

The Cliveden Waxworks

Another Most Laughable Tale of All the Chums at Cliveden College.



The 1st Chapter.

Pointexter Knows What to Do!

WHAT are we going to do?" asked Lincoln G. Pointexter, sitting on the table in No. 4 Study at Cliveden College, and looking at his chums, Neville and Flynn, "what are we going to do, kids?"

"I've thought," said Flynn, "thought, I've thought, I've been thinking all day, till I got a pain in my brain, and—"

"I've got the same boat with Micky," said Flynn, "I haven't thought of anything, either."

Which is the usual result of Dick— began

"Oh, rats," said Neville. "Don't borrow my smart sayings like that, Micky. Have you thought of anything, Pointexter? I believe we have, by the picnic in the corner of your

Lincoln G. Pointexter laughed. "Well, as a matter of fact, I have an idea,"

"I have got it off your chest, my son," said Dick. "I don't suppose it's a very good one, but it off itself before it vanishes. Quick!"

But Pointexter seemed to be in no hurry. "I'll think it over," he said, "and at this time of year, and a very thoughtful expression came over his keen face. The chums waited for him to speak with some impatience.

There was something "ou" at Cliveden, and the chums of No. 4 Study—known since the time of Lincoln G. Pointexter to the school, as the "Combine"—had met in council to discuss a most important matter.

Cliveden Church had been in need of repairs for the last fifty years or so, and at this time the steeple was raising a fund to get the necessary work done. It was a praiseworthy one, but cash came in slowly, and the idea had been mooted at Cliveden of doing something to help it on.

The Sixth Form had really started the plan, and it was known that the Sixth were to give a theatrical entertainment in aid of the church fund, every other Form in the school was fired by the ambition to go and do better.

The Fifth followed the example of the Sixth, and they got up a theatrical representation. "Come and Cuffy and their friends planned an entertainment in which conjuring and recitation played a prominent part.

When the Fourth heard what was being done by the Fifth, of course, they were determined to be let behind.

The Fourth Form were bound to do something to show that they were not to be put in the shade by the Fifth. But what were they to do?

"Then let's hear it!"

"What price a waxwork exhibition?" Lincoln G. Pointexter asked the question quite coolly. Neville and Flynn stared at him. Pointexter met their amazed stares without flinching.

"What price a waxwork exhibition?" asked Dick Neville slowly.

"And I've got nintepence," said Neville. "Which shall it be, Puntprusher—shall we hire 'em, or buy 'em outright?"

The chum from Chicago laughed.

"Suppose we gave a waxwork exhibition, and got up a number of the Fourth Form as waxwork figures, and—"

Neville and Flynn gave a simultaneous jump. "Kipping!" shouted Neville, falling on Pointexter's neck and hugging him. "It's a great wheeze! We'll take the shine out of the Fifth!"

"Faith, and we will!" howled Micky Flynn, slapping Pointexter on the back with all the strength of his arm—a powerful one. "Faith, and we'll take the Sixth out of the shine—sure, I mane the shine out of the shade—that is to say, the Sixth out of the spine—"

"Leave off thumping my back!" roared Pointexter. "That's my spinal column you're dislocating, you howling maniac!"

"Sure, and what's a spinal column at a moment like this?" said Flynn, slapping away.

Pointexter tore himself away from Neville, and gave Micky a shove which made him sit down in the fender.

And Price with us in this little game, or else we shall have them against us, and that would spoil the show."

"I guess that's so," said Pointexter. "Well, they'll have to admit it's a good wheeze, and I've no doubt they'll come into line. Let's go and ask them."

"Right-ho!" said Neville. "Come into the Close, I saw 'em walking there and jiving, and I suppose they were turning the idea over in their heads of getting up something to help the fund. I'll wager they don't think of anything half so good as this, though."

And the Combine sallied forth in search of their deadly rivals, who were their very best friends, all the same, whenever any good purpose could be served by an alliance.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Old Firm Join In.

PANKHURST and Price, the Combine's rivals in the Fourth Form at Cliveden, were indeed thinking over the matter, and trying to hit upon some where which should add to the glory of the Fourth Form, and, incidentally, put the Combine into the shade.

