

The

Boys' Herald 1^d

EVERY BOY'S AND YOUNG MAN'S
STORY AND HOBBY PAPER.

No. 255. VOL. V.

EVERY WEDNESDAY—ONE PENNY.

WEEK ENDING JUNE 6, 1908.

LOST in the BUSH



The men stood in indecision for a minute or two. The cook had planted herself squarely before the black and had snatched the rope from the bough. They were a rough crew; but they did not like the idea of maltreating a woman. And that brief delay saved Roderick's life. Suddenly Collin, bound, and lying upon the ground, gave a shout. He had caught the sound of approaching hoof-strokes.

FOLLOW THE GENERAL'S EXAMPLE AND READ "THE WOLF PATROL."

The Cliveden Derby



The Funniest Story Mr.
CHARLES HAMILTON
has ever Written.

The 1st Chapter. The Lasso.

LINCOLN G. POINDEXTER put his head out of No. 4 Study at Cliveden, and looked up and down the passage with an expression of great caution.

"Faith, and is there any baste in sight?" came the voice of Micky Flynn, from within the study.

Up and down the passage Poindexter glanced, and then craned his neck to get a look at the staircase. There was no one in sight, and the American chum turned back into the study with a satisfied grin.

"I guess the coast's clear," he remarked. "Let's get out."

"Faith, and sure I—"

"Back up! If those pesky bounders Panky and Price come along, they will spot us at once, and then—"

"Come on," said Dick Neville. "There's your giddy lasso. Buck up!"

Poindexter picked up a looped rope from a chair, and the three juniors left the study. It was a bright, sunny June day, and afternoon school was over. From the looks of the three chums, any observer might have guessed that they had something "on," though they tried to look quite casual and unconcerned as they descended the stairs.

The coast was clear, so far; but at the bend in the staircase Poindexter gave a grunt of disgust.

Two red-headed juniors were coming up, and they met the Cliveden Combine face to face.

"Hallo!" said Pankhurst, chief of the Old Firm. "What have you got there, Punt-dexter?"

Poindexter had made a hasty attempt to conceal the looped rope behind him. But Pankhurst's eyes were as sharp as gimlets.

"Eh?" said Poindexter innocently. "What did you say, Panky?"

"I asked you what you had got there."

"Oh, only a rope."

"Only a rope," said Pankhurst. "Yes, I can see it's a rope. What the dickens are you carrying around a coil of rope for? What's the little game?"

"Quite so," said Price. "What's the little game?"

"I guess—"

"Faith, and there isn't any little game," said Micky Flynn. "You're on the wrong track this time, Panky. It's nothin' up against you, on the word of a descendant of the ancient kings of Ireland."

Pankhurst grinned.

"What are you going to do with that rope, Punt-dexter?"

"Faith, sure ye're too curious, Panky. Why shouldn't Punt-dexter make a lasso if he likes, and—"

"Ow! What are ye kickin' my leg for, Dick Neville? Ow!"

Dick looked daggers at him. Pankhurst and Price burst into a simultaneous chuckle.

"Ha, ha! A lasso, is it?" said Pankhurst. "What are you going to do with a lasso, Punt-dexter?"

"Mind your own business!" growled Poindexter.

And the Cliveden Combine passed on. Pankhurst and Price grinned, and made room for them to pass on the stairs. Micky Flynn stopped to rub his leg.

"Sure, Neville, ye needn't have kicked me like that. I wasn't going to let anythin' out."

"Shut up!"

"I only said it was a lasso, and they might know it was a lasso without guessing that we were going to catch Stumpy's pony, and—"

"Cheese it!" roared Poindexter, who saw that the Old Firm were still listening, and making in every word uttered by the incautious Micky.

"Sure, and I—"

Pankhurst and Price grinned at one another. "You heard that?" said Pankhurst.

"Quite so."

"They've rigged up a lasso to catch Stumpy's pony—"

"What on earth do they want with Stumpy's pony?"

"To ride it, I suppose. My hat! I think I've caught on to it!" exclaimed Pankhurst excitedly. "You know, it's Derby Day this week, and I've heard those three muttering about the Derby several times the past few days. I suppose they're thinking of getting up some wheeze or other on Derby Day. Anyway, we're on in this scene, Pricey. We have got to keep those youngsters under our eye, and see that they come to no harm."

And Price grinned gleefully.

"Quite so!"

The 2nd Chapter. Poindexter the Lassoist.

FAITH, and it's out of breath I am intirely, ye spalpeens! Lemme stop, ye gossoms! Do ye hear, ye rotters?"

Micky Flynn was gasping for breath. Poindexter and Neville had run him out of the house at top speed, and right across the old Close to the gates. But they had not stopped there. Through the gates they went, and up the lane at a tearing pace, the Irish junior stumbling along between them, bewildered by the sudden rush, and half thinking that his chums had suddenly taken leave of their senses.

At a stile which led into a field beside the river, Poindexter and Neville stopped at last, and Micky gasped for breath.

