

A BRIGHTER "COMET" THIS WEEK!—
TWO EXTRA COLOUR PAGES!

COMET

PRICE
3^D
EVERY
MONDAY

No. 206. June 28, 1952

SHORTY

The
DEPUTY SHERIFF

WHAT'S UP,
CHUM?

WHEEL OF WAGON
BLOKEN - - NO CAN
DELIVER WABHEE!

LEAVE IT TO ME -
I'LL SOON HAVE THIS LOT
HANDLED OUT!

VELLY
GOOD!

GEE! THERE GO
ALL THE
LABELS!

SO SHORTY HAD TO CHASE THE LABELS - -

PHEW! THEY TOOK
SOME CATCHING -
BUT THAT'S THE LOT!

GLAD TO SEE
YOU, SHORTY!
I'VE BEEN
WAITING FOR
MY SHIRT!

HUH?

LATER -

SOMETHING
MIGHTY PECULIAR'S
HAPPENED TO
MY SHIRT!

MY BEST DRESS!
HELP!
THIEVES!

-- AND YOU CAN JUST
SORT THE WHOLE
LOT OUT AGAIN --
SEE!!

BILLY BUNTER'S BIRTHDAY PARTY



The famous five of Greyfriars School—Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Frank Nugent, Johnny Bull and Hurree Singh—have invited the girls of Cliff House School to a tea-party after an important soccer match. But Billy Bunter has "borrowed" the special cake which the girls baked for the party! Bob—who found him out—has made him promise to put things right. Billy has just made a mysterious phone call to the Courtfield cake shop.

MEANWHILE, ON THE SOCCER FIELD, THE FINAL WHISTLE BLOWS ~~~ JOLLY GOOD GAME!



BOB'S FACE FALLS, AND HE GROANS ~~~

OH, CRUMBS! I FORGOT TO TELL YOU. BUNTER PINCHED THE CAKE YOU SENT ~~~

WHAT! I MADE THAT WITH MY OWN HANDS!

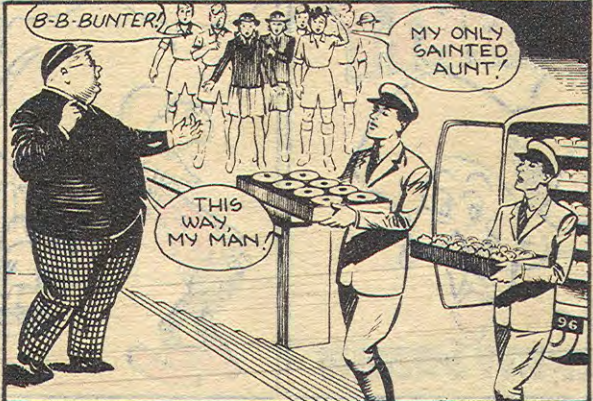


THE FAT ROTTER!



MY HAT! THE COURT-FIELD CAKE SHOP-- SOME-ONE'S IN FUNDS!

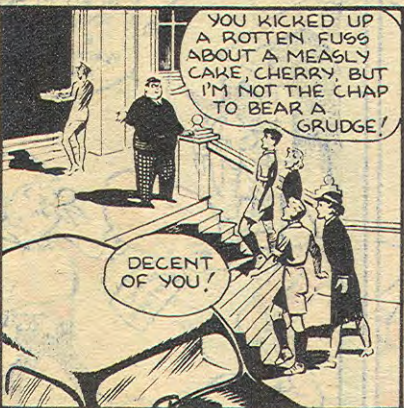
MUST BE A GIDDY MILLIONAIRE-- IT'S AN EXPENSIVE SHOP!



B-B-BUNTER!

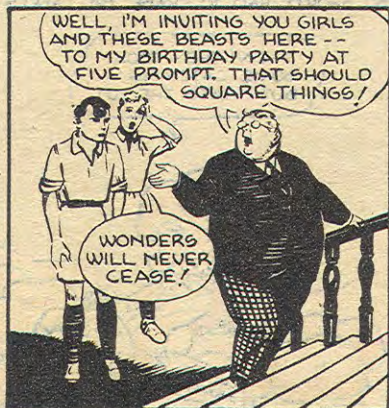
MY ONLY SAINTED AUNT!

THIS WAY, MY MAN!



YOU KICKED UP A ROTTEN FUSS ABOUT A MEASLY CAKE, CHERRY, BUT I'M NOT THE CHAP TO BEAR A GRUDGE!

DECENT OF YOU!



WELL, I'M INVITING YOU GIRLS AND THESE BEASTS HERE -- TO MY BIRTHDAY PARTY AT FIVE PROMPT. THAT SHOULD SQUARE THINGS!

WONDERS WILL NEVER CEASE!



BUNTER'S STUDY TABLE GROANS UNDER THE LOAD ~~~

THAT'S THE LOT, SIR. IF YOU'D LIKE TO SETTLE THE BILL, NOW ~~~

OH! BRING IT BACK IN HALF-AN-HOUR. I'VE GOT TO GET SOME CHANGE ~~~

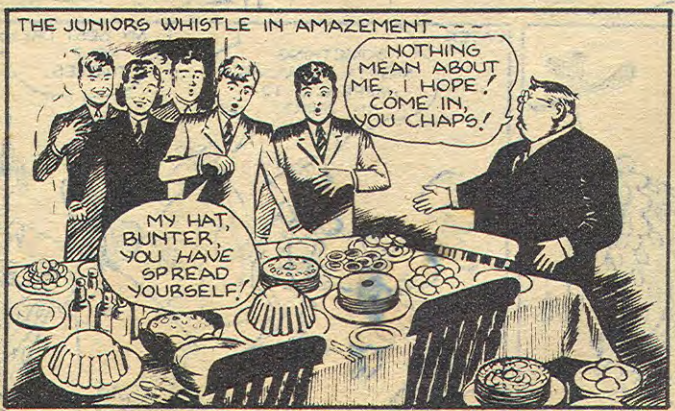
THE OTHER BOYS KNOW WELL THAT BILLY BUNTER NEVER HAS ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY FOR A FEAST LIKE THIS ONE ~~~ HOW HAS HE MANAGED IT, EVERYONE IS ASKING. AS BUNTER'S GUESTS APPROACH HIS STUDY, HARRY WHARTON LOOKS SERIOUS ~~~



I DON'T LIKE IT, BOB. IT'S VERY FISHY.

RATS! THAT'S BUNTER'S HEADACHE! COME ON ~~~ BEFORE HE CHANGES HIS MIND!

HA, HA, HA!

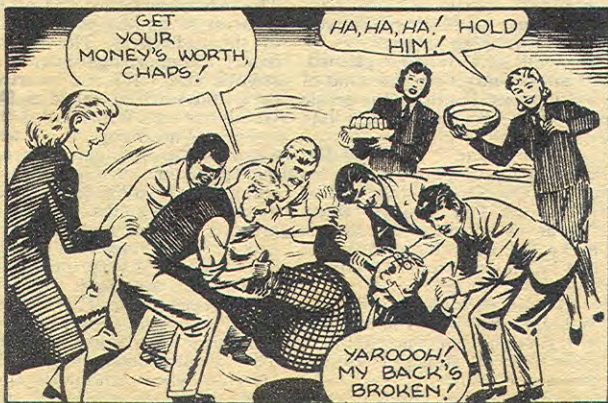
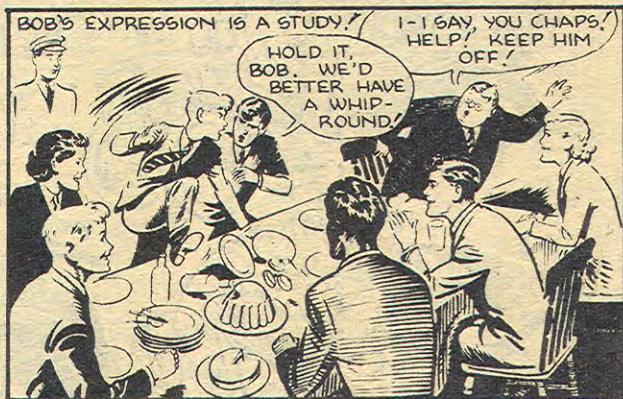


THE JUNIORS WHISTLE IN AMAZEMENT ~~~

NOTHING MEAN ABOUT ME, I HOPE! COME IN, YOU CHAPS!

MY HAT, BUNTER, YOU HAVE SPREAD YOURSELF!

BUT BOB CHERRY DOESN'T THINK SO WHEN HE HAS TO PAY FOR IT!



Next week—a new picture-story of Greyfriars School—"The Worst Boy at Greyfriars."

THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD



"Hang on!" howled Dr. Gandybar. "Hang on till the petrol runs out. We can't stop!"

WILLIE'S WONDER POLISH

DR. GANDYBAR was annoyed. He was driving along in his 1912 Whizzbang Rapide car when an urchin shouted: "Old iron!" Being very proud of his car, the headmaster of Gandybar School thought this was an insult.

Shortly afterwards a baker's horse and van trotted past him at a smart pace. The head pressed his foot hard on the accelerator. Alas! Although the radiator steamed and sizzled the car could not catch up with the cart.

Before long the Whizzbang gave a loud snort and a sigh and stopped.

Luckily there was no one near to jeer at the head as he pushed the vehicle to a nearby garage. The garage owner laughed heartily, however, when he saw the four-wheeled relic.

"Ho, ho!" he bellowed. "That's one for the Old Cocks' Race, that is!"

"This is a good, reliable velocipede, my man," Dr. Gandybar retorted with dignity. "I have never had any trouble with it before. Old crock, indeed!"

The garage owner became serious. "I beg your pardon, sir," he apologised. "If it is indeed reliable I strongly recom-

mend that you *do* enter it for the Old Cocks' Race, all the same. The prize is a silver cup, you know."

"H'm!" reflected Dr. Gandybar. "When is this race?"

"On Saturday, sir," replied the other. "It starts at Little Mudwump and finishes at Lesser Splash, forty miles away."

"This is Thursday," mused headmaster. "There is not much time to get my Whizzbang in running order again."

"Leave that to me, sir," said the garage owner, beaming. "I can do it. But—how about smartness?"

"Smartness?" queried Dr. Gandybar.

"All the cars must look smart," the garage proprietor explained. "No use reaching the winning post first if your car is rusty or dirty. You would be disqualified. I know because I am one of the judges."

Both men stared at the Whizzbang glumly. One lamp was held on by a piece of wire. The hood had a hole clean through it. All the brass parts were dull and greasy.

