

COMET

No. 108
(New Series)
Aug. 12, 1950

EVERY
THURSDAY
**4 HAPPY FAMILY
COMIC 2nd**

OUR CAR-SPOTTER'S PICTURE GUIDE



1950 Two-litre Triumph Saloon



Still holiday-ing by the sea,
Old Scamp was happy as can be!



But still he didn't see much sense
In weight machine, that needed pence.



Though for your penny, what you got
Was weight and fortune—all the lot!



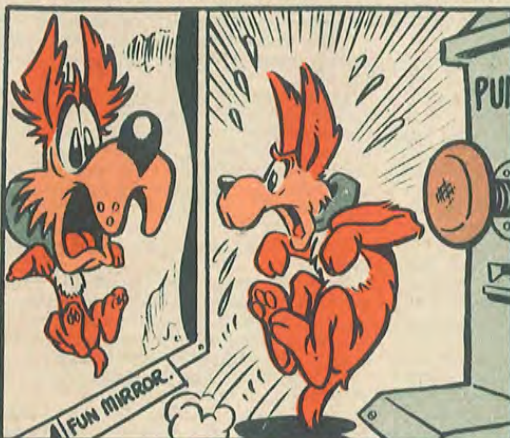
His black face-paint smelled rather good—
And Scamp is very fond of food!



He licked it off in half a trice—
It really did taste very nice!



But minstrel thought this was not fun,
And so they had to up and run!



And there, perchance, it came to pass,
Scamp saw his face in wobbly glass.



It gave the puppy such a scare,
He shot off backwards through the air.



He smacked the punch machine a clout,
And lots of cash came pouring out!



So that day ended like a dream,
With Scampy filled with nice ice-cream!

**TOMMY
HAWKE
and
MOE
CASSIN**





BILLY'S FIND

BILLY BUNTER suppressed a chuckle. Bunter was amused.

Loder, never a good-tempered fellow, looked at the moment in the worst temper ever. Even at the best of times, Loder, who was a prefect in the Sixth Form, was liable to use his ashplant, not wisely, but too well. Now he looked as if he would cane a fellow as soon as look at him.

So Billy Bunter kept his fat face quite serious, and indeed, pretended not to observe Loder at all, while watching him out of the corner of his eye, behind his big spectacles.

The winds were blowing in the old Quad at Greyfriars. That was how it happened! Loder of the Sixth, walking under the old elms by the school wall, was reading a letter. A gust of wind lifted it from his hand and blew it away among the trees.

William George Bunter of the Remove was leaning on one of the trees. Loder's letter—it was only a single sheet—whirling on the playful wind, dropped close by Bunter. Bunter put his foot on it.

Loder, looking in the wrong direction, did not see where the letter landed. With an angry and excited face he went on looking for it, quite unlikely to see it unless Bunter removed his foot.

Which Bunter did not do. Bunter did not like Loder of the Sixth. Not a junior at Greyfriars liked Loder, for that matter. And Bunter, only the day before, had had "six" from Loder's ash. Bunter remembered that six as he watched Gerald Loder hunting for the lost letter.

Loder went on hunting. Bent over, peering round trunks, he hunted and hunted. He passed quite near Bunter twice, giving him a scowl in passing each time. Those scowls only meant that Loder was in a very bad temper, he had not the faintest suspicion that the fat junior knew anything about the lost letter. He looked, indeed, so extremely bad-tempered, that Bunter would willingly have retired from the spot out of the danger zone. But he couldn't, without revealing the letter hidden under his foot. So he chanced it and stayed where he was, leaning on the trunk of the old elm.

A third time Loder drifted into the offing in his vain search. This time he addressed the fat Owl.

"Have you seen a letter blowing about, Bunter?"

"Eh! What sort of a letter?" asked Bunter.

"Oh! Just a letter—a single sheet. It blew out of my hand. Have you seen it?"

"Perhaps it blew up into a tree!" suggested Bunter.

ON A GOOD THING!

Another Smashing Story of Billy Bunter and the Chums of Greyfriars

By FRANK RICHARDS

gested Bunter.

"Don't be a young ass! If you haven't seen it why can't you say so?" snapped Loder.

Smack!

"Wow!" roared Bunter.

They did not smack heads at Greyfriars. Even Loder didn't! But this time he did! Having smacked Bunter's fat head he tramped on in search of the letter, leaving the fat junior rubbing his head and glaring after him with a glare that might almost have cracked his spectacles.

"Beast!" hissed Bunter.

If Billy Bunter had had any idea of letting Loder find his letter he would have dismissed it now. That smack on his head settled the matter. It was close on time for class and Loder couldn't go on hunting much longer. Loder was never going to see that letter again if Bunter could help it.

There was a distant clang of a bell.

Fellows began heading for the form rooms. But Billy Bunter did not stir. At the risk of being late with Mr. Quelch, he was going to keep his foot on that letter till Loder was gone. The Head was taking the Sixth that afternoon and Loder could scarcely venture to be late for Dr. Locke.

But to Bunter's surprise Loder did not heed the bell for class. He turned a deaf ear to the bell and went on desperately hunting.

It dawned on Bunter's fat mind that that letter must be an awfully important one. As he realised that, Bunter would have been disposed to let Loder find it, had not his fat head been ringing from an angry smack! But in view of that angry smack, Bunter hardened his heart and his foot remained planted on the letter.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" came a roar from the Quad in Bob Cherry's powerful tone. "You'll be late, Bunter."