"Ye spalpeens—"

Poindexter took him by the waistcoat, and jammed him against the top bar of the stile.

"You pesky ass—"

"Faith, and what's the matter now?"

"You've given us away to Panky and Price."



A MOST
EXCITING RACE!

"Hurrah! Tinned beef wins!" Pankhurst put on a fierce spurt and drew level. The result hung in the balance. Neck and neck for six yards more. Then Poindexter forged ahead again, and Pankhurst remained a head behind, and there was a roar. "Tinned Beef wins!"

"Sure and I've done nothin' of the sort. I didn't tell them we were goin' to lasso Stumpy's pony, and use it for a race on Derby Day."

"Oh, it's no good talking to him!" exclaimed Dick Neville. "The best thing you can do is to give him a ducking in the ditch here—"

"Faith, and I—"

"I guess you're right; shove him in, and—"

Micky Flynn clung to the stile.

"Sure, and I— Pax, ye bastes—pax!" Poindexter laughed, and let go his collar.

"Well, the secret's out now, anyway!" he exclaimed. "It doesn't matter much, only I didn't want a crowd here to watch us practising."

"Sure, and I didn't—"

"Let's get to business, anyway."

The Combine climbed over the stile. The field on the other side led with a gentle slope towards the river, and was a part of the extensive grounds of Cliveden College. Stump, the new porter at Cliveden, kept his pony in that field, and that pony was the pride of Stump's heart. It was a sleek little animal, full of spirit, and Stump had taught it to beware of schoolboys. Many a junior at Cliveden would have been glad of a chance of riding Stump's pony, but Stump would probably have committed assault and battery on the spot if he had discovered them doing so. And the pony was not easy to capture, either.

Lincoln G. Poindexter was a splendid rider. He had ridden mustangs on the Western plains, and he "guessed" that he could tackle Stump's pony. And the idea had come into Poindexter's head of celebrating Derby Day by a race at Cliveden. Stump's pony was to figure in the race, without Stump's permission, and another mount would have to be procured for the rival rider. The idea was hailed with enthusiasm by Neville and Flynn, and this attempt to lasso the pony and practise with him was the outcome.

Poindexter gave the coiled rope a swing in the air as he strode across the field to where the pony was grazing. Peter—that was the pony's name—looked up out of the corner of his eye, but made no movement otherwise.

"I say, do you know how to handle that thing?" asked Neville, glancing at the lasso.

"I guess so."

"Faith, and—"

"I've seen cowboys lasso wild steers on the prairie," said Poindexter. "I've handled the lasso myself, too, though it was some time ago. I guess I shall be able to account for pony Peter."

"He's looking at us."

"Sure, and the baste can see out of the back of his head, I believe," said Micky Flynn. "I've tried to catch him myself, and sure I couldn't do it!"

"What you couldn't do, Micky, would fill a prize set of volumes."

"Faith, and I'd like to see ye lasso Peter, that's all!"

"I guess you'll see it soon."

They were near enough to the pony now for a cast of the lariat. Peter had not moved, but his eyes were blinking.

"I guess Peter will suit me down to the ground," said Poindexter, looking critically over the pony. "We'll get another beast from Clivebank, Dick, for you, and perhaps one for Micky; only Micky can't ride."

"Can't I?" exclaimed Micky indignantly. "Arrah, and did ye ever hear of an Irishman that couldn't ride at all, at all? I can ride like winkin'!"

"Very well, we'll make it a threesome," said Poindexter. "It will be exciting, and it will lay over anything the Old Firm have done in the way of celebrations, I guess. Now then, I'm going to rope in this critter."

"Faith, I'd better let me try!"

"Rats! Stand back, you two!"

Poindexter swung the lasso round his head, and the two juniors promptly stepped back. Micky

was not quite quick enough, and the swinging rope knocked his cap off, and he gave a yell. "Sure, and ye—"

"Stand back—"

"Ye've nearly busted me brain-box!"

"Rats! Get out of the way!"

Neville dragged Micky back. Poindexter circled the rope, and hurled it. Peter threw up his heels and dashed off. Poindexter dragged on the rope, and Micky Flynn went rolling over on the ground.

Poindexter stared at him.

"What are you doing in my lasso, Micky, Flynn?"

"Howly St. Patrick!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Dick Neville, "you've lassoed Micky! 'Ha, ha, ha!'"

Poindexter turned red.

The cast had evidently been a faulty one, for the pony was on the other side of the field, and Micky Flynn was rolling on the ground in the coils of the lasso.

"Arrah, ye howling lunatic!"

"Get up!"

"Ye shriekin' omadhaun!"

"Get out of my lasso! It was all your fault for getting in the way. Why don't you get clear of the rope, you ass?"

"Faith, and I can't intirely."

"It's tightened round his arms!" chuckled Dick Neville, stooping over the sprawling junior. "You've got him safe, Punt. If only it had been the pony instead of Micky—"

"Oh, give me the lasso!"