Dr. Gandybar remembered the urchin's shout and scowled. He was determined now to prove the Whizzbang's worth.

"You get the car in running order by tomorrow and return it to me," he instructed firmly.

"I will see that it is cleaned in time for me to drive in Saturday's race."

The head boarded a bus to get back to Gandybar Academy. As he entered his study he stopped short in surprise and stared at an old alarm clock he had put on his desk that morning.

He had meant to throw away the rusty thing. Now, however, it was rusty no longer. It shone and sparkled like new.

Dr. Gandybar rang for Mrs. Sprogs, the school housekeeper.

"Ah, Mrs. Sprogs," he said when she appeared. "How on earth did you polish that old clock?"

"I haven't touched your old clock," snorted Mrs. Sprogs. "I knew you were going to throw it away so I let that young Wizzard borrow it when he asked. He must have cleaned it."

"Splendid!" chortled the head. "Find him for me at once, please!"

When the schoolboy inventor came into the study the headmaster questioned him excitedly.

"I believe you had this clock, Wizzard?" he asked.

"I hope I have not harmed it, sir," said Willie fearfully.

"No, no, my boy," Dr. Gandybar assured him. "It wouldn't matter if you had. I was just wondering how you made it look so smart."

"Well, sir," Willie explained, "I am developing a new kind of wonder metal polish. One gentle rub and you get results like that."

"This is fine!" chuckled Dr. Gandybar, jumping up from his chair. Quickly he told Willie about the Old Cocks' Race.

"Your invention will help me make the Whizzbang look like new! Can you prepare a couple of gallons for me?"

"I shall be glad to, sir," said Willie doubtfully. "I must point out, though, that it is still in the experimental stage. I cannot guarantee results."

Dr. Gandybar laughed away Willie's protest, and the follow-

ing afternoon a group of boys set to work on the car in the Gandybar garden. The Whizzbang Rapide had been returned from the garage as promised. It was in good running order, although the garage owner sent a note to say that he was not too sure of the steering.

Willie had brought two petrol cans full of his wonder polish. The metal parts on the car began to gleam and sparkle long before the boys had used even one can of the stuff.

In an hour or so the Whizzbang looked as if it had just come out of the showrooms. The hole in the hood had been neatly patched, the lamps were fixed firm and upright. And all the brass glistened in the sun like sparklers on Guy Fawkes night.

"Thank you very much, boys," beamed Dr. Gandybar, standing back to admire his chariot. "And especially you, Wizzard. Now I am sure I shall gain the cup. I would like you, Wizzard, to share my glory. You may ride with me tomorrow."

"That is very nice of you, sir," replied the schoolboy inventor. At heart, however, he was far from happy. As he confided later to his friend, Jimmy Bash, he was not at all sure that his polishing fluid was perfect. He shuddered to think that he would be in the head's presence if the car's brightness wore off during the race!

Nevertheless, the next morning he took his seat beside Dr. Gandybar at the starting point of the race at Little Mudwump. Several of the boys went to see them off. They willingly put cans of petrol on the back seat when Dr. Gandybar remembered that he might need more fuel during the journey.

Everyone was so excited that nobody noticed when Henry Gump, the school dunce, got hold of the unused can of Willie's polish and put that aboard too!

The village squire, Colonel Serferm, fired the starting gun. The Whizzbang clattered off in great style amidst the hurrahs of the onlookers. The garage owner was cheering louder than anyone else. "It's the smartest car of the lot!" he called as Dr. Gandybar and Willie sailed by.

The Whizzbang was well ahead of the other cars before it had gone far. Willie Wizzard clung tightly to his seat as they bounced along. Dr. Gandybar gripped the steering wheel and kept a determined eye on the road ahead. Every now and again he muttered fiercely: "Old crock, indeed! I'll show them!"

Trouble was soon to start. The headmaster swung the steering wheel round as they came to a bend in the road, but the car continued straight on.

It chugged across the highway, bashed through the hedge, and came to rest in a ploughed field!

Amidst derisive shouts from the rest of the competitors who went gaily by, Dr. Gandybar and Willie heaved and tugged at the Whizzbang. They managed after much effort to get it back on the road.

"Bah!" panted the head. "That nincompoop of a garage man! Why didn't he put the steering right! Quick, jump in, Wizzard! We have a chance yet!"

He yanked at the starting handle, leaped into his seat, and off the car shot.

Up hill and down dale they banged and clattered until they saw in front of them a cluster of other old cars. They were catching up! Dr. Gandybar gave a whoop of joy.

Willie Wizzard did not join in the shout. He was very unhappy. The headmaster had been too busy with his driving to notice, but the fact was that all the effects of the Wizzard wonder polish were fast wearing off! Willie could see one lamp turning a dull brownish colour. The brass on the bonnet was slowly going a bright green hue!

Now they were creeping past the other cars. Dr. Gandybar began to sing triumphantly. The Whizzbang began to pop and bang in reply. Willie was flung backwards and forwards in his seat as the car jerked and swayed. He began to think he must be on a bucking bronco!

It was quite a relief when the car coughed and came to a halt—this time for good. With a howl of dismay Dr. Gandybar leaped to the ground.

"Petrol!" he wailed. "We've run out of petrol now! Quick, Wizzard! Help me refuel!"

Willie grabbed a can from the back seat. He did not know it was the one containing the wonder polish. With trembling hands the headmaster snatched it from him and refilled the petrol tank.

Once more, after yanking at the starting handle, the two clambered aboard. Thankfully Willie saw that the head was still too excited to notice the horrible metalwork.

"All ready?" shouted Dr. Gandybar, and let in the clutch.

The results were amazing. With a "Whoosh-sh!" the Whizzbang shot forward like a stone from a catapult. Both the occupants were hurtled backwards into the rear seats. Willie was the first to recover himself, and with great presence of mind he crawled forward and grabbed the steering wheel!

Travelling at the speed of an express train, the Whizzbang was heading straight for a brick wall. Willie wrenched hard at the wheel, hoping that the steering would respond! It did, and not a second too soon. With a screech of tyres, the car held the road and continued its mad onrush.

There were twenty-five miles to go to the winning post in

Lesser Splash. The Whizzbang simply ate up the distance. It roared past the other cars in a cloud of dust, with Willie Wizzard sometimes trying to steer but more often shutting his eyes and just hanging on!

At the winning post the eager crowd began to cheer as the Whizzbang rocketed near. It bore down on them without slackening speed. Willie, his spectacles dangling from one ear, shouted: "Get out of the way!"

It was Dr. Gandybar who came to the rescue. He had by now scrambled into the empty seat beside Willie. He honked on the hooter with one hand and grabbed at the brake lever with the other.

The Whizzbang's brakes were not made for such occasions. They had no effect at all. But on hearing the honking the crowd parted hurriedly. Men, women and children jumped to right and to left as the car sped past the winning post without the slightest pause!

Out into the country lanes the car jumped about at break-neck pace. "Hang on!" howled Dr. Gandybar at his driver. "Hang on till the petrol runs out! We can't stop!"

The Whizzbang, however, seemed to have a different idea. It did stop, so abruptly that Dr. Gandybar and Willie were flung forward this time. They were unhurt, but they were only just recovering themselves when the car jerked into motion again and went on as madly as before!

So the vehicle sped on across the countryside. It jolted to a halt after every mile or so and then rushed forward again before either Willie or the head could leap to the ground.

"Look there!" yelled Dr. Gandybar suddenly. "There is the school! We are nearly at Little Mudwump again!"

Willie gave it one quick glance before something on the road ahead claimed all his attention.

Coming towards them was a van, taking up a good half of the road! It was speeding along and the driver was sounding his horn fiercely!

The two vehicles rushed headlong towards each other. Nothing looked like preventing a head-on crash!

At the last moment, though, the van screeched to a halt. At the same instant the Whizzbang had one of its stopping spells. Both vehicles came to rest, their bonnets touching with a gentle bump!

Before anyone could act the Whizzbang sprang into action again. It started forward, pushing the van backwards along the road and increasing speed every second!

Willie, who had fearfully opened his eyes again, could see two frantic men trying to decide whether to jump from the van or not. But the Whizzbang was in its stride now, and the van was being pushed along far too fast for anyone to jump

without being injured!

At long last the Whizzbang began to slow down. It crawled to a halt. Immediately the two men leaped from the van and started to run!

Neither Dr. Gandybar nor Willie Wizzard had a moment to wonder at this. A crowd of people was forming round them. Willie heard Dr. Gandybar gasp: "We are back at the starting point in Little Mudwump!" Then amidst laughing and cheering and singing he and the headmaster were lifted from their seats and carried shoulder high up the street!

Dazed and bewildered, Dr. Gandybar and his pupil were lowered to the ground. They found themselves facing Colonel Serfem. The colonel was holding a handsome silver cup. He stepped forward and grabbed the headmaster's hand warmly.

"Magnificent, sir! Magnificent!" he roared, amidst cheers from the onlookers. "Such skilful driving! Such endurance! What an example to set, sir! Not content with reaching Lesser Splash first, you turned round and did the double journey in record time! Now I must just examine your car for smartness, then I shall have great pleasure in handing you this trophy!"

Willie wished he could sink through the ground. In all the hubbub he had forgotten what had happened to the metal parts of the car! Now he was for it!

Everyone turned to walk towards the Whizzbang and inspect it. As they did so, the worthy old crock sprang into life again!

It started up backwards this time. And it hurtled down the street, gaining rapidly on the two men who had jumped from the van and were still running!

The men heard the car coming and doubled their pace. Ahead of them was the village duck pond. They gave a last desperate spurt, to leap into the centre of the pond, just before the Whizzbang hurtled after them. With a mighty splash and a gurgling, the car sank out of sight!

The crowd watched all this in hushed amazement. All at once someone gave a shout.

"Galloping codfish! That's my van!"

It was the garage owner. He hurried towards the van as fast as he could and looked inside.

"My cash register!" he howled. "They were stealing my van and all my takings!"

No one waited to hear more. Everyone except Dr. Gandybar, Willie Wizzard and Colonel Serfem scurried towards the pond to haul out the two soaking crooks and take them to the local lock-up.

Colonel Serfem was still clutching the silver cup. He turned sadly towards Dr. Gandybar.

"I'm sorry," he said. "The rules are that I cannot present this prize without having first examined the winning car for smartness. And that is impossible now, I am afraid."