"Coming!" squeaked Bunter.

Loder, clearly, was going to chance it with the Head, to carry on the hunt for that letter. Bunter could not venture to chance it with Quelch to the same extent. With great cunning Bunter dropped his handkerchief—on his foot! He stooped to pick it up, moved his foot, and picked up the letter inside the handkerchief. Then the fat Owl rolled off to the House, grinning—he could venture to grin now that his back was to Loder and at a safe distance. As he went in with the Remove fellows he released his long-suppressed fat chuckle.

"He, he, he!"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Enjoying life, old fat man?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Eh? Oh! Yes! He, he, he!" chortled Bunter. "I say, you fellows, Loder's lost a letter. I don't think he'll find it! He, he, he!"

"Why shouldn't he find it?" asked Harry Wharton.

"He, he, he! That's telling!" chuckled Bunter. "I say, Loder will be late in the Sixth! The Head will comb his hair for him! He, he, he!"

And Billy Bunter rolled into the Remove form room with so cheery a grin on his fat face that it might have been supposed that he was anticipating a happy time with Mr. Quelch and Roman history.

"Oh, crikey!" gasped Billy Bunter. It was after class.

Billy Bunter had gone up to No. 7 Study.

Loder's letter, enfolded in his handkerchief, was still in his pocket. Sad to relate, Billy Bunter intended to look at that letter before casting it forth from the study window to float away on the breezes. Bunter was curious, and when he was curious, he wanted to know. Loder's anxiety about that letter, to the extent of risking cutting class with the Head, made Bunter very curious indeed. So, having shut the study door he disinterred the letter and blinked at it through his big spectacles. Then he ejaculated, "Oh, crikey!" and jumped almost clear of the floor of the study.

"Oh, crumbs! Oh, scissors! Oh, gum!" gasped Bunter.

It was no wonder that Gerald Loder had been anxious about that letter. That letter was enough to get Loder "sacked" from the school, prefect and Sixth Form man as he was! Bunter had wondered what could be so jolly important about it. He knew, as he blinked at it. It ran:

"Dear Mr. Loder,

"I ain't the man to be hard on a young gentleman, as you know, and I've gone easy. But fair's fair. You lost three quid on Bonny Boy in the three o'clock on Saturday, and I ain't seen you since. I hope to see you pretty soon at the old place.

"Joe Banks."

"Oh, jiminy!" gasped Bunter.

The fat Owl stood blinking at it. Now that he knew how awfully serious it was he did not intend to throw it on the winds from the study window. If Bunter threw that letter away anyone might pick it up—and if it came under the eyes of authority, Loder's number was up.

Certainly he was not going to give Loder away to the "beaks." There was a thoughtful crinkle in his brow and a sly glimmer in his little round eyes behind big round spectacles when he rolled out of the study.

"I SAY, you fellows—"

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! Coming to tea with us, Bunter?"

"Oh! Yes! Rather!" answered Billy Bunter promptly.

"Come on, then—we're teeing in Hall!"

"Beast!" howled Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly chump!" hooted Bunter. "I say, you fellows, I've been disappointed about a postal order I was expecting—"

"Help!"

"Toddy and Dutton have gone out and there's nothing in the study—"

"And so the poor dog had none!" sighed Bob Cherry.

"Oh, really, Cherry! I'm not keen on doorsteps and dishwater in Hall," said Bunter. "If you fellows had anything in the study, I'd come. But I don't see why I should tea in Hall when Loder has lots."

"Loder!" ejaculated the Famous Five all together, staring at the fat Owl.

"Well, he may be hard up for cash, but he's got credit at the school shop," argued Bunter. "Loder always does himself well in his study. Bet you he'll have a jolly good tea, even if he can't pay his debts."

"How do you know he can't pay his debts, you fat ass?" asked Frank Nugent.

"He, he, he! That's telling, old chap! But I say, I don't see why I shouldn't tea with Loder, in the circumstances, you know."

"What circumstances?" asked Johnny

Bull.

"Well, I mean to say, one good turn deserves another," said Bunter. "My postal order hasn't come and I'm short of cash. Loder ought to be willing to stand a fellow tea when he knows, you know—"

"When he knows what?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Oh! Nothing!" said Bunter vaguely. "I'm jolly well going to chance it. After all, what can he do if I go to his study to tea?"

"Chuck you out on your neck," said Johnny Bull.

"And give you six for your cheek!" said Nugent.

"He, he, he! I'd like to see Loder give me six!" said Bunter grinning. "Loder won't be in a hurry to give me six again, I fancy! He, he, he! I fancy Loder will be glad to stand me tea."

"What the thump do you know?" asked Bob.

"Oh! Nothing! Still, one good turn deserves another and I shall jolly well tell Loder so! You fellows can do into Hall," said Bunter disdainfully. "I hope you'll enjoy the doorsteps! I'm going to tea with Loder, and chance it!"

"Gammon!"

Bunter rolled away, his fat mind made up. Harry Wharton and Co. gazed after him as he headed for the Sixth Form studies.

"Is he really going to Loder's study?" asked Bob. "Is he off his onion?"