They were striding under the elms in the Close, keeping pace, their hands thrust deep into their pockets, their heads bent forward, and their brows wrinkled.

Two more thoughtful-looking juniors could not have been found within the precincts of the ancient college. Yet, so far, the result of their reflections had been nil.

"You see, we've got to work up a wheeze," said Pankhurst; "if we don't, the Fourth Form will have to hide its diminished head, and the Fifth and Sixth will get all the kudos."

"Quite so," said Price. "Besides, if we don't do something, the Combine will, and we can't possibly allow the Combine to get ahead of the Old Firm."

"Exactly!"

"Then what are we to do?" demanded Pankhurst.

"Blessed if I know!"

"Oh, hang it!" said Pankhurst, running his fingers through his bright auburn hair, which some of the juniors called ginger—not within biting distance of Pankhurst, however—hang

it, Price! What's the good of having a brain if you don't use it?"

"Hats!" said Price. "Who's senior partner in this firm?"

"Well, I am, but you might do some thinking sometimes! I have some ideas, some schemes, and they look as if they had found something nice!"

"Hallo, kids!" said Pointexter, coming up, with the other two members of the Combine at his heels, "we were looking for you!"

"Well, now you've found us," said Pankhurst. "What do you want? I'm afraid I can't be bothered with you youngsters now. I'm busy."

"Quite so," said Price. "Youngsters!" howled Neville and Flynn together, "why?"

Pointexter waved them back. "We haven't come here to row, Panky, old son, have you thought anything about the church fund, and what the Fourth Form ought to do, and—"

"Oh, I've just turned it over in my mind," said Pankhurst carelessly.

"Have you found a plan?"

"I don't know. Haven't finished thinking it out. Have you found one?"

"I guess so."

"I see, and you want us to advise you how to carry it out," said Pankhurst, with a nod of comprehension. "Well, I always like to help kids in difficulties, and—"

"Draw it out, Panky! I want you to join us if you like, but we don't want any advice. We want you to help us carry out the idea."

"That's what your ideas want," said Pankhurst. "Carry 'em out and bury 'em; that's the best thing you can do with 'em."

"I guess this is a ripping wheeze. The Cliveden Waxworks will knock the dramatic performance and the conjuring entertainment into a cocked hat."

"The Cliveden Waxworks?"

Pointexter explained.

"By Jove," said Pankhurst, when he understood, "it's a good idea! And with a little knocking into shape by us, it will answer all right."

"If you put on any side about it, Panky, it's you that will get knocked out of shape," said Pointexter, roughly. "We mean business. Now, suppose we leave off ragging one another till this affair is over, and put our heads together like sensible fellows and make a big success of it."

"I'm agreeable," said Pankhurst immediately.

"Quite so," said Price. "You see, we've got to work up a wheeze," said Pankhurst; "if we don't, the Fourth Form will have to hide its diminished head, and the Fifth and Sixth will get all the kudos."

THE FOURTH FORM'S WAXWORK ENTERTAINMENT.



"Ladies and Gentlemen," said Lincoln G. Pointexter, advancing to the front of the stage, "you here behold the famous Cliveden Waxworks. The pride and glory of this ancient college, which have performed before all the crowned heads of Europe and America—"

"Young Trimble can wind them up."

"Wind them up?"

"If young Trimble starts winding me up there will be no waxworks."

"Don't be an ass, Panky! He'll go behind you with a rattle and make a row which will make the audience think he is winding you up."

"Oh, I see! I don't mind that."

"Then you'll all move your arms and legs and so on, and the people will think it's a set of gross puns that will knock spots off Madame Threewords!"

"Good!" said Neville. "Is there going to be a chamber of horrors, though? If so, that's where Panky and Price will come out strong."

"I'll chamber of horrors you!" exclaimed Pankhurst. "You—"

"Hold on! Don't start rowing! Neville, shut up. I'll keep peace in this party if I have to knock all your heads together!" exclaimed Pointexter. "Let's get on with the waxing! I'm going to be spokesman, because I've got most sense."

"Most sense!" exclaimed Pankhurst fully misunderstanding. "Do you mean the accents of the tinned beef your pater sells in Chicago?"