Dr. Gandybar's mouth dropped open. "So I have won nothing and lost a car!" he wailed.

"Nonsense!" a familiar voice cried. The garage owner had joined them again.

"I am one of the judges and I saw the Whizzbang at the start of the race," he beamed. "I can testify that it was the smartest car of all. Hand over the cup, please, Colonel!"

As the colonel presented the prize to the smiling headmaster the garage owner went on:

"You have not lost a car, Dr. Gandybar! If it had not been for you those crooks would have escaped with my van and my money. I shall be obliged if you will call at my garage tomorrow and choose any car you like!"

Then he turned to Willie Wizzard.

"As for you, my boy," he continued, "how would you like a brand new bicycle? I shall give you one if you promise to keep it clean!"

Willie stammered his thanks and gave the promise. At the same time he made a silent promise to himself. It was, not to use his wonder polish on the bicycle or anything else until he had made many, many further tests!

What will Willie think of next? Don't miss the fun with our Wizard Inventor next week!

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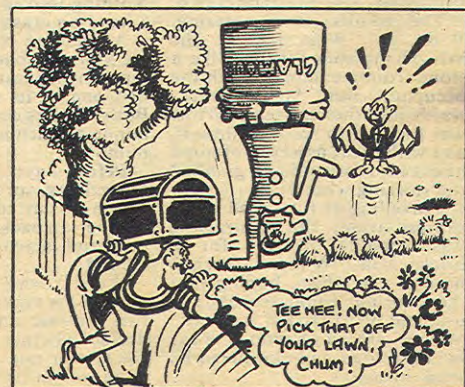
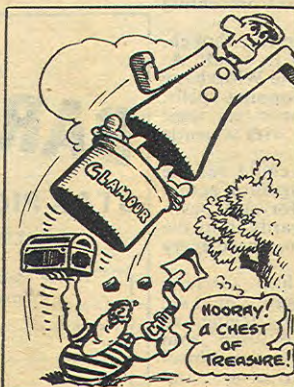
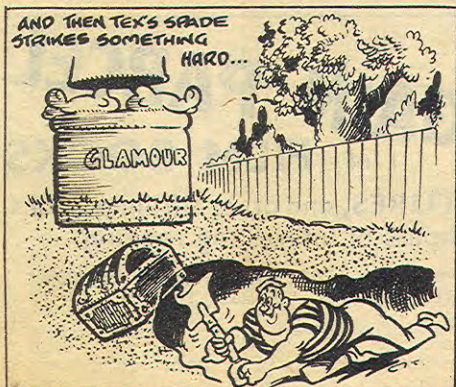
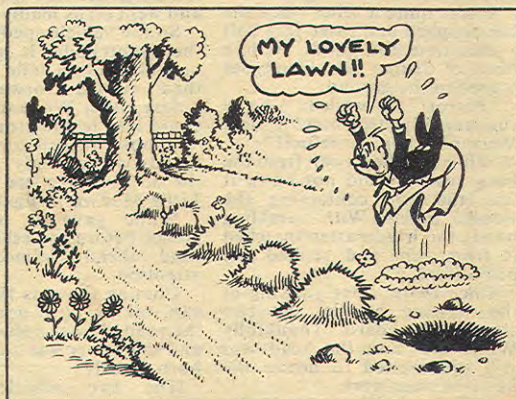
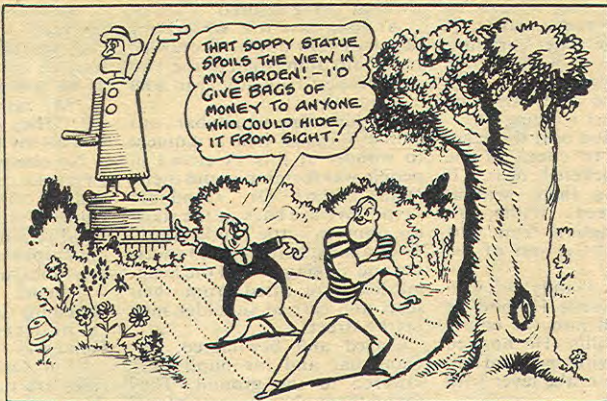
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S.3. A DIFFERENT PARCEL WILL BE OFFERED EACH WEEK

TOUGH TEX



Watch out for the chuckles next week when Tex visits the Art Gallery!

The Mystery of the Ivory Mandarin



Together they swam up and away from the Professor's submarine. But the submarine started to rise after them. The crooks knew of their escape!

Wan Chen, a cunning old Chinese master-crook, had amassed a huge treasure in stolen property. Where he had hidden it was his secret—but the key to that secret was the ivory mandarin.

This little carved clockwork figure would tap out a dance with his feet when you wound him up, and if you counted his steps properly, you would know just where to look for Wan Chen's treasure.

Wan Chen's daughter, Lotus, had grown up knowing nothing of her father's life of crime. But lately she had found out, and though she loved her father, she was determined to make amends for his misdeeds by helping the police to find the stolen hoard of treasure.

Through the ivory mandarin she had met young Bob Harley, the son of Inspector Harley of Scotland Yard, and the two had become firm friends.

But another crook was after Wan Chen's treasure. He was called the Professor. He had kidnapped Bob and Lotus, to hold them as hostages, and taken them aboard his submarine. Then, as the submarine swam out of the estuary of the River Thames, Bob managed to snatch the mandarin, and he and Lotus locked themselves in the store room of the sub.

In the store room they found frogmen's outfits, and wearing these, they got out of the sub-

marine through an escape-lock.

Now they were swimming upwards towards the surface of the sea!

It was easy to rise up through the green water—almost like flying, Bob thought. The air-cylinder on your chest not only gave you air to breathe, it lifted you in the water like water-wings. The webbed rubber feet made swimming easy and the glass windows in the face mask made it easy to see.

Bob looked sideways and saw Lotus forging upward beside him. Then he looked down through the water.

Bob's heart almost came up into his mouth at what he saw.

There below them in the clear green water was the submarine, like a huge grey shark.

And it was nosing upwards after them!

"Of course!" thought Bob, "what a chump I am! Of course they'd know as soon as Lotus and I escaped! For when we opened the outer sea-door water flooded the escape chamber—enough water to alter the trim of the little sub!"

The Professor and Captain Gaffo knew that the frog suits were in the store room. So that when they felt the sub lose "float" because of the extra water, they soon guessed why!

And now they were bringing the sub up to catch Bob and Lotus again!

Bob and Lotus broke up through the surface of the sea a yard or so from one another. Luckily the weather was quite fine, and only a slight choppy swell disturbed the surface.

Bob looked around. There was no land in sight—but then they were so low in the water they couldn't see far anyway.

There were no ships either. Bob trod water and spun himself around, looking for the slightest sign of anything or anyone that might help them in their plight.

There was something.

It was a sort of queer square house, standing up above the waves on legs made of steel lattice-work.

It looked so strange and sinister there, that for a second Bob thought it must be some awful trick machine that the Professor had sprung on them.

Then he guessed what it really was.

They were just beyond the mouth of the River Thames. The steel monster must be one of the ack-ack towers that had been built there during the war. These towers, Bob had read, were little steel "forts," standing on steel legs on the bottom of the sea, which carried guns to defend the Thames against enemy aircraft.

Deserted and rusting now in peacetime, the war-tower stood there among the lapping waves fifty yards to their left.

Bob had grabbed Lotus by the arm to tow her towards the tower, when there came a sudden boiling and tumbling of the water near them.

Up from the sea came the conning tower of the Professor's submarine.

"Quick, Lotus—duck under!" cried Bob in warning. Even as he did so, he knew that Lotus couldn't hear him, for the rubber headgear of the frog outfit covered his face.

Bob tightened his grip on the girl's arm and towed her under the surface. He wasn't going to be caught again by the Professor if he could help it.

But how could they hide? And where?

There was just one chance.

Bob struck out towards the submarine itself, which was now floating on the surface like an ordinary boat.

Up near the bows—the front—of the craft, it bulged outward, and had a slight overhang. If they stayed close in to the grey hull they might escape notice from the conning tower.

Bob broke surface again close to the hull. Lotus was beside him. They held their breath as they heard the scraping noise as the conning tower hatch was opened.

Then came the sound of feet on the iron deck plates.

"They're not in sight!" grated

the Professor's voice. "But it's easy to guess where they must be!"

"Yeah!" Captain Gaffo, who commanded the sub, replied. "A bit o' luck for them, bobbing up right by an old ack-ack tower. Or perhaps it wasn't so lucky after all!" and Gaffo laughed unpleasantly.

"Let's go and ferret them out, Gaffo!" snapped the Professor. "And this time, when we get 'em back, we'll put 'em in irons! I'll take no more chances with those confounded youngsters. As for the ivory mandarin—I'll take good care to smash it to atoms, as soon as I've made sure of the secret!"

Bob winked at Lotus through his glass eye shield. Perhaps things were working out their way after all—Perhaps it had been a bit of luck that they hadn't had time to reach the tower before the sub surfaced!

"Forward as she goes, Mr. Durry!" They heard Captain Gaffo yell down the conning tower to his mate below.

The submarine began to move gently forward. Bob and Lotus swam easily alongside with flips of their frog feet, keeping all the while under the shelter of the bulging hull.

"Stop engines!" called Gaffo.

They heard the whine of the sub's electric motors die. Its speed carried the vessel a few feet farther. Then they heard a clanking scrape. Captain Gaffo had grappled one of the steel support-legs with a small anchor.

"We'll have to climb these legs, till we get up to the railed platform there," said Gaffo.

"I can manage it, if you can," said the Professor sourly. "Get on man—stop hanging around. If a navy patrol vessel happens along this way they might ask us awkward questions."

Bob glimpsed the Professor and Gaffo climbing upward towards the railed platform that ran around the lower edge of the steel house-on-stilts. He ducked his head below the surface and drew Lotus down too.

They were on the far side of the sub from the tower, and if either the Professor or Gaffo had looked down from above, they might have seen them. But the two crooks felt sure that Bob and Lotus were hiding somewhere inside the deserted sea-fort, and luckily they didn't look.

They clambered over the rail twenty feet above the waves, and vanished from sight around the corner of the steel house, seeking a way in.

Bob signalled to Lotus to remain where she was, and showed himself along towards the middle of the submarine. There he slid his fingers up over the edge of the deck, and peeped very carefully upwards.

(Continued on next page)

THE MYSTERY OF THE IVORY MANDARIN

(Continued from page 7)

Bob was just aft of the conning tower when he froze, still as a statue.