"Is he ever on it?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Blessed if I make him out," said Harry Wharton. "Loder will skin him for his cheek if he does."

It was really quite a puzzle. Billy Bunter had nerve enough to butt into any junior study for a spread and did not need to be asked. But that even Bunter could have the nerve to butt into a Sixth Form man's study, and that man a prefect, and a bully like Loder, seemed improbable. But it looked like it, and it looked as if the fat and fatuous Owl was asking for what Gerald Loder would be absolutely certain to give him.

TAP!

"Come in," grunted Loder.

Loder of the Sixth, in his study, looked in the worst temper ever. He had not had a happy afternoon. There had been a spot of trouble with the Head for being late—very late—in form. After class Loder had resumed the weary hunt for that letter. But he had given it up at last as hopeless. It was tea-time now, but Loder was not thinking of tea. He was thinking of what would happen to him if that lost letter came to light and fell into official hands. The mere thought gave him a cold feeling down his back.

His clouded brow did not clear as his study door opened and a fat face and a pair of big spectacles looked in. He scowled at Bunter.

"What do you want?" he snapped.

"Oh, just looked in, old chap!" said Bunter breezily. And he rolled in and shut the door.

Loder gazed at him. Such a reply from a Lower boy would have caused the best-tempered prefect at Greyfriars to reach for his ashplant. And Loder was the worst-tempered. He gazed at Bunter, too astonished to speak for a moment. Then he rose to his feet and reached for the ash on his table.

"Bend over that chair, Bunter!" he rapped.

Billy Bunter backed round the table, eyeing him warily. He had the upper hand now if Loder had only known it. He realised that he had to make that fact clear before Loder started in with the ash.

"About that letter you lost, Loder—I!" he hastened to add.

"Oh!" Loder lowered the ash. "Have you found it?" His look and tone were eager.

(Continued on page 7)

CHUCKLE CORNER



SPLASH PAGE —AND— THE MISSING PRINCE

When Splash Page, of the Daily World, and his assistant, Jill Brent, see a boy kidnapped in a London street, they give chase in a taxi. But a smoke bomb is thrown and they are ditched! Splash discovers that the bomb was made in Hentzia so he and Jill call on the Hentzian Ambassador.

THE BOY WAS INDEED PRINCE STEFAN, MR. PAGE. THE VILLAINS HAVE ALREADY SENT ME A NOTE. THEY DEMAND AS A RANSOM NOTHING LESS THAN -- THE HENTZIAN CROWN JEWELS!



WE MUST CALL IN THE POLICE!

NO! PLEASE! THIS MUST BE KNOWN ONLY TO OURSELVES, OR THERE WILL BE TROUBLE IN HENTZIA.

THEN I'LL FIND PRINCE STEFAN! AND AFTER I'VE RETURNED HIM SAFELY, THE STORY'S MINE! EXCLUSIVE! A SCOOP! COME ON, JILL!

AS THEY HURRIED FROM THE ROOM.



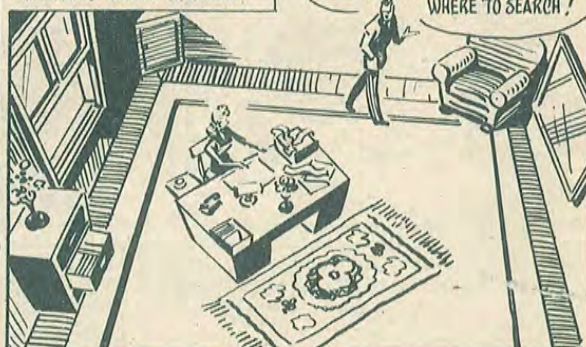
THIS MAN IS DANGEROUS! HE MUST BE STOPPED!



SPLASH PAGE MUST NOT FIND PRINCE STEFAN! FOLLOW HIM, LEO --- AND DO WHAT YOU THINK FIT.

YES, EXCELLENCY!

SPLASH PAGE'S OFFICE--HIGH IN THE 'DAILY WORLD' BUILDING--



IF WE CAN GET REPORTS ON THE CAR'S ROUTE, JILL, WE'LL HAVE AN IDEA WHERE TO SEARCH!

MEANWHILE--
OUTSIDE--



I'VE SENT URGENT CALLS TO ALL 'DAILY WORLD' CORRESPONDENTS NORTH OF LONDON, SPLASH, TO LOOK OUT FOR SALOON CAR YWXL 22!



THEY'LL NOT HURT THE BOY UNTIL THEY GET THE RANSOM-- BUT WE'LL HAVE TO BE CAREFUL, JILL!



THEN--

GOSH! LOOK OUT, JILL!

THE SILENCED
GUN SPAT--



SPLASH!!

SORRY, JILL!



THEY SAY BREAKING MIRRORS BRINGS BAD LUCK. IT'S GOING TO BE BAD LUCK FOR THAT GUNMAN!



CAREFUL, SPLASH! HE'S A KILLER!



GOT YOU!

NO, NO-- HELP! I'LL FALL!