"Right-ho! I'll cut it!"

"Ass, if you cut it, I'll jump on you!" shouted Poindexter, rushing to the rescue of his lasso.

"Well, you get it loose, then," said Neville, stepping back; "blessed if I can!"

Poindexter cast the lasso loose, and Micky Flynn staggered to his feet. He gave the American chum an expressive look.

"How many sorts of a silly ass do ye call yerself?" he demanded.

"It was all your fault for getting in the way."

"Sure, and I—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a roar of laughter from the stile. The Cliveden Combine looked quickly round. Pankhurst and Price were seated on the top bar of the stile, and behind them in the lane were Gatty, Greene, Medway, and several other fellows of the Fourth Form, all roaring with laughter.

The chums coloured uncomfortably, as they realised that they had had an audience for the great lassoing feat.

"Hang 'em!" muttered Poindexter. "I didn't know they were there."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Pankhurst. "Try again, Johnny! Try again, do!"

"Come on," said Poindexter, "we're not going to give it up because those silly asses are grinning."

"Sure, we—"

"Oh, come on!"

And the Cliveden Combine crossed the field on the track of the elusive Peter, Poindexter coiling in his lasso as he went.

The 3rd Chapter. On and Off.

POINDEXTER stopped again within an easy cast of the pony. Peter looked at him out of the corner of his eye; but perhaps Poindexter's previous failure had given Peter confidence, for he appeared less alarmed than ever. The noose of the lasso had not fallen within a dozen yards of him the first time. But Poindexter was on his mettle now, and his chums were exceedingly careful to keep beyond his reach.

The pony went on grazing. Poindexter threw up his hands and started him, and he raised his head. Then the lasso flew. Micky Flynn gave a yell, but it was one of triumph, as he saw the noose slip upon the sleek neck of the pony.

"Got him!"

"Hurrah!"

The loop was on Peter's neck. Peter seemed surprised to find it there. He threw up his head, and rose on his hind legs, and then dashed off madly. Poindexter held on to the rope like grim death, but he could not resist such a rush as that of the pony. He went over in a twinkling, and was dragged along heels over head through the grass.

"Help!" he gasped.

The juniors at the stile shrieked with laughter at the sight of the bold lassoer towed through the grass by the galloping pony. Poindexter hung on desperately, and his chums rushed to the rescue. Flynn and Neville seized hold of Poindexter, and then of the rope, and hung on with all their strength.

Peter slackened down. The noose was tight on his neck now, and the weight of three sturdy juniors was no trifle.

"Hang on!" gasped Poindexter. "We've got the brute!"

"Arrah! Hang on!"

Peter came to a stop, with hanging head, and the juniors rose to their feet. They kept a tight hold of the rope, however, as they knew that Peter was of a deceitful nature. He was probably only biding his time.

"Careful does it," said Poindexter, "and look out for his hoofs."

"I say, Punt-dexter—"

"Oh, come on!"

"But, sure, I say, ye've forgotten saddle and bridle!"

"I couldn't get hold of them, kid!"

"Arrah! Are ye goin' to ride him without?"

THE CLIVEN DERBY.

(Continued from the previous page.)

"I guess so."

"Faith, and I'll be glad to see ye ride Peter bareback," said Mickie Flynn. "Ye'd better leave it to me, Puntpusher. I've ridden ponies bareback on the hills in County Kerry, and I can manage him."

"I feel a bit knocked up!" gasped Poindexter. "You can go on first, if you like, if you think you can manage him."

"Faith, and I'm sure of it."

"Well, I guess you can try."

The juniors approached the pony rather gingerly, but Peter seemed to be in a gentle mood. Apparently he realised that he was defeated, and did not mean to keep up a vain struggle.

"He's all right!" said Neville, patting the pony's muzzle. "He's in a good temper."

Poindexter nodded.

"That's so, Dick. You've only got to show a horse that you're master, and he'll cave in and be as gentle as any lamb, I guess."

"Faith, and there's a deceitful gleam in his eye."

"Oh, he's all right! Jump on!"

"Gimme a bunk, then; there's no stirrups, you know."

"Here you are."

Poindexter knotted the lasso at the loop, leaving it loose enough for the pony to be comfortable, but not to slip off over the head. Neville gave Mickie Flynn a helping hand up, and the Irish junior was quickly astride of Peter's back. A sort of tremble ran through Peter. Poindexter knew what that meant, and he gave a yell of warning.

"Look out!"

"Arrah, I-ow-bejabers!"

Peter tore his head loose from Poindexter, and started across the field at full gallop, the rope trailing behind through the grass. Poindexter made a desperate snatch at it, but it whisked through his fingers like a snake, and disappeared. Peter held on straight for the river.

"My hat," gasped Neville, "he's going for the water."

"I guess he won't go in."

"But Mickie will."

"The water's shallow. By Jupiter, look at the brute!"