The head and shoulders of Durry were visible, sticking up through the conning tower hatch!

But the man hadn't seen him. His back was turned towards Bob, and he was looking upwards at the tower.

Bob decided to take a daring chance. Half in and half out through the narrow hatch, Durry would be at a disadvantage. Bob made up his mind to tackle him.

But with what?

There was only one weapon to hand—the air cylinder on Bob's chest. Holding it by the narrow neck, Bob unhooked it from the chest-harness. It was made of thin steel, and weighed two or three pounds. About a foot long, and three or four inches through, it would make a first-class club. There was enough slack in the rubber tube that connected it to Bob's mouth to allow him to wield it.

Bob held his club up, and hauled himself onto the deck with the aid of his free hand grasping the deck rail.

His rubber feet made no sound, as he padded along the plates towards Durry's back.

Bob raised the air-cylinder high, and then brought it crashing down on Durry's head.

Durry let out a little grunt, and went limp. Then he slid down inside the submarine with

a horribly loud clatter. Bob tore his face-mask off.

"Lotus!" he cried.

But the girl was already climbing up onto the deck behind him. He grabbed her outstretched hand, and yanked her up, even as he heard the clatter of running feet on the staging up above their heads.

"Down the hatch, Lotus!" gasped Bob, pushing her towards the opening. She went down the ladder in a slithering tumble.

Bob followed her even faster. As his chest came level with the deck, he leaned out, and grabbed the steel hatch-cover, which was lying back on its hinges and dragged it shut above him.

Angry shouts and the sound of scrambling feet told him that Captain Gaffo and the Professor had heard them, as he wrenched the locking wheel around on the inside of the hatch-cover. He could have shouted for glee as he saw the stout steel bolts shoot home and pull the cover down snugly against its rubber seating.

The two crooks were locked out, and Durry was Bob's prisoner!

Feet pounded on the deck above Bob's head. Faintly Bob could hear the muffled sound of the Professor's and Gaffo's furious shouting.

Bob grinned at Lotus.

"Let 'em shout! Unless they've got a mighty powerful tin-opener, they can't get in."

Lotus was pulling off her frog-outfit.

"I'm jolly cold!" she said "I'm going to see if I can fix up a hot drink and some dry clothes." Her teeth were chattering, and to tell the truth, Bob was in little better shape.

"Good idea," He said. "I'm going to find some rope to tie up Durry here. Then I'm going to see if I can make this tin fish go. If I can scrape it ashore somewhere, we'll soon find someone to take care of you, and you'll be able to get a rest after all you've been through."

"I don't want a rest, Bob. Not until this whole rotten affair is cleared up. I love my Dad—even if he is a crook. He's always been good and kind to me, and it was an awful shock to hear from his own lips—what I did hear. I shan't rest, Bob, till I've helped find that stolen treasure, and seen it given back to the people it really belongs to!"

Lotus was crying, now.

Bob turned away.

"I'll—I'll find a rope, and tie up Durry," he said awkwardly, for there was a lump in his own throat.

THE Professor's eyes glittered with baffled rage.

"Think, man—think!" he gritted through clenched teeth, "There must be some way! We must get into the submarine—we must! What about the way

those kids got out—through the escape hatch under the bows?"

Gaffo shook his head.

"If you can stay under water without a frog-suit for long enough to unlock the outer hatch, pump the lock dry, and open the inner hatch as well, you're a better man than I am. And if we do get that done, we're still no better off. That'll only get us into the store room—and the door to that's locked on both sides. The kids locked the inner side so's we shouldn't get in—and we locked the outer side so's they shouldn't get out!"

"Isn't there some other way then? Think man—think!"

"Submarines is built to keep the sea out—tons of it pushing in on every square foot of plating. There isn't a chance, Prof. You might as well save your breath!"

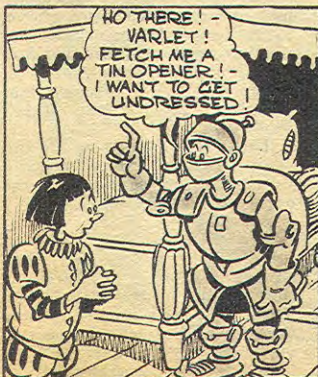
The Professor started to speak again, but Gaffo held up his hand for silence. He dropped down on his knees, and pressed his ear against the iron deck-plates.

"I thought so!" he muttered "That brat's found out how to start the electric motors. Not that that's very hard—all the switch gear's marked clearly for any fool to read!"

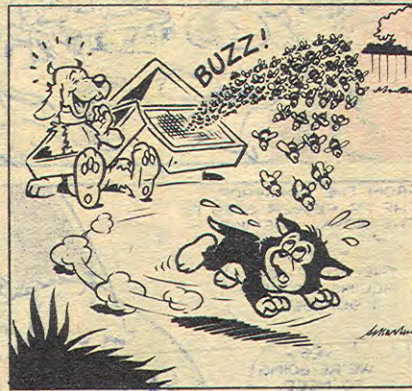
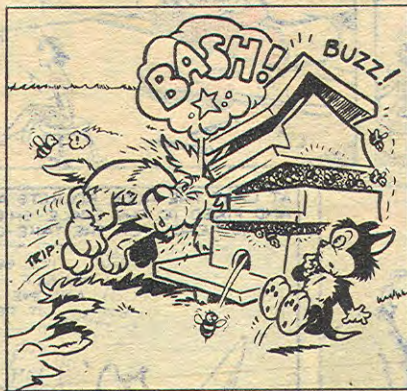
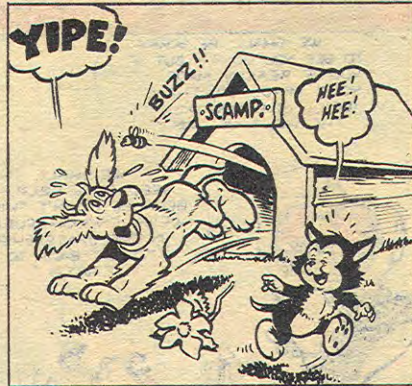
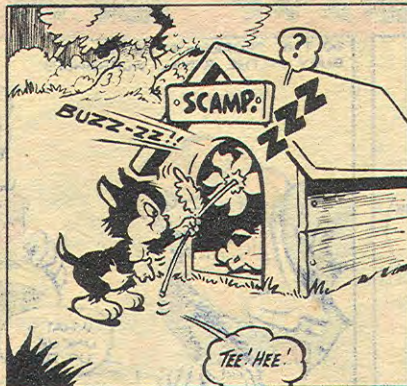
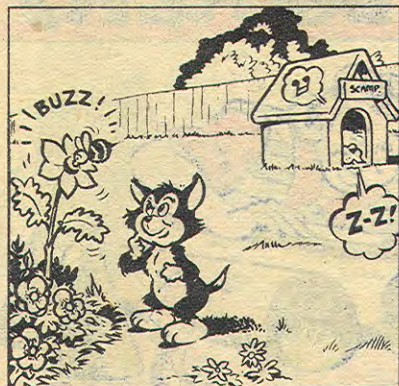
"They won't get away though!" the Professor cackled, and pointed to the small anchor, which was still hooked through

(Continued on next page)

CHUCKLE TIME - Some jokes to keep you laughing!



SCAMP OUR HAPPY HOUND



MYSTERY OF THE IVORY MANDARIN

(continued from page 8)

the lattice of one of the tower-legs.

The anchor chain drew taut even as he spoke, as the motors drove the sub's propellers up to full speed, thrusting the vessel forward.

"I wouldn't be too sure about them not getting away!" snarled Gaffo. "That chain wasn't meant to hold against full power. Jump for it!"

Gaffo himself jumped for the nearest lattice leg, and as he did so, a link of the chain tore open under the strain, and the sub was free!

The Professor scrambled wildly, and just managed to find a foothold beside Gaffo as the sub slid away through the water.

Neither of the crooks was keen to stay on the outside of a submarine that might go down at any moment!

But Bob was no expert at handling a submarine—and it's not easy to steer one of these craft from inside, even when they are on the surface. You can't see much through the periscope, and Bob didn't know how to work the radar gear that would tell him when there were obstacles ahead.

As the submarine forged away from the leg where Gaffo and the Professor were clinging, it bounced heavily off one of the other legs. The tower quaked

and rattled, and the Professor cursed angrily as the jolt almost threw him into the sea.

Down inside the submarine, Lotus almost dropped the kettle she had found to make hot drinks.

"Goodness! what was that?"

"I hit something—one of the legs of that Ack-ack tower, I think," said Bob, white-faced and tense. The two of them were now clad in heavy duffle coats they had found to replace their own wet clothing. "I hope I haven't done any damage," he went on. "These subs aren't made to take wallops like that one!"

"What are you going to do?"

"Keep heading west. We know we must be somewhere out in the mouth of the Thames. We're bound to run ashore somewhere on the Essex or Kent coast—I don't much care which, just so long as we get ashore!"

Lotus had found an electric point which fitted the plug on the kettle, and was now waiting for the water to boil to make coffee—from a bottle—in two tin mugs which she had ferreted out.

"What are you frowning at, Bob?"

"These—" Bob pointed to two big dials, "They're the trim meters. This one tells whether

you're rolling—tipping sideways that is—and this one tells whether you're tipping your nose up or down. The first one's okay—but look at the other!"

Lotus looked closely.

"It's just a tiddy bit down at the nose end. Is that bad?"

"It's not good, Lotus," returned Bob gravely. "It means that we're heavy at the front end and, what's more, we're getting heavier. If you watch that needle you can just see it moving. I'm afraid we've sprung a joint."

"Oh, Bob!" The girl's eyes were wide with dismay. "But—but couldn't you find the leak and plug it up or something?"

"No can do. It's somewhere on the other side of the store-room door—and we can't get into the store-room. We locked the door on the other side to keep the Professor out—remember?"

Lotus left Bob's side and moved forward to the water-tight door that now kept them out of the little store-room as completely as it had kept the Professor and Gaffo out earlier. Then the stout wheel-locks had been a boon. Now they looked like being the finish of all their hopes.

Lotus put her ear to the steel platemwork and held her breath.

"I can hear the water, Bob. I can hear a sort of squirting noise, and I can hear it splashing around, too."

"Cheer up," said Bob, trying to sound as though nothing was the matter. "We've still got the frogmen's outfits. We can always get out through the conning tower hatch if worst comes to worst."