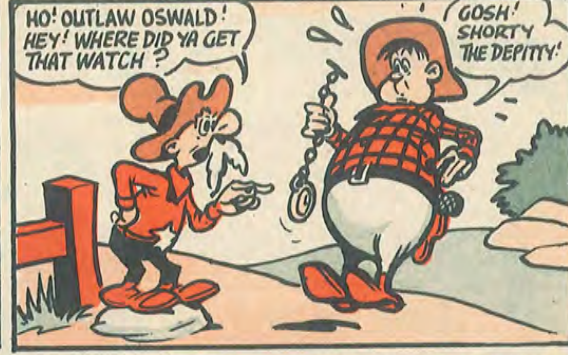
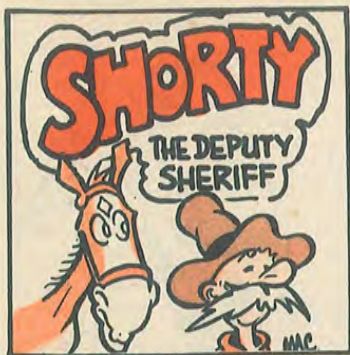


THAT'S GOT THE GUN, ANYWAY! NOW WE'LL FIND OUT ABOUT YOU, MY FRIEND, AND WHO SENT YOU!



BUT NEXT MOMENT--

GOSH! HIS JACKET'S TORN AWAY!



Buck Jones and the KID FROM DALLAS



...
GROUCHER GARRETT WAS A MEAN-TEMPERED PROSPECTOR WHO LIVED ALONE IN THE HILLS
...



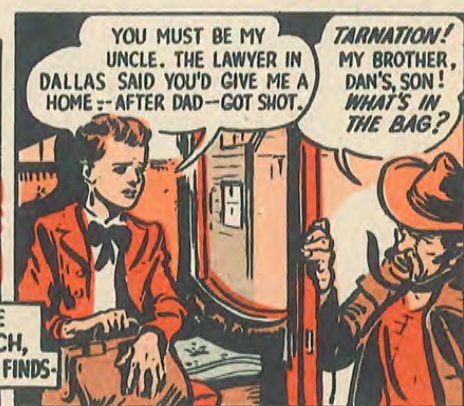
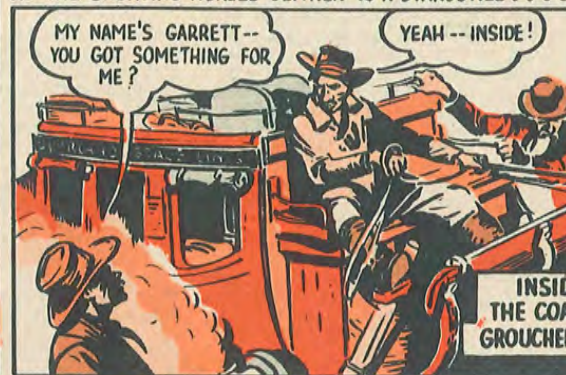
SO BUCK READS THE LETTER FOR HIM...



THAT AFTERNOON...



AS THE SNORTING HORSES SLITHER TO A STANDSTILL....



AND GROUCHER MEANS IT!



AND WHEN GROUCHER FINDS NOTHING OF VALUE IN THE KID'S BAG HIS TEMPER GETS EVEN WORSE.



THAT NIGHT...



AN HOUR LATER, THE FRANTIC GROUCHER BURSTS INTO THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE....



SO BUCK HITS THE TRAIL



Just to Remind You

JACK DEAN, who is penniless after being shipwrecked, journeys to seek help from his uncle, Squire Dean of Fox Cleave. The squire is a lonely, embittered old man. His only son is a ne'er-do-well who has long since been sent packing. On his way Jack helps a girl, Ruth Benoke, who has seen a highwayman who is terrorising the district. He appears all in black but with the head of a white fox and the people think he is supernatural! The Bow Street Runners come to hunt him down. They suspect Tom Benoke, Ruth's father, of being the White Fox! And one night Jack and Ruth see Tom Benoke arrive home under suspicious circumstances.

LONE HUNTERS

IN the shadow of the old wayside forge in the lonely Exmoor village of Cleave, Jack Dean stood motionless, his eyes upon the burly, bearded figure of the man who had just dismounted.

"It's your father, Ruth," he whispered to the girl beside him. "I thought you told me he was crippled and in bed. He doesn't seem to be . . ."

He broke off with a catch of the breath, for Ruth was no longer there. Without a sound, her face white with alarm and dismay, she had fled back into the cottage.

Jack stole away, too, sick at heart, running back through the darkness, swiftly, to the manor. So that hard-faced, keen-eyed Bow Street Runner who had called upon his uncle earlier that same night had been right in his suspicions. This highwayman people called "The Fox" was none other than Tom Benoke, Ruth's own father, and he had hoodwinked her like the rest.

Jack slept hardly at all that night and ate little of the breakfast the old housekeeper set before him. As soon as he could he stole away to some place where he could be alone. And presently, when he paused in the shelter of the huge boulder local people called "The Fox Rock," the sight of it added a sting of mockery to the secret pact he had made with his chum to hunt down this ghostly marauder.

A movement came from behind him and Jack swung round with a catch of his breath. It was Ruth, and her pretty face was deathly pale. But her eyes, as she gripped his arm eagerly, were bright, defiant almost.

"Jack! I had to see you. You think that Father is 'The Fox.' It isn't true, Jack. It can't be true."

"But how do you know it isn't true? Did you question him last night?"