Peter dashed down directly towards the river. Mickie Flynn had fallen forward on his neck, clutching wildly at his mane to hold on.

"Help! Arrah! Help!" roared the Irish junior.

He had not the slightest chance of controlling or stopping the excited pony. The river gleamed ahead, and Mickie Flynn gave himself up for lost.

"Arrah! Help!"

Peter dashed right down to the edge of the water, and the onlookers thought that he meant to dash right into it.

But Peter knew a better trick than that. Right to the water's edge he dashed, and then suddenly stopped stock still, his forefeet planted firmly in the earth.

Mickie Flynn, of course, was hurled right over his lowered head.

The Irish junior described a somersault in the air, and went with a tremendous splash into the river.

Peter, as if satisfied now, trotted quietly away and began to graze. Poindexter and Neville were tearing down to the bank. Mickie's head rose from the water, his hair dropping over his face.

"Help!"

The water came up to his neck, but his footing was insecure, and he went over again. Poindexter plunged in and caught him by the hair, and dragged him shoreward. Neville gripped his collar, and he was landed.

"Arrah! Don't pull my hair out by the roots!" wailed Mickie.

"Rats! I'm saving your life!" exclaimed Poindexter.

"Ow! Leggo!"

Mickie was plumped in the grass, drenched and dripping. Poindexter shook himself, and scattered a shower of water-drops like a Newfoundland dog.

"Howly smoke! I'm wet—"

"Did you expect to get ducked in a river without getting wet?" asked Poindexter sarcastically.

"Sure, and it was all your fault, Puntpusher, entirely," said Mickie Flynn, sitting up in the grass and rubbing the water out of his eyes. "Why didn't ye hold on to the rope?"

"Why didn't you hold on to the horse?"

"Well, ye see—"

"Ass! Now we've got to catch him again."

"If you had held on to the rope—"

"If you had held on to the horse—"

"Oh, rats!" exclaimed Dick Neville. "Are we going to have another try? Those rotters on the stile seem to be killing themselves with laughing."

"Of course, we're going to have another try. I guess I'm not going to be beaten by any four-legged pony in this country."

"Then come on. Luckily the rope's still on him; we shall only have to get hold of the end of it—"

"Sure, and that won't be so easy," said Mickie Flynn.

"Oh, I guess we can do that!" said Poindexter. "Come on!"

And the Cliveden Combine resumed the chase, while from the stile across the field, where the crowd of Cliveden fellows was increasing, came a yell of merriment.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The 4th Chapter.

Poindexter's Ride.

PETER seemed to be in a sportive mood that afternoon. A dozen times the juniors came just within grasping distance of the trailing rope, and as they clutched at it, the pony whisked off, and the rope whisked off too.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Neville. "This is getting monotonous. Those asses yonder will burst something if they go on yelling like that."

"Oh, hang them!" said Poindexter.

"Faith, and sure I'm gettin' fagged intirely. Poindexter, old dear, I'm afraid the pony doesn't want to be caught."

"He may not want to, but he's going to be caught, I guess," said Poindexter grimly. "I guess I'm not going to be beaten by a fat pony."

"But sure—"

"Oh, come on! If we let the brute beat us, Pank and Price would have it up against us for ever and ever. We can't afford to look such asses, if we're to keep the respect of the Form."

"But sure, if the pony won't be caught—"

"He's got to be caught."

"We've got to catch him," agreed Neville.

"If we get him into working order, the laugh won't be against us—not so much, anyway. Come on!"

And the breathless juniors resumed the chase. They were red with their exertions and the hot June sun, and their faces were thick with perspiration. They separated so as to surround the pony, and approach him from different directions, and closed in on him.

"Now, Peter," said Mickie Flynn persuasively. "Good old Peter—good boss! We're not going to hurt you, Peter darling."

But Mickie's blandishments were all in vain. Peter refused to listen to the voice of the charmer. He dodged the juniors, and dashed away between Neville and Flynn. The trail-

ing rope whisked off through the grass, and Dick and Mickie threw themselves upon it together, and came in contact with a heavy bump.

"Ow!"

"Ow-wow!"

Mickie and Dick sat up in the grass, dazed and breathless, and stared at one another. The pony was across the field. Poindexter was running after him, but he stopped, breathless and exasperated.

From the stile came a fresh roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Pankhurst and Price could not have enjoyed a pantomime more. They were yelling themselves hoarse and husky, and so were the other juniors at the stile.

"Ye gosssoon!" gasped Mickie. "Why did ye run into me?"

Dick Neville panted.

"Why did you run into me, you ass?"

"Sure, you got in the way—"

"It was you got in the way—"

"Ass—"

"Fathead—"

"I guess you're both right there," said Poindexter. "It doesn't matter whether the ass ran into the fathead, or the fathead ran into the ass! You've spoiled the thing again between you. Come on!"

"Faith, it's out of breath I am intirely!"

"Come on!"

"I say, Poindexter, I'm getting fed up with that pony—"

"Come on!" said Poindexter inexorably.