"Yes—" began Lotus. Then her face fell. "We can't, Bob. There's only two outfits and there's three of us!" She nodded towards Durry, bound and gagged on the floor.

"Gosh—that's right!"

Bob turned a big wheel around as far as it would go. The throb of the motors rose to a high pitched whine.

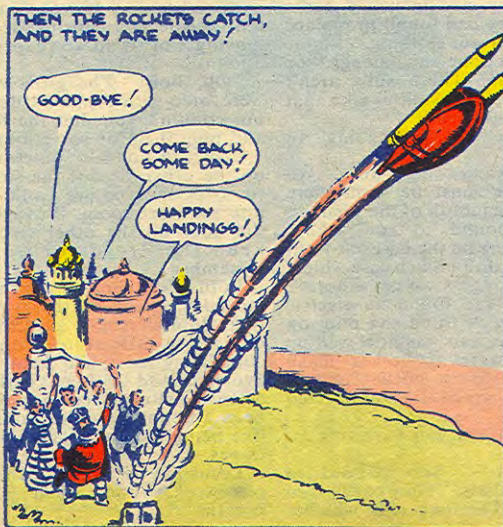
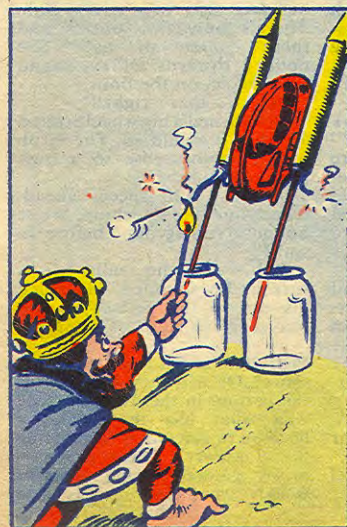
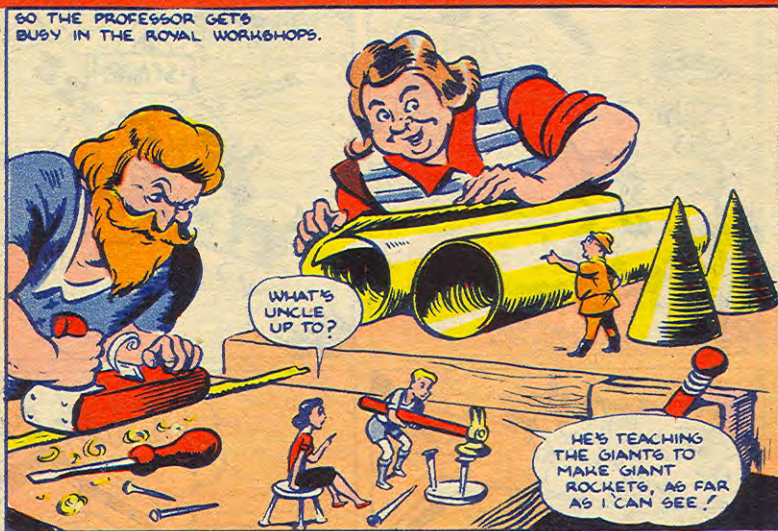
"That's full speed ahead. Keep your chin up, chum. We're bound to run aground before we sink!"

Bob wished he really felt as sure as he sounded. He glued his eye to the periscope, and prayed for a sight of dry land.

Will Bob and Lotus reach the shore? Or will they be stuck at the bottom in the Thames mud? And what has the Professor been up to since they left him on the Sea-Fort? There are surprises galore coming in next week's chapters of this fine thriller!

PETER, ANN, AND THEIR UNCLE, PROFESSOR JOLLY, HAVE HAD A GRAND TIME ON JUPITER, THE GIANT PLANET. BUT AT LAST THE TIME COMES WHEN THEY MUST LEAVE...

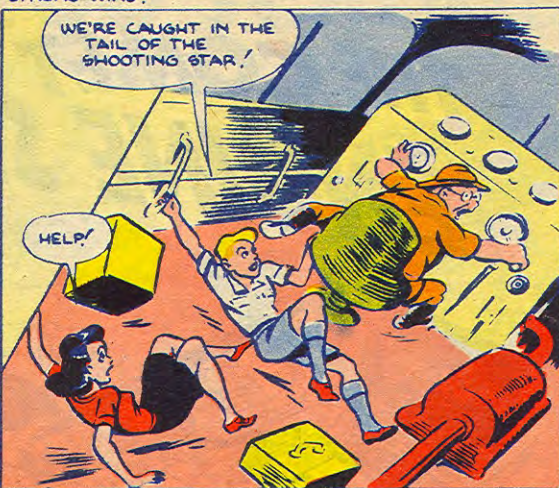
THE SKY EXPLORERS



SO THE THREE ADVENTURERS SPEED ON, HEADING BACK TOWARDS THE EARTH. TWO DAYS LATER ---



A FEW MINUTES LATER THE SHOOTING STAR MISSES THEM BY A BARE HALF MILE --- BUT ITS HUGE TAIL SWEEPS THEM ALONG WITH IT, LIKE A PIECE OF PAPER IN A STRONG WIND!



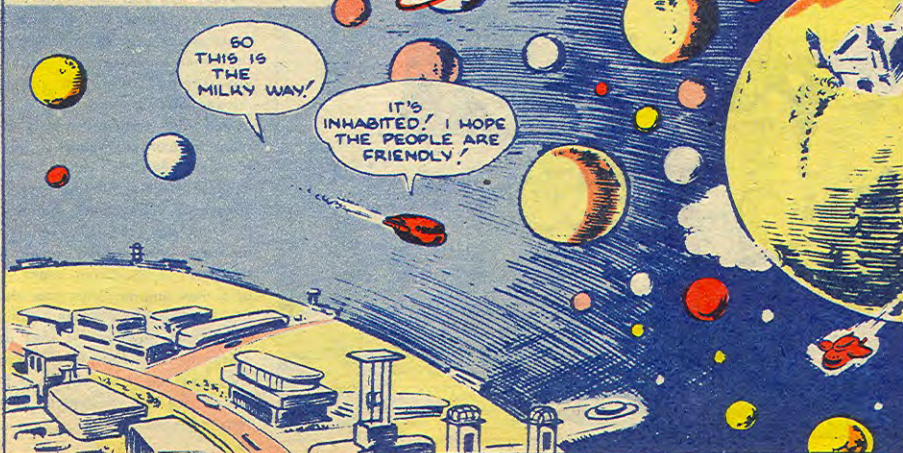
SO THEY ARE SWEEPED HALF A MILLION MILES OFF THEIR TRUE COURSE TOWARDS THE EARTH, BEFORE THEY ESCAPE FROM THE FIERY STORM. THEY FIND THEMSELVES HEADING FOR THE MILKY WAY ---



AND SO, AN HOUR LATER, AS THE LAST OF THEIR ROCKET FUEL SPLUTTERS AND BURNS OUT, THEY FIND THEMSELVES PLUNGING INTO THE MIDST OF PLANETS BY THE THOUSAND --- LIKE TINY ISLANDS IN SPACE ---



NONE OF THE WORLDS IN THE MILKY WAY ARE MORE THAN A MILE OR SO ACROSS, AND A FEW BUILDINGS CAN BE SEEN ON EACH. LITTLE SPACE-SHIPS PLY BETWEEN ONE WORLD AND ANOTHER.



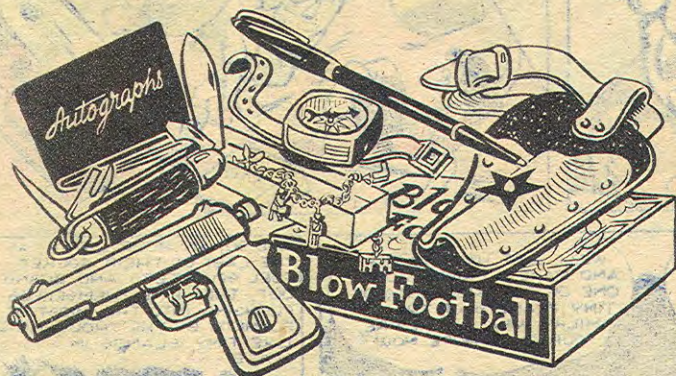
BUT THEY AREN'T OUT OF TROUBLE YET!



(Continued on back page)

What Does the C.E.S.C. Stand For? Why—

THE COMET ENGINE SPOTTERS CLUB



THE CLUB PRESENTS!

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FUN, INTEREST and HUNDREDS of CLUB PRESENTS, FREE!

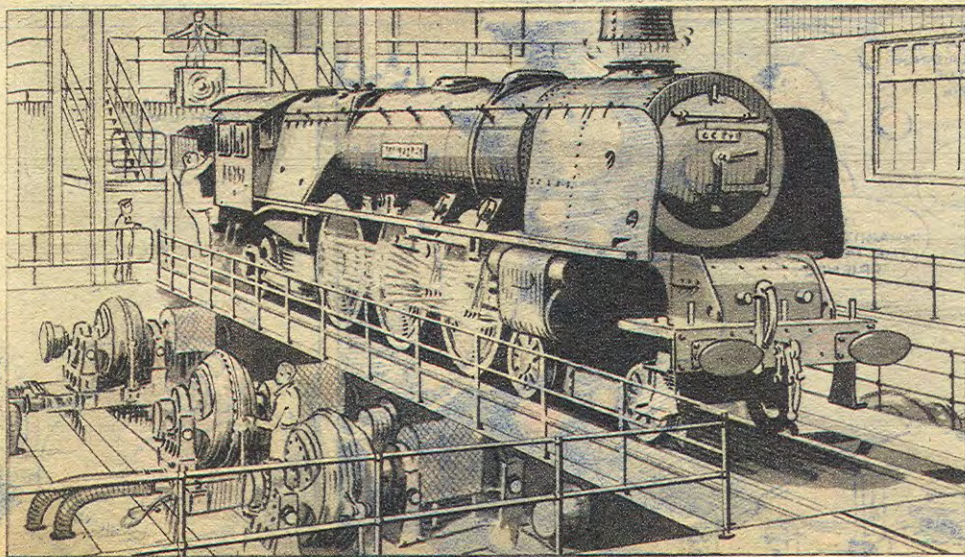
LOOK at this Spotters! Again this week your very own Club has put aside presents for 150 of you! The numbers of those members who can claim a present are printed below—perhaps yours is among them. Get out your Club Album now and see—your membership number is on the back cover.