"Ha, ha!" cackled Price. "Quite so!"

"Oh, give the tinned beef a rest!" said Pointexter. "Let's talk business!"

"Seems to me you're doing all the talking!"

"Look here, Neville can make up as Napoleon."

Dick Neville struck an attitude, and thrust his hand into his breast. Pankhurst looked at him curiously.

"Is he going to do that?" he asked. "I don't want to be critical, but what about the audience? They'll wonder if he's off his giddy rocker, you know!"

"Quite so!"

Neville turned red, and Pointexter went on hastily:

"Pankhurst will do Julius Caesar."

"Good!" said Pankhurst. "That will suit me down to the ground! Ah, the Ides of March are come!"

"Oh, I say, he's not going to retire, is he?" asked Neville, in alarm. "If Panky retires, you know, you can't expect me to stand in the same row with him! It's silly."

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too much of any man, and you know I'm not strong."

Pankhurst looked daggers at him. Poindester hurried on.

"Kaiser Wilhelm will suit Price."

"Quite so!" said Price promptly. "Hilp-ly for the Mailed Fist!"

"Micky Flynn can represent an Irish moon-lighter."

"Faith, Pankpusher, it's jokin' ye are!"

"No, I'm not. With a board and a shock of hair and a shilling, you'll look the part to the life. We shall want two more figures, and I think Simpson and Gatty will do."

"Simpson can make up as Nelson, and Gatty as General Robb."

"Good idea. But about the costumes?"

"We can hire the props at the costumier's in Cliveden."

"And the paint?"

"Same place. They sell it, and they'll tell us what we want besides. We shall have to get a little practice at making up, of course."

"And when is it coming off?" asked Pankhurst.

"Oh, you'll wash it off with hot water after the exhibition!"

"Ah! I mean, when is the exhibition coming off?"

"Why couldn't you say so, then? Lemme see, the Sixth are giving their rotten dramatic show on Wednesday evening. The Head has allowed them the hall to give it in, and the charge for the admission of the public is a shilling a head. The Fifth have bespoken the hall for Thursday, to give their rotten conjuring stuff. We shall have to give our exhibition on Friday, I suppose. That will give us time to get ready. The fund closes on Saturday, so we shall be just in time."

"Good! And we'll only charge a shilling for admission, and then we shall get a lot in, and half-price to the lower forms."

"I guess so. It's a go, then?"

"Haher!"

And the five juniors shook hands upon it solemnly.

The 3rd Chapter.

Crane and Cuffy Make Inquiries, with Unpleasant Results to Themselves.

WEDNESDAY afternoon was a half-holiday at Cliveden, and the fellows were all pretty busy that afternoon. The chums of the Fourth had their theatrical "props" to get in for the proposed waxwork exhibition. The Sixth had a last rehearsal of King John to give—one act—and it was a full-dress rehearsal, and other fellows were admitted to see it. The Fifth had the conjuring entertainment to think about, which they were giving on the morrow.

The Vicar of Cliveden took a lively interest in all the proceedings, as was natural. It was probable that the school would be able to contribute a considerable sum towards the repairing fund, as the result of the entertainments. Nobody was to be admitted on the "nod"; every spectator would have to pay, and the whole of the takings were to go to the fund. And it was, of course, a point of honour with every Cliveden fellow to take a ticket. Then all who chose to come from the village and the surrounding parts were welcome, and Trevelyan, the captain of Cliveden, had brought quite a brisk demand for tickets.

The Vicar of Cliveden, a fat, comfortable-looking old gentleman, with white hair, and a red face, came into the school that afternoon with Dr. Rayne, and stopped to look at the school notice-board.

"Ha," exclaimed the Head of Cliveden, "there is something new here!"

The vicar stroked his fat chin, and read the notices.

The most prominent was that of the Sixth

NOW ON SALE.

THE
SPLENDID CHRISTMAS
DOUBLE NUMBER
OF THE

"MARVEL,"

Containing a

Triple-Length Tale of

JACK, SAM, & PETE,

By S. CLARKE HOOK.

Price - - - - 2d.