And the breathless Combine started after the pony again. Peter was feeding quietly close to the water now. Poindexter's eyes brightened.

"I guess we've got him now," he murmured. "We shall corral him against the river; he won't have so much room to dodge, anyhow. Follow your uncle!"

The pony raised his head and looked at them as they came cautiously up. Then he dashed away up the bank. But, as Poindexter had noted, he had less room to dodge; the rippling Combe barred his escape on one side. The trailing rope whisked by Poindexter's feet as he ran forward, and he clutched at it and caught it.

"Got the brute!"

Poindexter dragged on the rope. His chums lent him their aid, and the restive pony was quickly brought to a standstill.

Some fellows would have used the end of the rope on Peter's flanks, as a punishment for the trouble he had given them, but there was nothing of that sort about the Cliveden Combine.

At his head while Poindexter mounted.

"Faith, and now ye've got him!" exclaimed Mickie Flynn. "Stand clear, while Punt-dodger is chucked into the river."

Poindexter set his teeth.

"He won't chuck me into the river in a hurry!"

"Sure, he chucked me in, and as I'm the better rider—"

"Rats!"

"If ye say rats to me, Puntscraper—"

"Stand clear!"

"Begorra, and we'd better!" exclaimed Mickie Flynn, jumping back, and Dick Neville promptly followed his example.

But Lincoln G. Poindexter soon showed that he could ride.

There was neither saddle nor bridle on the pony, but Poindexter had ridden horses bareback in earlier days on the Western prairie, and though he was much out of practice in that difficult art, Peter found him a handful to tackle.

The pony tried first the tactics that had proved successful in the case of Mickie Flynn. He dashed away at full speed, and came to a sudden halt, with his head low and his haunches high. But Poindexter dug his knees into the pony's flanks, and clung on like grim death.

Half a dozen times the pony tried those tactics, and each time he failed. Neville and Flynn cheered enthusiastically. They had never suspected their chum of such excellent horsemanship. And from the juniors crowded at the stile a cheer rang, too. Pankhurst and Price were never slow to give a tribute to real grit, even in a rival.

"Bravo, Poindexter!"

"Good old Tinned Beef!"

Poindexter was not listening, however. He wanted all his attention for the pony. Peter gave up trying to unseat him, and began to dash round the field at a headlong pace.

Poindexter had no means of holding him in, but he clung tightly to his seat on the pony's back, and gave him his head.

That was not enough for Peter. He dashed twice right round the field, and then made a sudden break for the stile.

The stile was a low one, nothing to Peter in the way of a jump, and it looked as if he meant to clear it with the American chum on his back.

There was a yell of alarm from the juniors crowded on the stile.

"Get out of the way!" roared Neville.

But the Old Firm did not need the warning. They scrambled off the stile at record speed, and the other juniors crowded away in alarm. They were none too soon, either. Peter went straight at the stile, and took it without a pause. His hoofs clattered in the hard road, and right on he dashed towards the school gates.

"My hat!" gasped Neville, in utter dismay. "He's going home!"

"Faith, and all the fat will be in the fire now," murmured Mickie Flynn. "What an obstinate brute! Come on!"

They clambered over the stile.

"I say, there will be a row!" exclaimed Pankhurst.

"Yes, come on," said Neville. "All of ye lend a hand, and we may catch him. Close before he does any damage. Come on!"

"Right you are!"

The Fourth Formers dashed at top speed after Peter. But the pony, with Poindexter on his back, had already disappeared within the great gates of Cliveden.

The 5th Chapter.

A Busted Idea.

POINDEXTER "sat tight," as the pony cleared the stile, and dashed up the lane to the school. He guessed that Peter was making for his stable, and as he could not stop him, he sat tight, and gave him his head.

It was all he could do. The pony dashed at the gates, and careered across the old Close. There was a yell of alarm as the excited animal went prancing down a gravel path.

"Look out!" gasped Poindexter.

"Ciel! Vat is zat?"

Monsieur Fricquet, the French master of Cliveden, was walking down the path. He gave a terrified jump as he saw the runaway bounding right down upon him.

"Ciel, I am lost!"

"Get out of the way!" yelled Poindexter.

The French master seemed to waver suddenly from a trance, and he skipped aside just as the pony thundered past.

"Mon bleu! Ciel!" gasped Monsieur. "It was ye greatest of narrow escapes. It is a wonderful marvel zat I am not keel."

The pony dashed on.

Mr. Lanyon, the master of the Fourth, was coming out of the schoolhouse, and he stopped and adjusted his spectacles, and stared at the careering junior in indignant amazement.

"Poindexter."

Poindexter made no reply. Peter seemed to have made up his mind to ascend the steps and explore the interior of the house, and Poindexter was dragging furiously on his case to stop him or turn him aside.

"Poindexter! Get off that pony immediately!"

Mr. Lanyon rapped out the words sternly.