79,968	102,168	13,882	53,484	21,867
47,232	159,592	48,776	119,623	58,359
79,899	41,247	119,386	144,382	103,731
135,238	5,976	133,593	23,619	183,267
198,720	202,444	37,852	12,477	47,494
2,545	47,885	9,491	52,565	103,900
36,105	169,472	102,894	103,387	159,472
183,487	155,680	175,893	145,481	194,169
198,905	71,845	201,611	195,661	8,682
63,088	6,386	121,777	61,685	57,328
102,854	101,623	50,240	23,871	116,781
135,994	118,184	10,793	40,183	156,494
40,336	42,686	100,593	166,284	183,899
3,691	7,772	143,791	194,350	30,672
67,174	21,483	44,453	42,219	41,985
140,515	155,284	31,282	56,868	81,784
178,693	135,323	11,744	113,668	164,579
207,625	91,778	71,884	141,701	176,983
37,563	55,040	183,066	166,012	129,871
68,895	136,389	130,571	40,557	73,572
184,432	145,292	173,352	81,537	48,363
136,780	21,433	12,257	168,127	141,863
118,577	8,220	23,887	127,133	200,946
44,216	36,489	102,465	199,546	176,772
4,502	147,482	164,225	46,854	30,439

Well, was your number there? If it was then choose a present from the list on the left. Write its name in the space marked "For Official Use" in your Club Album and then, on a piece of paper, write the name of the story, picture-story or character you like best in COMET—and add a few words saying "why." When you have re-checked your number, and also filled in your name and full address on the membership page of your Album, address an envelope to:

COMET E.S. Club, 3 Pilgrim Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.)

Put a 2½d. stamp on the envelope, pop both Album and piece of paper inside, seal it and then post at once, as the closing date for claims from this week's list is Tuesday, July 1. Note.—Presents are dispatched about a week after the closing date. Albums are returned at the same time.



AN ENGINE ON TEST

Have you ever wondered how they test engines? Well, here is a picture of the test machine in the famous works at Rugby. The engine stands on rollers instead of rails, and the rollers have brakes on them so that the train is always trying to pull forward. But it can't move because it is fixed at the back to a sort of huge spring balance. In this way the experts can measure the pulling power—they call it "tractive effort"—of a new engine. They can also find out just how much coal it burns and how fast it uses up water in its boiler. In this way they can tell if an engine is fit to do its job before it even leaves the works!

DR GRUNTER'S ZOO SCHOOL

THE BUN THIEF!

"SOMEONE'S been pinching my buns!" roared Dr. Grunter, the polar bear.

"But what an extraordinary thing to do!" cried Mr. Drripp, the turtle, in astonishment. "I've heard of shoes pinching—I've heard of little girls pinching each other—but I've never yet heard of anyone being so silly as to pinch buns. Do you think they pinched them to discover whether the buns were hard or soft?"

"It's you who are soft, you great stupid dolt!" roared Dr. Grunter, fairly gnashing his great, long yellow fangs with rage. "I don't mean that sort of pinch, fathead! I don't mean squeeze or nip. When I say that somebody's been pinching my buns I mean that somebody's been stealing my buns! Somebody's been at my buns and I intend to find out just who the rascally thief is!"

Dr. Grunter hadn't always been a polar bear. Neither had Mr. Drripp always been a turtle. Not so very long ago they had been a couple of schoolmasters in charge of a party of boys who had come to Meadow-sweet Farm to help Farmer Whipstraw with the harvest.

One morning, however, the whole party had felt ill. So Dr. Dozey, the village doctor, had come out to the farm to give them all a dose of medicine.

But Dr. Dozey was the most absent-minded little old gentleman you could meet anywhere. He had got the bottles mixed, and instead of giving the two masters and the boys a dose of medicine, he had given them a dose of a wonderful liquid which he had invented for changing people into birds and animals. And birds and animals they were doomed to remain until Dr. Dozey could find a liquid which would change them all back to their proper selves again.

Having been changed into birds and animals they liked the food which birds and animals ate. That was why Dr. Grunter was so fond of buns and of great hamper of raw fish.

"I'll find the villain who's been helping himself to my buns!" he roared, pacing furiously up and down the wooden hut which he shared with Mr. Drripp. "I must think out a plan to trap the scoundrel. You think, too, Drripp, instead of standing there looking like a silly stuffed turtle in a mouldy museum!"

Mr. Drripp obediently started racking his brains. Suddenly Dr. Grunter gave a start.

"I've thought of a plan," he cried. "What's more, it's so simple that it can't possibly fail. All we've got to do, Drripp, is to hide."

"Where?" demanded Mr.

Drripp, looking round the hut.

"I don't mean hide inside," snarled Dr. Grunter. "One could scarcely hide a frozen herring inside this beastly little hut. I mean, we'll hide outside. I'll tell the boys that they can have the morning off because you and I are going for a walk. We'll pretend to go off for a walk, see, but we'll creep secretly back and watch the hut and catch the thief red-handed."

"Yes, but suppose the thief doesn't come into the hut this morning?" Mr. Drripp.

"He'll come in all right, don't you worry!" retorted Dr. Grunter, with a savage sort of laugh. "I'll tell the boys that we're going for a walk to get our appetites up because I've just received a lovely big hamper of fresh cream buns."

"But you haven't!" said Mr. Drripp.

"I know I haven't!" roared Dr. Grunter, fairly bristling with rage. "But that doesn't stop me saying I have, does it? There are times, Drripp, when you aggravate me so much that I don't know how I put up with you. I don't, indeed! Now go and assemble the boys!"

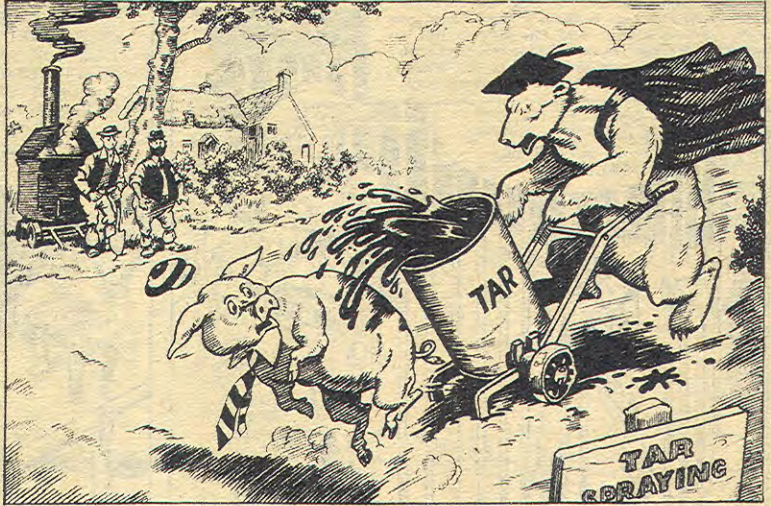
Mr. Drripp obeyed, waddling away on his hind flippers. A few minutes later Dr. Grunter addressed the assembled boys—or rather, the assembled crowd of monkeys, goats, lions, tigers, parrots, donkeys, kangaroos, camels, and other birds and animals of every sort, size and description.

He told them that they could have the morning off as he and Mr. Drripp were going for a walk to get an appetite before he tackled a hamper of lovely cream buns which had just arrived for him, and which was in his hut at that very moment.

Then off he and Mr. Drripp went, leaving the boys to do as they pleased. But they hadn't gone very far before the pair of them crept back behind a hedge towards their hut.

"I can see the door perfectly from here," growled Dr. Grunter, peering through a gap in the hedge. "No one can enter without my spotting him—Hullo!"

"What's the matter?" cried Mr. Drripp.



The road-menders stood and gasped with surprise, As the oddest things happened in front of their eyes!

"That wretched boy Tweeks, who has been changed into a pig, is approaching our hut," Dr. Grunter informed him in a voice trembling with excitement. "He is looking to the right and to the left as though to make sure that he is not observed. Hah, he has now reached the door of our hut! He takes one last look round—he has gone in!"

"Then he is the thief!" twittered Mr. Drripp excitedly.

"He certainly is!" snarled Dr. Grunter, barging his way through the hole in the hedge. "And now I'll teach the young rascal a lesson which he will not forget in a hurry."

Boiling with rage, he rushed towards his hut. Reaching it, he sent the door flying open with one blow of his paw.

As the door crashed open Tubby Tweeks, a boy who had been changed into a great fat pig, got the fright of his life. For Tubby was gobbling down a bun from Dr. Grunter's old hamper and looking round in vain for the new hamper.

"Got you!" roared Dr. Grunter, making a furious rush at him. "How dare you steal my buns, you wretched boy!"

Next instant Tubby was out of the hut and fleeing madly away. After him rushed Dr. Grunter.

"Stop!" he roared. "Stop, Tweeks!"

But Tubby Tweeks didn't stop. So great was his terror that he was running faster than he had ever run in his life before, scuttling madly along, as fast as ever he could lay his fat little trotters to the ground.

He was about ten paces in front of the raging Dr. Grunter when he shot through a gap in the hedge which bordered the road.

With a snarl of triumph Dr. Grunter saw his chance. With a terrifying roar he bounded right over the hedge.

Crash! Instead of landing on the road, Dr. Grunter crashed full tilt into a tar barrel with which some men were tarring the road.

The barrel went over with a crash, shooting a great torrent of warm, melted tar all over the road, and all over Tubby who was just halfway across.

As for Dr. Grunter, he had hit the boiler such a bang that he turned a complete somersault and landed flat on his back amongst the tar.

Roaring with rage and fury, he tried to struggle to his feet, but slipped and went down again. The men fled madly away along the road, leaving the squealing, terrified pig and the raging polar bear sliding, slipping and struggling from the great pool of liquid tar.

Tubby was the first to release himself, and he scuttled frantically away, looking for all the world like a shiny black pig instead of a white one.

By the time Dr. Grunter managed to struggle from out of the tar, no one would have recognised him as a polar bear. He looked just like a black bear, and it took days and days, and tubs and tubs of Farmer Whipstraw's best lard to get the tar off him.

But as you can guess, he vented his rage on Tubby, and it was many a long day before that greedy boy—or pig, rather—ever tried to steal another of Dr. Grunter's buns.

