distance. For one pedal he had to plunge his fat person down on one side: for the other, on the other side. That did not make for rapid progress, especially on a hilly road. Every now and then Turkey wobbled right across the road, from one hedge to the other: and it was fortunate for him that no cars came along.

"Blow!" said Turkey, for the umpteenth time: as he heard a sudden buzzing of a bicycle-bell behind him.

Buzzzzzzzzzz!

Another cyclist was overtaking him, and ringing his bell loudly as a warning to the wobbling Turkey.

Warnings were not of much use to Turkey. He was not in command of his mount. With a rider like Turkey Tuck, that bike seemed to have developed a will of its own. The outburst of furious ringing behind him only startled Turkey, and made him jump, and very nearly made him topple. He kept his seat somehow, but the bike wobbled frantically.

Buzzzzzzzz! The rider behind was evidently not a patient-tempered fellow. He volleyed out furious clangs on his bell.

"Oh, haddocks!" gasped Turkey.

"You fat ass!" came a yell from behind, "Get out of the way! You blithering porpoise, do you want all the road?"

Turkey knew that voice. It was that of his study-mate in No. 9 Study at Carcroft: Dudley Vane-Carter. Vane-Carter was neither a patient nor a good-tempered fellow. He was liable to kick Turkey as soon as look at him. If he had to get off his machine, it was an absolute certainty that he would kick Turkey. The fat Turkey, wobbling wildly in the middle of the lane,

strove to get out of the way of the irate V.C. He steered to the side of the road, and Vane-Carter came whizzing by.

What happened next, neither of them quite knew. In fact, almost anything was liable to happen, with the fattest and clumsiest fellow at Carcroft plunging and lurching on a machine too high for him. Turkey, certainly, had no intention of whirling round in V.C.'s way as he careered by. He did it quite without intending it. What happened was a collision and a crash: and almost before they knew it, two cyclists were somersaulting, and two machines sprawling on the road.

There was a wild roar, as Turkey landed on the grass verge by the hedge. There was a perfectly fiendish yell, as Vane-Carter crashed on the road. Both of them sprawled headlong while the bicycles clanged.

"Oh! Oh! Oh, haddocks! O, Jiminy! Oh!" roared Turkey.

Vane-Carter scrambled to his feet, red with rage. He did not heed Turkey for the moment. He jumped at his machine, to see the extent of the damage. V.C. was starting on a long spin round Ridgate Heath, and it looked as if he was stopped at the start. One look at his machine was enough. It had suffered much more severely than Turkey's. One pedal looked more like a corkscrew, both wheels were bent, mudguards twisted. Only too clearly, that machine required very extensive repairs before it became a going concern again.

"You—you—you—!" panted Vane-Carter. He turned on the roaring Turkey. Turkey's roars intensified, as a foot landed on his plump person.

"Ow! Oh! Stoppit! Yaroooooh!" Roared Turkey. "Ow! Stoppit! Wow!"

"You mad fat ass——!"

"Ow! wow! Stoppit! Twasn't my fault you ran into me!" howled Turkey. "You leave off kicking me, you swob, or I'll—wow! wow! wow!"

Vane-Carter ceased to land his foot on the yelling Turkey, and turned his attention to the other bicycle. His own was a hopeless wreck. But Turkey's seemed to have escaped severe damage: and V.C. picked it up, and examined it. His face cleared as he did so. A pedal was a little twisted, and the front wheel was knocked out of the straight. But those were damages that V.C. could put into order, with a little time. Holding the bike, he glared at the sprawling, yelling Turkey.

"You've crocked my bike, you blithering blotter. I'm going to take yours."

Turkey sat up in the grass, spluttering.

"I say, tain't my bike," he gasped, "It's Compton's——. I—I borrowed it, you know——."

"Yes, I know!" snapped Vane-Carter, "I'm taking it, as you've crocked mine, you dangerous maniac. Mine will have to be wheeled back to the school. You're going to wheel it."

"I jolly well ain't!" bleated Turkey, "I can jolly well tell you——."