"Do you hear me, Poindexter? I insist upon your immediately dismounting and leading that pony quietly back to his stable."

Poindexter would have given a term's pocket money to be able to do so; but Peter had to be considered!

"Poindexter, take a hundred lire. Take—"

Mr. Lanyon took a flying jump himself, then, to get out of the pony's way, and he clattered his forefeet on the stone steps.

"Dear me, Poindexter!"

Mr. Lanyon landed in a flower-bed outside. His hat went one way, and his spectacles another. Trevelyan, the captain of Cliveden, came running from the direction of the main ground in his flannels. But Peter did not give him a chance to get near. He cut off in a different direction, and went careering near the Close with the unfortunate Poindexter clinging to his back, like a limpet to a rock.

Either Peter was completely excited, and he lost his head, or else he had decided to make a day of it. A crowd gathered from all sides, but their gestures and exclamations only served to excite the pony more. Neville and Pankhurst and Price, and a crowd of other Formers burst in at the gate, as Peter was making for it again, and he whisked round and dashed off at right angles.

"The baste! Sure we—"

"Come on!"

"Hallo," exclaimed Pankhurst, "the Stumpy!"

"Hallo, Rags!"

Stump, the porter, had come out of his hole and was looking on at the scene in great amazement. Stump was usually known as the Cliveden boys as "Rags," for as he had reason that that a former porter at Cliveden had borne that nickname. Rags was engaged in a towering fury.

"You young varmint!" he shouted, forgetting the respect due to a porter. "Bring me that pony here at once!"

But Poindexter had to follow the whimsical fancies of his ramble yet.

Stump ran towards him, but Peter dashed and went tramping over a flower-bed and the window of the Head's study.

"My hat," gasped Pankhurst, "what a row over this!"

"Bless my soul!"

Dr. Rayne looked out of his window, and wild Indian on the back of a Mustang hardly have surprised him more than the sight of Poindexter careering on the frantic pony under his window.

"Bless my soul, Poindexter, what are you doing?"

"Sitting tight, sir!" gasped Poindexter.

"Dear me! Really?"

Stumpy made a rush for the pony.

Trevelyan ran forward at the same time, and the Sixth lent his assistance, and Cuffy of the Fifth blocked up the path.

escape. Peter dodged round, but they were many for him. The trailing rope was held fast, and then Stump got a grip on the pony's mane.

Poindexter sat gasping.

"You young villain!" howled Stumpy. "You've disengaged fat at Poindexter. It's all his to ride my pony, and throw me out of the saddle!"

"Stumpy!"

"THE BOYS' FRIEND"

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The porter gave a gasp. He had not observed the Head at the window. His manner changed, and he touched his cap.

"Yes, sir!"

"You must not speak to Poindexter like that. Poindexter, what do you mean by riding this pony, especially in the Close?"

"I guess I didn't want to ride him in the Close, sir," said Poindexter, between jerky gasps for breath. "He bolted, sir!"

"What were you doing on his back at all?"

"I was going to practise, sir."

"You know you are not allowed to ride Stamp's pony."

"Well, sir, we thought it would be a good idea to celebrate Derby Day by a race in the field, and I was going to practise with Stamp's pony, and ride him on Derby Day."

Stamp seemed almost petrified.

"You were going to ride my pony!" he gasped. "You young—"

"Stamp!"

"Begin your pardon, sir, but the young—"

"That will do. Poindexter, I exonerate you from any intention of creating this disturbance in the Close, but it all comes of your having ridden Stamp's pony without permission. You will write out to your Form-master by the end of the week."

Poindexter's face fell.

"Yes, sir."

"And, now, dismount, and allow that troublesome animal to be taken away."

"If there were a bridge put on him, sir, I'll jolly soon bring him to reason!" said Poindexter.

"Nonsense! Dismount at once!"

"Yes, sir."

Poindexter slipped from the pony's back. Stamp, somewhat consoled by the heavy imposition inflicted upon Poindexter, led his sweating pony away. Peter, who seemed satisfied with his afternoon's fun, went as quietly as a lamb.

The 6th Chapter. The Challenge.

"JOLLY good exhibition!" said Pankhurst, as the crowd dispersed. "By the way, it is that what you call riding, Punt-dodger?"

Poindexter grunted.

"A better show than you could put up, anyway," he said.

"My dear chap, I shouldn't try to put up a show like that. If I mounted Peter I should ride him. Ha, ha! If that's the way you're going to celebrate Derby Day, you can put me down for a front seat. I've never laughed so much since the day you chaps went in for gardening."

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

"Oh, choose it!" said Poindexter. "The whole is busted up now, but you never thought of one at all. And Peter would have chucked you into the river as he chucked Flynn."

"Sure, and he didn't exactly chuck me into the river," said Micky Flynn, in a tone of exasperation. "It's a jolly good rider I am, indeed, Punt-dodger."

"Then what did you go over his head for?" grunted Pankhurst.

"Sure, I was forgetting for a moment, and the late took me by surprise."