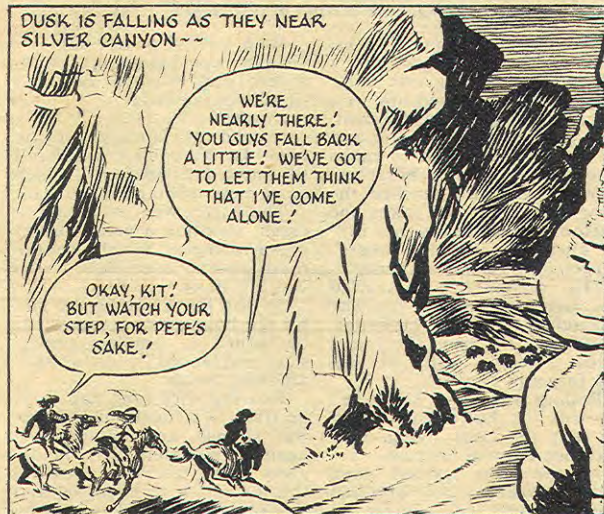
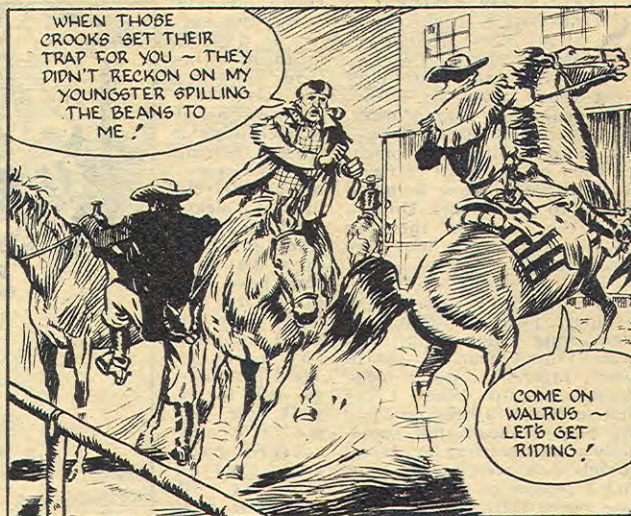
Next week a dormouse school-boy gets his own back on a couple of jokers. Don't miss the fun!

KIT CARSON

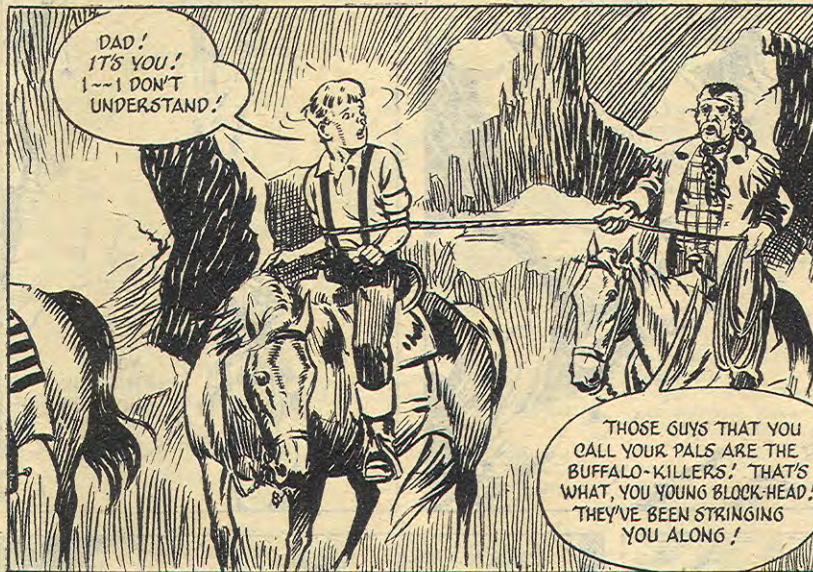
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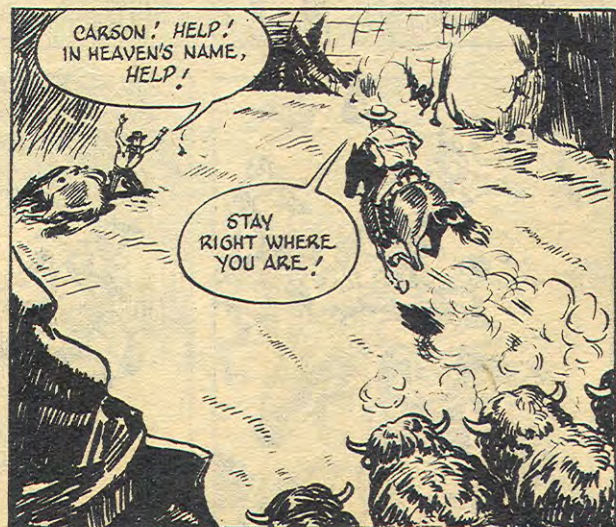
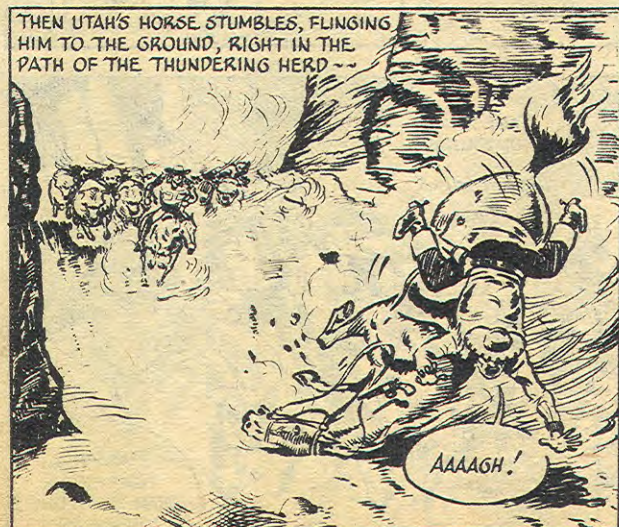
BUFFALO BANDITS

Kit Carson has the job of stopping the killing of hundreds of Buffalo for the sake of their hides. Having found Walrus Peters beside a dead buffalo, he has had to arrest him. Now the real buffalo killers have won over Walrus's son, and the boy is out to get Kit. Walrus learns of this when the boy smuggles him a gun into prison. So Walrus tells Kit of the peril that threatens him.



THE BUFFALO BANDITS TRICK YOUNG PETERS INTO TAKING SIDES AGAINST THE LAW!





Will Kit save the crook from the thundering herd? Don't miss next Monday's super thrills!

MICK THE MOON BOY

YOUNG Hank Luckner came into his room at the Silver Bullet hotel, then stopped short and stared.

There seemed to be nobody else in the room, but spread out on the table were several strange-shaped little instruments, with two of them floating in the air at about chest height, turning and probing this way and that.

"Creepin' polecats!" exclaimed Hank, hurriedly closing the door. "What are you playing at, Mick?"

The voice of Mick the Moon Boy sounded from empty space.

"I'm having trouble with my invisibility gadget," said the voice. "I can't make myself visible again until I've put it right, and I'm afraid it's going to be rather a long job!"

Mick the Moon Boy had travelled from the moon in a flying saucer and landed near the little town of Indian Bend, in Arkansas. He had made friends with Hank, who was the only person on earth to know that Mick was no ordinary person.

Dressed in ordinary clothes, Mick looked like an Earth boy, except for his rather strange green eyes. But underneath his clothes he wore a close-fitting suit and helmet of flexible metal. There was a gadget attached, by which he could make himself invisible. This was only one of the many wonders achieved by scientists on the Moon.

"I took my Earth clothes off because it's better to be completely invisible than to walk around with no head between my shirt and my Stetson!" Mick said with a chuckle as he worked busily away.

Mick had been made Sheriff of Indian Bend, and, after cleaning up the bad-men there, he and Hank had travelled to see Chicago. Now they had left the big city and were wandering through the middle west.

"This is sure going to be tricky!" Hank said glumly. "There's a party of citizens who have ridden over from Katichooki, fifteen miles south of this place. They heard that the famous Sheriff of Indian Bend was passing through, and they want your help!"

"Okay, Hank," the Moon Boy answered crisply. "You can tell 'em I'll help. Find out what it's all about and let me know. Invisible or not, I'll think of something!"

Hank went down to see the little deputation of men waiting on the boardwalk outside the hotel. Their spokesman, Jud Groves, seemed disappointed.

"Waal, we really wanted to see this young feller," he drawled "but I guess you can tell him our trouble. We come from Katichooki, and that li'l place is in a bad way. We've had six Sheriff's, and Kid Hogan's gang has run every durned one of 'em



"I'm comin' for you, Hogan!" rumbled the bear as he shambled towards the terrified gunman!

out o' town. Hogan's the slickest gunman west of the Mississippi. All the citizens are skeered of him, and he jest runs Katichooki!"

Hank nodded solemnly. "I'll tell Sheriff Mick," he promised. "He'll tackle the job for you."

"We sure would like to see him," said Jud Groves wistfully.

"Waal, it just ain't possible right now!" Hank said desperately. "Nobody can see him—er—I mean, he's kinda feelin' shy. Don't worry, folks. Mick will tackle this Kid Hogan!"

Some hours later, Hank Luckner rode out of town and took the trail for Katichooki. He was leading a riderless horse—at least it seemed to be riderless, but it was really carrying the invisible Mick.

By mid-afternoon they had reached the rugged hills which looked down on the township of Katichooki.

"Let's cook up some bacon and beans before we ride in," Mick suggested. "I want to think how I'm going to deal with this business." Hank quickly made their meal, and watched with interest as Mick tucked in. It was uncanny to see a forkful of food rise in the air and then vanish completely as Mick swallowed it!

Suddenly Hank gave a gasp and pointed. "Limping long-horns!" he spluttered. "Look—behind you, Mick!"

A huge and shaggy bear, walking upright on its hind legs, had come shambling out from behind a rock. Mick turned his invisible head and chuckled.

He rose and walked towards the snarling bear. Hank could hear funny little grunts and snuffles coming from Mick, almost as if the Moon Boy were talking to the bear. Then Hank saw the shaggy fur of the bear's head smoothing down and springing up again as Mick's invisible hand stroked it!

Snuffling contentedly, the bear put out its tongue and licked Mick's hand!

"Hank! This gives me a great idea!" Mick called excitedly, feeding a rasher of bacon to his furry friend. "Now listen! You ride on into Katichooki. I want Kid Hogan to learn that the Sheriff of Indian Bend can't be bothered to tackle such a small-time gunman himself, but that I'm sending a deputy to do the job!"

"Chattering chipmunks!" gasped Hank. "That will sure get Kid Hogan all steamed up!"

"Never mind that," Mick chuckled. "You do as I say. And remember, I'll be around."