"No," she whispered. "I dared not. But there is some explanation, I am sure of it, and I am just as sure Father could never be capable of this wicked thing. I know it, Jack, and I mean to prove it. That is why I watched and followed you here."

Jack met her eyes, admiring her loyalty and courage.

"How can you prove it?" he asked.

"By going through with the plan you suggested last night, Jack. You know what you told me about the Duchess of Bideford and how she will be passing along the Barnstaple road tonight in her carriage. There was to be a trap set by the Runners, you said, to catch 'The Fox' and the Duchess was to be the bait in the trap. You said that if we went, too, you and I secretly, we might forestall the Runners and waylay the highwayman ourselves."

"That's right."

"Then let us go," she begged of him. "Let us try, Jack. Then, if we can catch 'The Fox' we shall have proof of what I say—that this man is *not* my father. Will you, Jack? For my sake?"

Jack did not hesitate. If Ruth had faith and courage how could he deny her? He pressed her hands in his own.

"It is a bargain, Ruth. When shall I see you?"

"Tonight," she said eagerly. "As soon after dark as you can. I shall be ready and waiting."

They parted then because it was not wise for them to be seen together and Jack made his way back to Cleave Manor. He no longer felt worried and depressed. His thoughts were all upon the strange adventure which lay before him and this dread secret which had yet to be solved.

Early that afternoon, Old Cripps, the squire's manservant, saddled the bay mare and Jack watched his uncle ride away in the company of that same lynx-eyed sergeant of Runners who had called the night before.

"There be zumat in the wind, boy," old Tim wheezed, "though what it be Squire wouldn't say. Shouldn't wonder if it arent zumat to do with that rascally highwayman, eh, boy. What do 'ee say?"

Jack said nothing. He guessed what was

THE WHITE FOX

by LEWIS JACKSON



Looking round, Jack saw the Duchess of Bideford's coach

happening and where his uncle and the sergeant were bound for? Anyway, his uncle would not be at home now to question his movements. That made things easier.

That evening, as soon as it was dusk, Jack took a book to his bedroom, telling the old housekeeper he proposed to read in bed. Half an hour later, with a loaded pistol in his pocket that he had borrowed from the stable, Jack reached the village and stole towards Tom Benoke's forge.

A figure glided from the shadows. It was Ruth, almost invisible in a long dark cape, the hood thrown over her head. Behind her, quiet as a mouse, stood her shaggy pony, Tony, his sturdy feet wrapped in a soft, dark rag. Jack pressed Ruth's hand.

"Where is your father?"

"In bed and asleep," she whispered.

"Is that a pretence?"

"I don't know. He will not miss me. He thinks I am in bed, too."

Jack nodded excitedly.

"You'll have to be the guide, Ruth. Where do we make for?"

"The Barnstaple road, by a short cut over the moor. Nobody dares go that way after dark because of the bog. I'm not afraid," she whispered. "I know the path too well. Follow me—quietly."

She took the pony's bridle and led him out noiselessly along under the shadow of a loose wall, then along a narrow rutty lane, with Jack following softly. Quite abruptly, the lane ended and Jack saw the great, bleak expanse of Exmoor stretching away like an ocean into the darkness. Only the faintest suggestion of a track indicated the route they were to follow; but it was enough.

Ruth paused an instant to whisper to the pony before she sprang upon his back. Then, at a nod from her, Jack vaulted up behind her.

"Now for 'The Fox'!" Ruth said grimly over her shoulder.

"For 'The Fox'!" Jack echoed grimly.

A few moments later they were speeding off into the darkness.

The Fox's Ruse

RUTH knew the Moor as she knew the shape of a horseshoe. Mile after mile she led the way confidently, skirting the great, treacherous bog which had engulfed so many unwary travellers. It took more than a morass to deter her or Jack from their purpose that night.

Tony, too, bore the double burden with ease and the pony travelled on swiftly, pausing only when his muffled hoofs thudded softly at last on the hard surface of a road. Jack saw an old worn milestone peeping from above the ditch beyond.

"What road is this, Ruth?"

"The road to Barnstaple. In a little while the Duchess's carriage will be passing this way."

"Do we wait here then, and watch?"

"No. There is another path yonder, Jack, that cuts off a mile or more and brings us out to the road again by a place they call Cuckoo Pen. There is a clump of trees there on the side of the road, and that is the most likely place for a highwayman to hide. We'd better make for Cuckoo Pen."

Ruth turned Tony off the road again and they galloped on across the moor. Then,

suddenly, she reined the pony in and pointed ahead. A low moon was rising and against it, black as night itself, Jack saw the clump of trees they were making for. But he saw something else as well—two moving gleams of light, dancing like will-o'-the-wisps away to the right of the clump.

"What's that, Ruth?"

"It looks like lanterns on the road."

"Would it be 'The Fox' do you think?"

His voice was tense.

"I don't think so because there are more than one. Perhaps it is your uncle, Jack, and the Runners and they have taken up their watch in the 'Pen'."

"They must be pretty clumsy if it is," Jack muttered. "You don't catch foxes by waving lanterns for everyone to see."

The ghost of a smile flitted over Ruth's pale, determined face.

"They've let us see, anyway," she said, "which is all to the good. I think it might be safer if we tie Tony up to that stump, yonder, and do the rest of our scouting on foot."