"You'll wheel that bike back to Carcroft, and start now!" snarled Vane-Carter. "If it isn't safe in the bike-shed when I get in, I'll boot you all over the school. Got that?"

"But I—I—I say——," protested the dismayed Turkey.

"Shut up, and get going! If you're not gone in less than a minute, I'll start you with my boot."

"Oh, lor!" moaned Turkey.

He tottered to his feet. There was no help for it. Turkey's spin on a borrowed bike had come to a short and sudden end. Instead of spinning gaily round the country lanes on Compton's bike, and sailing merrily home on the same, Turkey had to wheel a crocked, clinking, tottering wreck—two or three miles on foot, with that wretched crock to push all the way. But it had to be—Turkey had had enough of Vane-Carter's lunging foot, and did not want any more. He dragged up the clinking wreck, and started.

Vane-Carter gave him no further heed. He devoted himself to getting Compton's bike in order, and in half-an-hour or so he was mounted on it, and riding on his way. And as he headed for Ridgate Heath on the borrowed bike, Turkey Tuck, with feelings that could not have been expressed in words, was still trailing dismally homeward, wheeling the clinking, clanking crock; and wishing from the very bottom of his fat heart that he had never borrowed Compton's bike that afternoon.

Pop!

"Oh!" breathed Harry Compton. He jumped down.

"That's the second!" sighed Bob Drake.

"Rotten!" said Dick Lee.

It was undoubtedly "rotten." Tyre punctures, on a long ride, were neither grateful nor comforting. Two in succession, with a prospect of more to come, made a cyclist feel quite deadly. And it was all the fault of that fat sweep, Turkey Tuck. It would have been a solace to boot Turkey: but Turkey was nowhere near.

The chums of the Carcroft Fourth had wheeled into Thorney, Harry Compton a passenger on the back of
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THE BORROWED BIKE

(Continued from page 9)

Bob's machine, Thorney was only a little out of their way for St. Jim's and they reached it in pretty good time, even with Bob carrying double. At Thorney a bicycle was hired on which Harry Compton mounted, and the three started at a rapid pace for the long trail across Ridgate Heath, on the other side of which lay Wayland and St. Jim's. For a couple of miles all went well: then there was a pop! Compton had had his doubts about a bike hired at the village shop—subject to very rough and tough wear and tear. His doubts were justified. It had many a mended puncture, and one of them burst out afresh: and the three had to come to a halt, up-end the bike, and repair the puncture. After which, they did another two miles, and then came that fatal "pop" again.

This time it was a very emphatic "pop". It sounded almost like a pistol-shot. Harry Compton's feelings were very deep, as he up-ended the bike and examined the damage. Drake and Lee dismounted, and leaned their machines against wayside trees on the track over the heath.

"Bad?" asked Bob. He judged by the expression on Compton's face that it was!

"Couldn't be worse, unless the whole dashed tyre ripped off!" said Compton, with a knitted brow, "Not so deep as a well, or so wide as a church-door—but jolly nearly! By gum, that fat villain Turkey—" He breathed hard and deep, "Goodness knows when we shall get to St. Jim's, at this rate—it's five or six miles yet."

"Lucky we've got a repair outfit with us," said Bob. Bob always looked on the bright side, "We'll get the wretched thing going again."

Harry Compton doubted it, as he examined the tyre. Three or four ancient punctures seemed to have blended together: it was rather a gash than a puncture. However, he set to work, his face growing more and more expressive as he laboured: and at last—at long last!—that dilapidated tyre was pumped up again.

But it booted not. Hardly had the pedals revolved, when there was a bang. Compton jumped off again. "No go!" he said, "It's gone again."

"Oh, what rotten luck."

Up went the bike again for examination. A more ghastly gash than before met the view. That ancient tyre, long since worn out, and repaired over and over again, had reached the finale of its career. Sticking the wretched thing together

again, evidently only meant another pop at the first bump on the rugged track. Compton leaned the bike against a tree.

"Nothing doing!" he said, "The tyre's in rags. Goodness knows how it's lasted so long. I'm dished."