"Ha, ha! So he would again if you got on his back," chuckled Price.

"Fidd and I—"

"By Jove!" said Pankhurst. "I'd guarantee to put up a better show of horsemanship on a rocking-horse."

"Quite so! Ha, ha!"

"Or with old Pricey for a horse," said Pankhurst.

"Eh! What's that?" said Price.

"I say, I'd put up a better show riding on Stamp's back," said Pankhurst. "I shouldn't be so away with, anyway."

Poindexter's eyes sparkled.

"If you mean that, Pank—"

Pankhurst looked at him. He had spoken in jest, but the American chum was looking as if he took the remark seriously.

"What do you mean, Puntplunger?"

"I mean, that if you're as good as your word, we'll give you a race on Derby Day!"

Poindexter promptly. "You can ride Price, or Price can ride you, and I'll give Stamp a mount—and we'll see which wins."

Pankhurst gave a whistle.

"Now, if you're going to back out—"

"Rats!" said Pankhurst. "You won't catch so Old Firm faking anything the Combine can do."

"Then it is a go?"

"Certainly, if you like."

"Jolly good idea!" exclaimed Gatty. "You are put on turf colours, and make a regular party of it. I'll start you, if you like."

"It's a go!" exclaimed Poindexter. "And Stamp will make you copper merchants sing."

"Rats!" said Pankhurst. "Canned rats! You won't have a look-in!"

"Quite so!"

"I guess you won't have much of a show," said Poindexter. "But we'll see. Time—half hour after school on Derby Day. Place—"

"Agreed!"

"Distance—a hundred yards. Jockeys—"

"Pank and Neville. Starter—Gatty."

"Faith, and where do I come in?"

"You wouldn't come in at all if you were in a race!" said Pankhurst.

"Arrah, now, Pank—"

"You can come in in the grand stand," said Poindexter.

"Faith, and I'd make a better jockey—"

"You weigh too much, and you're too much of an ass, anyway—"

"Faith, and I—"

"It's settled!" exclaimed Pankhurst. "And on Derby Day, you kids, you can look out for a record licking!"

"We'll take all the lickings you can give us, without noticing them," grunted Poindexter.

"Faith, and it's right you are!"

And the rivals of Cliveden separated, full of the new wheeze, which was soon being discussed all over the lower school.

The 7th Chapter. Derby Day.

DERBY DAY! A famous day in racing annals—and a day of unusual interest this 3rd day of June to the juniors of Cliveden College.

The hasty challenge of Lincoln G. Poindexter had been as hastily accepted; and the idea of the race had caught on in the lower school. And not in the lower school only; for many of the great Pooh-Bahs of the Upper Fifth and Sixth were curious to see the race, and had announced their intention of taking seats in the grand stand—the grand stand being a new name for the cricket pavilion.

It was pretty certain that the whole of the Lower Forms would be there, so the rivals were sure of a numerous audience, and a noisy one.



POINDEXTER
LASOES
STUMP'S
PONY!

Poindexter held on to the rope like grim death, but he could not resist such a rush as that of the pony. He went over in a twinkling, and was dragged along heels over head through the grass. "Help!" he gasped, and the juniors at the stile shrieked with laughter.

After school the fellows began to stream down towards the spot assigned for the novel race between the rivals of the Fourth Form. There was a crowd on the ground a quarter of an hour before the time fixed for the start, eagerly awaiting the appearance of the horses and the jockeys.

Interest in the race was very keen, and sympathy was divided. Both the Old Firm and the Combine had a strong following in the Form, and their backers were all there ready to cheer whatever they did.

Greene, the amateur photographer of the Fourth Form, was there with his camera, of course. Nothing ever happened at Cliveden without Greene was trying to take a snapshot of it, and he was determined to have a snap of the Cliveden Derby.

The turf lay level and green, and the June sun was bright. Most faces were turned towards the school-house to see the jockeys emerge with their steeds.

There they came!

It was a sudden shout, and a general grin went round.

"Bravo, Punt-dodger!"

"Good old Tinned Beef!"

"Bravo, Neville!"

Dick Neville, the Combine's jockey, had stepped into view in the sunshine, clad in true jockey fashion, the costume having been obtained from the costumier at Clivebank, who had many a time supplied the needs of the amateur theatrical society of the Fourth Form.

Neville sported a pink silk, and wore a jockey-cap on the back of his head, and in order to make the thing more realistic he had a straw in his mouth.

He led his "steed" by the bridle. Poindexter was the steed, and he was in football

shorts, and the bridle consisted of a highly-decorative pair of braces.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Tinned Beef!"

Loud cheers greeted the Combine as they came down to the racing-ground, Micky Flynn following with a huge bell in his hand. The bell was to be rung to clear the course, in the true racing style, and Micky seemed to be rather fond of its music, for he clanged it again and again as he came along.

Trevelyan put his fingers in his ears.

"Flynn, stop that fearful row!" he exclaimed.