It was a wise precaution. Silent as moles, Jack and Ruth stole forward to the coppice. Then, as they paused for a moment in its shadow, a queer sound came from behind them that made their hearts stop beating. It was like the sound of a groan.

"What was that?" Jack whispered.

"I don't know. It seemed to come from—look!" Ruth's voice was low and tense. . . . "That tree!"

Jack moved forward and stopped again with a jerk. A streak of moonlight had fallen across the tree to reveal the figure of a man—a man who was bound to the trunk by a rope, and with his own neckerchief stuffed into his mouth for a gag; who was hatless and coatless as he dropped there, chin sunk on his chest, as if his outer garments had been stripped from him.

There was no need for the gag; Jack saw that at once. The man was stunned and senseless and too far gone for speech. But as Jack looked at him more closely there was something familiar about the prisoner's lean, rather repellent face that made him gasp.

"It's the sergeant of Runners, Ruth," he whispered. "It's that man who was suspicious of your father and whom I saw riding off with Uncle this afternoon. What can—"

"Hist!" Ruth silenced him tensely.

"Watch!"

She had gripped his arm to draw him back quickly into the shadows; and it was as well that she did. For out of a dark bay in the trees, a second man came striding, a big, burly man in the uniform of a Bow Street Runner. In his hand he carried a short hunting stock and there was a pistol in his belt. They watched the man swing away boldly towards the road.

"You're mistaken, Jack," Ruth gasped. "There goes the sergeant of Runners. He must have caught this other man and made him prisoner. Who can this bound man be?"

"The sergeant of Runners," Jack replied grimly. "Nobody else, Ruth. I'd know that ugly face anywhere."

"Then who is the sergeant, yonder?"

"No sergeant, if I know anything about

it," Jack muttered, "but somebody wearing the sergeant's clothes. A bird in borrowed plumes, Ruth. Let's follow and see what he's up to!"

They stole off after the man quickly, keeping close into the side of the road as he strode along it. They saw, then, the reason for those dancing lights they had seen from over the moor. A cluster of men stood there in a group, several carrying screened lanterns, all of them armed to the teeth.

"It's your uncle, Jack," Ruth gasped, "and several others. I believe—why, yes!" she cried in awe. "There is the Lord Lieutenant himself, from Taunton. The tall man in the greatcoat."

Jack saw him in the light of a lantern and nodded grimly.

But Jack's eyes were not upon the group of men on the road. His gaze was focused on the man approaching them.

"Hi, there, sergeant. Be that you, man?" Jack heard his uncle shout at the man impatiently.

"Aye-aye, sir. Here I am," came the cheery response.

"Then why do you leave us here, cooling our heels, you clod?" snapped the Lord Lieutenant. "What time will the Duchess be coming through, do you know? And what do we do when she does come? Plague on ye, man! It's your plan. What do we do?"

The "sergeant of Runners" detailed his plan with the confidence of a man used to rounding up felons and criminals. They all kept out of sight, he said, till the Duchess's carriage and outriders went by. Then the plan was to follow on, keeping the carriage in sight until "The Fox" appeared and held it up. Then they would close in for the "kill."

"But first of all, gentlemen," the sergeant said. "I've something of interest to show you and if ye've any doubt as to the identity of this murderous rogue now, you'll have none when you've seen it, and that I'll warrant you. Step along with me to the lock-up, gentlemen. I've got something there to surprise ye."

He strode on with a chuckle and the others followed in a body, moving back along the road to a heavy, stone-built hut standing off the road. It was something not uncommon in lonely districts, a sort of cell where felons and malefactors could be safely shut away until it was convenient to remove them to jail.

A local constable led the way in through the massive hut door his lantern held aloft. He was followed by the Lord Lieutenant, Jack's uncle, and the rest.

"What be here then, sergeant?" Jack and Ruth heard the squire demand, as he peered about the bleak interior. "I see nought out of the ordinary."

"But you would do, gentlemen, if you came with me," retorted the sergeant unexpectedly. "That's why I'm taking the liberty of leaving you behind. 'The Fox' is an animal that likes to run alone, not in a herd. Maybe you'd forgotten that, gentlemen. Good night."

The next instant the massive door of the lock-up had slammed tightly and the men inside were prisoners and helpless. Dumbfounded, Jack stood in the shadows, his eyes upon this man who had foiled his would-be captors with such ease and daring. The face of the man was completely obscured by the wide brim of the hat he was wearing. But his burly, stalwart figure looked strangely familiar, like that of Benoke, the smith.

Jack saw the man turn and give a low whistle and straightway, out from the coppice, a horse appeared, advancing obediently; a black horse with muffled hooves. Then, with a laugh, the man sprang into the saddle and set the horse off at a gallop, up the lonely road.

"It is 'The Fox'!" Jack muttered grimly. "And there is the Duchess coming," gasped Ruth, wheeling about with startled eyes.

It was true. Jack, too, had heard the clip-clop of approaching horsemen and the creaking of wheels on the road behind, and presently saw an outrider come round the bend, followed by a stately four-in-hand, its bright silver coachwork, embellished with a coat-of-arms, gleaming in the moonlight.

It was the Duchess of Bideford, the rich, bejewelled lady for whom the dreaded "Fox" was lying in wait not far away. She was to be his victim after all. But was she? A light had sprung into Jack Dean's eyes. Here was the chance that Ruth had prayed for.