Form, written in Trevelyan's hand. It ran as follows:

"On Wednesday, at 8 p.m. precisely, the 4th Act of King John will be represented by the Sixth Form Dramatic Society, in the lecture hall of the College, by the kind permission of the Principal. Admission, 1s.; reserved seats for the masters, 2s. All takings will be handed over to the Cliveden Church Restoration Fund."

(Signed), H. TREVELYAN.

The next notice was written by Crane, of the Fifth, and it was worded thusly:

"Notice!—On Thursday, at 8 p.m. precisely, will be given in the lecture hall of the College, by kind permission of the Principal, a Grand and Unique Conjuring Entertainment, followed by recitations by the Fifth Form. Admission, 1s. Come in your thousands! All proceeds to be handed over to the Cliveden Church Restoration Fund."

(Signed), H. CRANE.

Then came the notice posted up by the Fourth, in the handwriting of Lincoln G. Poindester:

"Take Notice!—On Friday evening will be held at Cliveden, in the lecture hall, by kind permission of the Principal, an exhibition of the Famous Cliveden Waxworks, under the management of Lincoln G. Poindester, of Chicago. These wonderful waxworks move and look like human beings, and cannot be told from the originals. Come and see! Admission, 1s. Reserved seats for the masters, 2s. All proceeds to be handed over to the Cliveden Church Restoration Fund."

THE FIFTH FORM'S CONJURING ENTERTAINMENT.



Crane smashed up the Vicar's watch and turned almost cold when he discovered what he had done. "And now, gentlemen, Mr. Crane will restore the watch to its owner," piped Cuffy. The Vicar rose, but as he caught sight of Crane's expression the smile died away. He put the broken watch back in his pocket. "Wonderful!" he said sarcastically.

mission, 1s., and 6d. to boys of Forms lower than the Fourth. Come in your millions. Elevating and entertaining, instructive and amusing. Any boy can safely bring his parents to this exhibition.

(Signed), LINCOLN G. POINDESTER.

"Dear me," said the vicar. "The boys are really taking the matter up in a good spirit. I feel very grateful, Dr. Rayne."

The doctor nodded.

"I really don't know about these waxworks," he remarked. "I have given the Fourth Form permission to use the hall on Friday evening. But I don't know the kind of entertainment they proposed to give. I would not willingly damp their enthusiasm in so good a cause."

"Quite right, quite right!"

"But, really, I do not see where they can have obtained waxworks."

"Perhaps they have hired some," said the vicar. "In any case, let them have their way, my dear doctor. It can do no harm."

And the Head of Cliveden assented.

The two old gentlemen walked on, and a few minutes later Crane and Cuffy of the Fifth came by, and stopped to read the Fourth Form notice.

"What rot!" exclaimed Crane. "Do you see that, Cuffy? Waxworks! It's a hoax, of course!"

"Must be," said Cuffy.

"Where could they get waxworks from?"

"They couldn't get 'em from anywhere."

"It's a hoax!"

"A rank swindle!"

"Anyway, we'll go and see them," said Crane. "There's no telling what those young rascals may be getting up to any time. They'd like to take the shine out of our conjuring business if they could."

The feeling between the Fifth and the Fourth at Cliveden was not of the best.

Relations had been strained for a long time.

Fourth, a claim which was so fiercely contested by the Combine and the Old Firm, that the Fifth had dropped it.

Crane said Cuffy marched off to No. 4 Study, to see Lincoln G. Poindester about that waxwork exhibition. Crane kicked the door open, and the Fifth Formers entered, in astonishment.

"Hello!" exclaimed Crane, in astonishment. He gazed at the scene before him in amazement. The study was littered with theatrical costumes. Dick Neville, before a glass, was making up his face with grease-paint. Micky Flynn was affixing a huge, bushy moustache to his upper lip. Poindester was dabbing a flesh tint on the countenance of Pankhurst.

"What the dickens does this mean?" exclaimed Crane.

"Get out!"

"Rats! What are you kids up to?"

"Travel!"

"Boh! What's that rot on the notice-board about waxworks?"

"Shunt!"

"I'm not going till I—"

Poindester jumped up.

"If we're going to have the trouble of kicking you out—"

"You couldn't kick out one half of us!"

"Come on, kids!" shouted Poindester.