The three stood at a halt, under the tree.

"Dished!" said Bob, "It was my idea to hire a bike at Thorney. Not one of my best! Here we are, miles from everywhere—" Bob broke off, glancing back the way they had come. A cyclist appeared in view on the heath-land track. He did not see the three juniors, standing under the trees by the wayside: but, looking out from the shade, they recognized Dudley Vane-Carter.

"That swob!" growled Bob, "If he'd lent you his bike—!"

"He's going nowhere," said Lee, "He might as well! Bother him!"

Harry Compton did not speak. He stood with his eyes fixed on the approaching cyclist. A startled look was on his face.

"That's queer," he said, "V.C.'s not riding his own machine! He rides a black Rally. That's a Starbeam, like mine—why—why—what—that's my jigger."

"Yours!" ejaculated Dick Lee.

"Looks like it! It's not V.C.'s, anyway—you know his jigger. He can't have changed with Turkey, surely—but it looks—"

"Must have!" said Bob blankly, "That's not his own jigger, no it looks like yours. Here, get back behind the trees before he spots us—we're jolly well going to stop him, and see—and he might cut off—"

They backed into prompt cover.

Dudley Vane-Carter came spinning on. As he came abreast of the clump of wayside trees, three active figures rushed out, and before the scapegrace of Carcroft knew what was happening, he was off the bicycle, in the grasp of Drake and Lee, and Harry Compton had hold of the machine, and was examining it.

"My bike!" he shouted.

"What the thump—what—who Let go!" yelled Vane-Carter, struggling, "What do you think you're up to? What—?"

"You're riding my bike!" exclaimed Compton.

"Oh!" Vane-Carter gasped for breath, as the Co. released him. He stared at the chums of the Fourth. It was an unexpected meeting, and rather unfortunate for V.C. "Look here, you're not taking that jigger—"

Harry Compton laughed.

"Not taking my own machine?" he asked. "I seem to remember that you wouldn't lend me yours this

afternoon. Are you asking me to lend you mine?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Drake and Lee, quite entertained by the expression on Vane-Carter's face.

"Thanks for bringing it along," added Compton, with cheerful sarcasm, "we were just stranded—that crock we hired at Thorney won't go! You can try your luck with it if you like!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I tell you I'm having that bike!" shouted Vane-Carter, "That fool Turkey crashed into me and crocked mine, and I took his—"

"You took mine, you mean!" chuckled Compton.

"It was the one he was riding, anyhow, and I'm having it—think I'm going to be left without a machine, five miles from everywhere!" yelled Vane-Carter.

"Just exactly what I do think!" agreed Harry Compton, "I'm not lending you my bike! Not so's you'd notice it," he added, in playful parody of V.C.'s own remark earlier, "Walk it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Drake. "Come on—let's get on, you chaps. We'll leave that crock in the trees here, and collect it on our way back. You've got your own jigger now, old chap—come on."

Vane-Carter made a furious rush at the Starbeam, to wrench it away. Three pairs of hands collared him, and swung him off his feet. He landed on Ridgate Heath with a bump! He yelled as he landed.

As he sat panting, the Carcroft Co. mounted and pushed on, Harry Compton on his own handsome Starbeam, and much relieved to be there-on. He looked back, and waved a parting hand to Vane-Carter, scrambling to his feet, with an expression on his face like unto that of a demon in a pantomime. Vane-Carter shook an enraged fist in return. Then the three chums, putting on speed to make up for lost time, disappeared in the direction of distant St. Jim's. Dudley Vane-Carter, breathing fury, gave one glance at the old crock left under the trees, and then set out on a four or five mile walk—his only consolation the prospect of kicking Turkey when he reached Carcroft.

TURKEY had not enjoyed life on a borrowed bike. He enjoyed it still less when Vane-Carter, tired and dusty and in the worst temper ever, arrived at the school. But three other fellows had quite a pleasant ride to St. Jim's, a cheery tea in Tom Merry's study there, and a happy cricket jaw: and a pleasant ride homeward in time for calling-over at Carcroft.