But suppose Ruth's father does turn out to be the White Fox? Don't miss the concluding chapters of this gripping story in next week's "COMET."

Don Deeds

Don Deeds' attempt at rescuing Mai-Mai fails. He is on the bed of the river entangled in the weed, but he shoots a hole in Ah Lee's boat with his patent under-water pistol.



"WE'LL NEVER GET THROUGH THIS MUD... WE'LL GET STUCK IN IT!"

"NO, I THINK NOT!"



"IT IS TRUE WE HAVE SEEN THE LAST OF OUR BOAT, BUT COME, MY FRIENDS... I ALONE KNOW THE PATHS ACROSS THIS SWAMP, AND ONE OF THEM BEGINS JUST HERE!"



"SEE! THAT'S THE ROLLING SPHERE! THE BRITISHER IS DROWNED, SO I DO NOT SEE WHY WE SHOULD NOT CAPTURE IT!"



"THEY REACH THE ROLLING SPHERE..."

"NOW, HURRY... MAKE THAT GIRL COME UP!"

"UP YOU GO... AND DON'T TRY ANY TRICKS, OR I'LL SHOOT!"



"I'LL TIE YOUR HANDS AGAIN, I THINK... JUST FOR SAFETY'S SAKE!"

"I THINK I CAN GET IT TO WORK..."

"WE'LL TRY, ANYWAY... WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW THE GIRL WILL TELL US... WE MAKE HER TELL, EH?"



"AH! THIS IS THE STARTER, I THINK... AND THIS WHEEL IS THE STEERING!"

"GOOD! NOW WE WILL TAKE THE SPHERE ROUND THE EDGE OF THIS SWAMP..."

"WE CANNOT GO THROUGH IT... AND SO WE GET TO OUR ISLAND STRONGHOLD!"



"MEANWHILE, DON FREES HIMSELF FROM THE ENTANGLING WEED..."

"NOW... TO FIND MAI-MAI AGAIN!"



"GOSH! THEY'VE GOT THE ROLLING SPHERE! TAKING HER ROUND THE MARSH! I'LL WORK ROUND THAT WAY..."



"LATER..."

"I THINK I UNDERSTAND... AH LEE IS TAKING THE SPHERE TO HIS ISLAND BY WAY OF THE RIVER. THAT GIVES ME A CHANCE!"



"AH LEE IS JUBILANT!"

"THIS DAY I AM VERY LUCKY, MY FRIENDS! WE TAKE THE SPHERE TO MY STRONGHOLD AND WE STUDY ALL THE MACHINERY. SHE IS MINE, AND WITH ITS HELP I MAKE MYSELF MASTER OF ALL CHINA... YOU WILL SEE!"

BUT AH LEE HAS RECKONED WITHOUT DON DEEDS! DON'T MISS NEXT WEEK'S ADVENTURES

ON A GOOD THING!

(Continued from page 2)

"Well, a fellow might know where it was and a fellow mightn't," said Bunter cautiously. "That's telling. A fellow might know what it was about, or he mightn't."

Loder breathed hard. He knew now that Bunter had found the letter and read it. That accounted for his impertinence. He realised, too, that he could not venture to handle the ash on Bunter till that letter was safe in his hands.

"Give me that letter, Bunter," muttered Loder in a choking voice.

"I haven't got it about me, old chap! But it's all right," added Bunter encouragingly. "It's in a safe place. He, he, he!"

Loder made an almost convulsive movement towards him, with a face of fury. There was an alarmed howl from Bunter.

"You keep off, you beast! I'll jolly well take it to the Head! You'll jolly well be sacked!"

"Oh!" gasped Loder.

To the fat Owl's great relief he dropped the ashplant. He dared not use it.

"Will you give me that letter, Bunter?" he breathed. He eyed the fat junior across the table, almost wolfishly.

"Oh, never mind that now," said Bunter airily. "It's in a safe place, Loder—nothing for you to be afraid of, old fellow! I say, what about tea?"

"Tea!" gasped Loder. "I thought you might like me to come to tea, Loder, in the—circumstances," explained Bunter.

Loder almost choked. Billy Bunter gave him a cheery grin across the table. The fact that Loder did not immediately fall upon him and whop him right and left was reassuring.

Bunter, to do him justice, did not realise in the least what a young rascal he was. Bunter wanted his tea—and he wanted a good tea.

"Well, what about it?"

There was a long moment of silence. Then Loder gasped:

"Yes!"

"Right-ho! I don't mind if I do, old chap," said Bunter affably.

And he did!

HARRY WHARTON AND CO., coming out after a far from sumptuous tea in Hall, came upon a fat junior who looked as if his latest meal had been. "You fellows enjoyed the doorsteps? He, he, he! I say, I've had a jolly good feed with old Loder!"

And Billy Bunter rolled on, sticky and shiny and jammy, leaving the Famous Five staring, and happily unaware that he, like Loder, would find the way of the transgressor very hard!

More about this next week. Don't miss Billy Bunter's adventures every week in the "COMET."

DO YOU WANT A PEN PAL?

If so, **DO NOT SEND YOUR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**, but write direct to one of the readers whose name and address appears in the list below. If you would like your name and address to appear, then cut out the coupon below and send it to The Editor, the "COMET," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4, together with your age and a few facts about yourself. And don't forget, at the same time, to say what you like best in the "COMET."