"What row?" asked Micky innocently.

"With that bell."

"Sure, and it's not musical you are. I like the tone of that bell."

"Well, I don't, so shut up!"

"But sure, I've got to clear the course—"

"Wait till you're on the course, then, you young ass!"

"Arrah, then, Trevelyan—"

"Oh, keep quiet!" said Poindexter. "I guess you've made row enough."

"Faith, and you're a boss in this act. Punt-dodger, and you can't speak," said Micky Flynn; "so you shut up!"

"It's a case of Balaam's ass over again," said Medway.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Dick Neville led his steed on the course, and Micky reluctantly kept the bell quiet. All were looking with interest for the appearance of Pankhurst and Price.

"There they are!"

"Buck up, Pank!"

Price emerged from the house in green silk, leading Pankhurst by the bridle. Pankhurst

"Now, keep quiet, you ass!" growled Crane, sitting on Micky's chest.

"Lemme gerrup!"

"Gentlemen, the race is about to commence."

The jockeys led their horses upon the field, and stopped at the starting-post. Gatty was standing there with a toy pistol, which fired real powder and shot.

"Are you ready?"

"I guess so."

"Quite so."

Gatty raised the pistol, and all was breathless attention.

The 8th Chapter. The Winning Horse.

POP! "They're off!"

They were certainly off.

Poindexter and Pankhurst had dropped on their hands and knees, and Price and Neville had mounted on their backs. As the pistol popped they were off—in a double sense. For as the amateur horses started, the jockeys rolled off their backs, and plumped into the grass.

There was a roar of laughter from the spectators.

"False start," said Trevelyan, wiping his eyes; "try again."

The jockeys rose to their feet rather ruefully.

Poindexter and Pankhurst were led back to the starting-post, and their riders mounted them again. Gatty was looking at his pistol in rather a puzzled way.

"Sure they're all ready!" exclaimed Micky Flynn. "Why don't you start them, Gatty?"

"I haven't any more powder."

"Well, of all the asses! Fancy a starter with only one charge of powder!"

"How was I to know they were going to play the giddy goat?" demanded Gatty indignantly.

"They must be started."

"Give 'em a whoop!"

"Oh, all right," said Gatty, adopting the suggestion. "You chaps start when I let out a yell. You hear?"

"Yes; buck up!"

Gatty filled his lungs with air, and opened his mouth. He gave a yell that a Red Indian on the warpath would not have been ashamed of. Some of the juniors jumped; but the "horses" were ready, and they started.

This time the start was a success.

The course lay across the field for fifty yards, then round a pole, and back again.

Poindexter and Pankhurst plunged through the grass in really fine style.

"Pink leads! Good old Tinned Beef!"

"Buck up, green silk!"

"Here, get along, Pank," gasped Price, "you're falling behind!"

Pankhurst bucked up, as a crowd of spectators were advising him to do, and he went bounding and bumping along at a rate that left Poindexter in the rear.

The half-way post was reached first by the Old Firm, and they went whisking round it amid a roar of cheers.

"Bravo, Pank!"

"Green silk wins!"

"Rats!" muttered Neville. "Now, then, Punt-dodger, for the honour of the Combine!"

"What-ho!" muttered Poindexter.

He made an effort, and went round the post. Pankhurst and Price were already a dozen yards on the home stretch. Poindexter kept it up, and gradually crept closer. Half-way home he was only a foot behind.

"Go it, Pank!"

"He's catching you!"

"Go it, Tinned Beef!"

"On the ball!"

The "horses" were red and perspiring with exertion now. The perspiration ran in streams down their faces, and they gasped for breath. But they stuck it out gallantly, and bumped on in splendid style.

"Pink wins!"

"Rats! Go it, green!"

"They're level!"

"Tinned Beef's ahead!"

Poindexter had drawn level. Pankhurst made a desperate effort to get ahead again, but in vain. He was hardly equal to keeping up his present pace. The viry youth from Chicago drew ahead. He had the lead now, and he kept it.

Ahead, and further ahead. A dozen yards from home Poindexter was a length in advance of his rival.

"Hurrah! Tinned Beef wins!"

Pankhurst put on a fierce spurt, and drew level. The result hung in the balance. Neck and neck for six yards more.

Then Poindexter forged ahead again, and Pankhurst remained a head behind, and there was a roar.

"Tinned Beef wins!"

"Bravo, Poindexter!"

Poindexter and Neville had won!

Pankhurst came in just a head behind, and the next moment he rolled on to the turf in utter exhaustion, and his jockey bumped in the grass.

A dozen fellows rushed to raise him up. He had lost, but he had made a gallant fight.

Neville, gasping for breath, slapped Poindexter on the back.

"A near thing, old chap!"

"I guess it was close!" gasped Poindexter.

"But we've won! Hurrah for the Combine!"

There was no doubt upon that point. The Combine had won the Cliveden Derby.

THE END.

("Flynn, the Golfer," next week.)