"We'll teach those rotters to come poking into our study without knocking!"

Never was a call to arms more promptly obeyed. Crane and Cuffy hit out as the Fourth-

Harrison of the Fifth, outside, and down the passage.

"Outside with them!" said Poindester. "If you come into a gentleman's room without knocking again, Crane!"

"I'll bring your beauty back, you twisted-head!"

"Ha, ha! Shut!"

"The door was unlocked, and the two Fifth Formers bounded into the passage, with their chums of the Fourth, chuckling, confident of their work."

The 4th Chapter.

A Scene by the Sixth!

CRANE and Cuffy staggered to their feet. Crane was as red as a beetroot.

Cuffy was as pale as a sheet. They looked at each other in speechless wrath.

"Come on!" yelled the voice of Harrison in the distance.

And there was a rush of feet, and a crowd of Fifth Formers came pouring in the passage towards No. 4 Study. "Come on! Those young rascals have got—"

Harrison stopped in amazement as he caught sight of Crane and Cuffy.

"My only hat! What have you done to your faces?" he gasped.

"The Fifth Formers stared, and an irrepressible roar of laughter rang through the passage."

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

Crane gritted his teeth.

"You cackling idiots—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The sight of the beetroot-coloured face working as Crane talked was excruciatingly comical. The Fifth Formers roared with laughter.

"You silly asses!" growled Cuffy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, come along!" roared Crane. "Let's get this off. Buckle away, you silly duffers. till you get a crack in the neck."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chiefs of the Fifth stilled away in wrath.

A little fat gentleman was coming up the stairs, and he stopped and held up his hands in amazed alarm.

"Mon blue! Vat is zat? Mon cell!"

Crane and Cuffy did not deign to reply. They stalked on, leaving Monsieur Frapart staring after them with his eyes almost starting from his head.

Crane was making a beeline for the nearest lavatory to get cleaned, but he unfortunately happened that the vicar and Dr. Rayne had just looked in at Trevelyan's study to see how matters were going on, and, coming away, they met the two Fifth Formers face to face.

The vicar adjusted his glasses and stared.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "How excessively peculiar! Surely those cannot be the natural complexions of those lads, doctor?"

"What does this masquerade mean?" he demanded sternly. "Who are you? I cannot recognise you."

"If you please, sir, I'm Crane—"

"And I'm Cuffy—"

"Of the Fifth. We—"

"We have been—"

"Painted—"

"We are sorry—"

"I should think you were. What does this mean?" thundered the doctor.

"Crane and Cuffy looked helplessly at one another. Of course, it was impossible to "peach" on the juniors.

But a light dawned upon the vicar's mind.

"Ah, I understand," he exclaimed, rubbing his fat hands comprehensively. "These youths have been making up for the representation! Ha, ha!"

"I did not know that—"

"It's—it's something to do with the entertainment, you see, sir," said Crane eagerly.

That was strictly true; it was entirely owing to the properties for the entertainment being No. 4 Study that the chums of the Fifth had been made up so artistically. "We—we've just been made up like this—"

"You must not go about the passage with make-up on your faces," said Dr. Rayne sternly. "Don't let it happen again!"

The two old gentlemen walked on, and Crane and Cuffy gasped with relief.

"Thought that was going to be serious," gasped Crane. "We're well out of it. Let's get this horrible stuff cleaned off, for mercy's sake!"

And they lost no time about it. When they had reached their room, and their appearance, they repaired with a chosen party of the Fifth to No. 4 Study. There they attacked the door vigorously, but it was locked and bolted on the inside, and they could not get it open. They did not desert till Graham the prefect came up from below, and then they fled for their lives, and No. 4 Study was left in peace.

Taking no notice of the knocking at the door, the chums of the Fourth worked on. They were trying their hands with the costumes and paint, and really their efforts were very successful.

Neville made an excellent Poindester, and Pankhurst left little to be desired as Julius Caesar. Micky Flynn looked the moonlighter to the life, and as for Frodo, any loyal German would have recognised him at once as the Kaiser.

"Jolly good!" said Poindester, at last. "I think it will be a ripping success. Now get all that stuff off and let's have a wash."

In the absorbing interest of their occupation