CHOOSE YOUR PEN PAL

RAYMOND WILES, 104 Mere Road, Erdington, Birmingham, 23. Raymond is thirteen years of age and is anxious to write to a pen pal. His hobbies are swimming and film stars.

GARRY BOLTON, 35 Well Road, Heeley, Sheffield, Yorks. Garry is fourteen years of age and would like a pen pal abroad. He is interested in reading and writing.

MORE NAMES AND ADDRESSES IN NEXT WEEK'S "COMET"

PEN PALS COUPON

"Comet" August 12th, 1950

HOW TO SOLVE THE NEVER-EMPTY-SWEET-TIN MYSTERY

The vital clue is on this page. Give it to your Mum. With this hint and a tin of Cadburys Bournville Cocoa she will quickly detect how to keep your tin filled with smashing, off-ration ALMOND TRUFFLES!

WANTED CHOCOLATE ALMOND TRUFFLES

Cadburys own recipe
2 oz. icing sugar
1 oz. cooking fat or margarine
1 oz. Bournville Cocoa (tablesp.)
½ dessertsp. golden syrup
¼ teasp. vanilla essence
1 oz. chopped blanched almonds

Cream cooking fat and icing sugar in a bowl, add cocoa powder gradually, mixing till a smooth paste is obtained. Lastly mix in golden syrup and vanilla essence. Shape the truffle paste into balls, moisten with a little golden syrup and toss in chopped almonds.

★ Mother knows that the solution to the problem of tastier drinks, sweets, cakes and 'afters' is Cadburys Bournville Cocoa.



CADBURYS

BOURNVILLE COCOA

GROWING FAMILIES HAVE THE COCOA HABIT

★ ★ ★ THE "COMET" GALLERY OF STARS ★ ★ ★



ROBERT TAYLOR
(M-G-M.)



GLORIA DE HAVEN
(Universal-International)



DUNCAN RENALDO
(United Artists)



SALLY ANN HOWES
(Rank Organisation)

BUFFALO BILL



BUFFALO BILL IS KEEPING WATCH FOR PUMA, THE BANDIT, WHO THREATENS TO ATTACK A PEACEFUL WAGGON TRAIN -- WHEN HE SEES A PARTY OF REDSKINS--



THEY'RE PIUTES, BY THE LOOK OF THEM, AND THERE ARE TWO WHITE MEN WITH THEM!



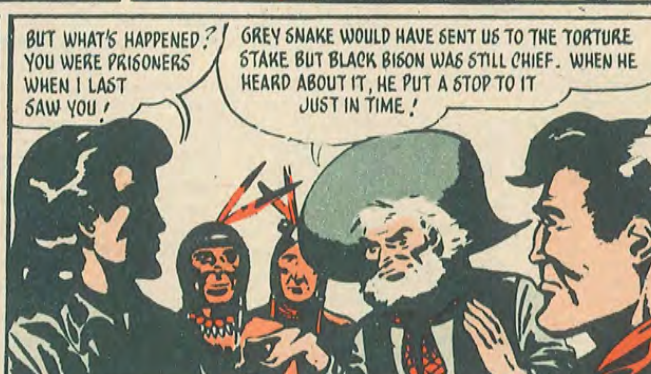
BY ALL THAT'S WONDERFUL! IT'S BEAR CLAW AND BIG JIM -- MY TWO OLD FRIENDS WHO WERE PRISONERS OF THE PIUTES!



BEAR CLAW! JIM! DON'T YOU KNOW ME!



IT'S BUFFALO BILL! AND WE NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE YOU AGAIN!



BUT WHAT'S HAPPENED? YOU WERE PRISONERS WHEN I LAST SAW YOU!

GREY SNAKE WOULD HAVE SENT US TO THE TORTURE STAKE BUT BLACK BISON WAS STILL CHIEF. WHEN HE HEARD ABOUT IT, HE PUT A STOP TO IT JUST IN TIME!



BLACK BISON SENT US OUT WITH THESE WARRIORS TO LOOK FOR YOU. HE'S RECOVERING FROM HIS WOUNDS AND WANTS YOU TO GO BACK WITH US.

THERE WAS NO SIGN OF PUMA AND HIS BANDITS, SO BUFFALO BILL WENT WITH HIS FRIENDS TO THE PIUTE VILLAGE.



BUFFALO BILL TELLS BLACK BISON ALL ABOUT HIS ADVENTURES AND HOW PUMA WAS PLANNING TO ATTACK THE WAGGON TRAIN --



WHEN BLACK BISON HEARD THE NAME OF PUMA HIS FACE GREW DARK WITH ANGER.



"I KNOW PUMA" SAID BLACK BISON. "ONE DAY, WHEN I AND MY WARRIORS WERE AWAY HUNTING, BANDITS ATTACKED OUR VILLAGE."



"WHEN WE RETURNED, A TERRIBLE SIGHT MET OUR EYES!"



"ONLY A FEW SURVIVORS, WHO HAD FLED INTO THE FOREST, WERE LEFT, AND THEY TOLD US WHO HAD DONE THIS THING!"

IF PUMA IS THE CAUSE OF BLACK BISON'S ANGER--HE'S FOR IT! (BUFFALO BILL ALSO APPEARS IN "KNOCKOUT COMIC")