Hank's guess was right. When he spread the word in Katichooki, all the citizens promptly took cover in their houses and closed the shutters of the windows! At least, all except Kid Hogan, who was nearly bursting with rage.

The gunman, a lean, wolfish man, took up his position right in the centre of the dusty main street, just where the trail curved round into the town.

"So I'm only worth a deputy!" he snarled, loosening his guns in their holsters. "Waal, we'll soon settle this! The guy can go for his guns as soon as he turns that corner!"

Hank, peering from an alley between two shacks, waited impatiently. So did everybody else, peering through cracks in the shutters. Half an hour passed then suddenly a figure appeared round the bend of the trail, fifty paces from Kid Hogan. The figure wore a Stetson, and gunbelts hung round its waist.

But it was not a man. It was a huge bear! The bear shambled forward on its hind legs, looking strangely human. As it drew closer, Hank could see that the badge of a deputy was clipped to the thick fur of the bear's chest!

Kid Hogan stood as if turned to stone. A gurgling stammer (Continued on next page)

bubbled from his dry lips as he tried to speak.

"Wh-what's this?" he babbled wildly. "Have I gone loco?"

The bear plodded menacingly forward, closing the gap. Suddenly a growling voice sounded, a voice which seemed as if it must have come from the bear itself!

"I'm comin' for you, Hogan!" it rumbled. "Draw, you yeller dog! Draw!" Only Hank Luckner could know that it was the invisible Moon Boy speaking!

The bear was only ten paces away when Kid Hogan snapped out of his numb bewilderment. His hands streaked for the smooth, well-worn butts of his guns. The deadly Colts leapt clear of the holsters, and then... it seemed as if Hogan flung the two guns to the ground in front of him!

Hank chuckled to himself. He guessed that Mick had nipped behind Hogan and jerked the two guns from his hands as soon as they were drawn!

Hogan's mouth fell open and he gaped stupidly. The fact that some invisible force had twitched the guns neatly from his hands was the last straw. His nerve snapped, and with a yell of fear he turned and fled!

The bear dropped on all fours and went pounding after the gunman at a swift, shambling gallop. A tree stood just outside the one hotel in Katichooki. Kid Hogan made for it and went scrambling high up the trunk at a frantic speed, yelling for help.

The bear halted below. Hank had picked up Hogan's guns and raced after Mick's strange "deputy". As he came up with the bear, he heard a voice from nowhere whispering: "Cover Hogan with your gun, Hank, and call out the citizens!"

A few minutes later a crowd of the townsfolk had gathered round timidly, staring from the bear to the treed gunman. Hank called Jud Groves forward.

"Reckon this is what you wanted Mr. Groves," he said cheerfully. "You can have Hogan lodged safely in the town gaol now!"

When Hogan had been locked up by the staggered citizens, Jud Groves shook hands gratefully with Hank, eyeing the bear which stood patiently nearby.

"I don't understand all this, younker," said Jud. "But we sure are thankful! Now—what about the rest of Hogan's gang? They sure are tough hombres!" Hank paced up and down for a moment, pretending to be deep in thought. He was really listening to Mick's whispered instructions!

"We—er—I mean, I'll stay at this hotel overnight," Hank said at last. "And perhaps you can find an empty stable for Sheriff Mick's deputy. We'll tackle the Hogan gang tomorrow!"

THE next evening Mick, who was still invisible, was in a stable with the bear.

"Now, what's the next move?" Mick murmured to himself. "Using old Bruno here as a deputy, I've managed to get Kid Hogan safely in gaol, but now the townsfolk want me to find the rest of his gang. Hank's been out all day trying to get a clue to their hide-out. He should be back by now."

Suddenly the door of the stable swung open and Jud Groves entered nervously. He carried a lantern in one hand and a grimy scrap of paper in the other. Of course Jud could not know that Mick, the famous Sheriff, was anywhere around.

"I—er, I guess," mumbled Jud falteringly, "er—gee! I feel plumb foolish, talking to a bear! No offence!" he added hastily. "Waal, Mr. Deputy, this message has been sent in by Hogan's gang. There's nobody else to give it to, so I guess you'd better have it!"

Jud held out the paper hesitantly, then paused.

"Gosh! Maybe he can't read!" he muttered. Then went on aloud: "Guess I'll read it out, Mr. Deputy. It says: 'We got the kid called Hank. You better let Hogan outa gaol, or we'll fix a little necktie party for the kid.' It's signed by Ned Cullen, that's Hogan's right-hand man," Jud ended.

He hesitated uncertainly for a moment, then put the paper on the floor and backed out of the stable with a sigh of relief.

"Okay! I'll see to it!" said a deep, growling voice. It sounded like a bear's voice—if a bear were able to speak!—but, of course, it was really the invisible Moon Boy speaking.

Ten minutes later the door of Katichooki gaol clanged open and Bruno the deputy stalked in. Guided by the Moon Boy, Bruno shambled forward on his hind legs to the cell where Kid Hogan was held.

"Your pals have snatched Hank Luckner!" said the growling voice which Mick used for Bruno. "They say I gotta let you go!"

Kid Hogan looked up with a thin smile. He was nervous, but it seemed that he held the whip hand now.

"Then you better do like they say!" he rasped. "You'll never find their hide-out, if that's what you're aimin' to do!" Bruno stood quite still for a long moment, then turned and lumbered away.

"Mebbe you're right!" said the growling voice.

Mick the Moon Boy had learnt just what he wanted! He was rather annoyed with himself for not having tackled the problem in this way earlier on—but there had been rather a lot to think about!

In those few moments spent with Kid Hogan, Mick had discovered the gang's hide-out. On the Moon the people had developed the art of thought reading, and it was quite simple for Mick to pick up Hogan's

thoughts after mentioning his gang.

He now knew that the gang's hide-out was in a deserted ghost town some six miles west!

There was nobody to see Bruno when he left Katichooki, for all the townsfolk were abed. And nobody would have seen Mick the Moon Boy, anyway, for he was invisible. Outside the town Bruno dropped into a more comfortable all-fours position at Mick's instructions, and together they headed west for the ghost town.

It was a difficult place to find, for it consisted of a mere huddle of broken-down shacks nestling in a little valley, but at last they reached it. Settling Bruno in hiding, where the bear could take a nap, Mick began to scout through the ghost town.

It was nearly dawn now. The Hogan gang were lying-up in a ramshackle place which stood on the edge of a shallow gulley. Mick fitted on his zonic goggles, another Moon invention. With these goggles he could see through anything, just as if he had X-ray eyes!

The Moon Boy saw that Hank was lying bound in one corner of the hut, while the eight members of the gang were sprawled about on blankets on the floor. One of them, Ned Cullen, was awake. He was busily frying a huge pan of eggs and ham over a rusty stove.

With a soft chuckle, Mick crouched down in the gulley and took a slim, pencil-like object from a pocket of his invisible suit. This object could project a ray so powerful that it would pierce a mile of solid steel!

Mick adjusted the miniature ray-gun, then held it at an angle and projected the ray. There was no sound, but in a flash a neat round hole had been driven up through the side of the gulley and through the floor of the shack which stood above.

A moment later Mick was holding the nozzle of another tiny cylinder against the hole, and this time there was a soft hissing sound.

Inside the hut Ned Cullen suddenly threw back his head and chuckled. The other men had started to wake up now and they stared.

"Ho, ho, ho!" chortled Ned. "I was just thinking how funny it would be, Baldy, if I tipped this pan over your bald head!" The idea seemed to tickle everybody, for all the men guffawed with laughter.

Hardly able to stand up for laughing, Ned Cullen reeled across the hut and carried out his idea. Baldy, a stocky little man, sat with egg-yolk and bacon fat streaming over his head and shoulders. But he was still laughing like a hyena!

Mick had pumped a special gas into the hut. It was like laughing-gas, but far stronger!

"Hey, heh, heh!" cackled Baldy. "Say, Ned! What a joke if I parted your hair for you—

with lead!" He whipped out his gun and fired. Next second there was a clean parting about half an inch wide in Ned Cullen's bushy hair!

Cullen was fairly convulsed at this rich joke!

"How about a li'l tune, boys?" he said, spluttering and gasping with mirth. And with that he began to bang the frying-pan backwards and forwards across the heads of his friends, ringing a different note from each head.

"Look at me!" he quavered, almost in hysterics. "I'm a moonician! I'm a moonician!"

Clang, ding, boing, clonk! went the fry-pan. And yet the dazed badmen still rolled with hysterical laughter!

Mick the Moon Boy came close to the corner of the hut where Hank was lying. With a neat flick of his wrist, he cut a big square hole from the wall with his ray-gun, then reached through and dragged Hank out.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Hank was giggling weakly. Mick released his pal, then directed the ray-gun upwards and moved round the shack. The powerful ray sheared through the supports, the walls fell outwards, and the whole of the timbered roof crashed down upon the gang.

A medley of howls and yells arose. As the men struggled out, Hank, who had now recovered from the laughing-gas, whipped the guns from their holsters. Meanwhile a shrill whistle from Mick called up the grim figure of Bruno.

"Right!" whispered Mick as the dazed and breathless badmen stood in a helpless and bewildered group. "Let's get them moving, Hank!"

It was nearing mid-day when the startled townsfolk of Katichooki saw the Hogan gang being marched up to the gaol. Behind them came Bruno, complete with Stetson, gunbelts and deputy's badge. And beside the strange deputy walked Hank.

"Well, Mr. Groves," Hank called cheerily, "I guess Sheriff Mick's deputy has cleaned up the rest of the gang for you!"

"Oh! Sure! That's just dandy!" stammered Jud Groves, bewildered but happy. Then the look of delight faded from his face, to be replaced by an anxious expression.

"Sheriff Mick's deputy is going to stay on in Katichooki, isn't he, younker? He's got to! This town just can't do without him!"

"Er—I'll have to see about it!" stammered Hank.

This was a new problem! He and Mick did not want to stay in Katichooki... and they certainly couldn't leave Bruno there on his own! The Moon Boy would have to do some smart thinking to find a way out of his puzzle!

Don't miss the fun our two chums have sorting out their bear problem next week!

THE ADVENTURES OF

CLAUDE
AND

CUTHBERT
THE TWO NEW BOYS

THERE'LL BE NO CRICKET THIS AFTERNOON, BOYS! DR CROTCHET, THE GREAT PIANIST IS COMING TO PLAY TO THE SCHOOL. I WANT YOU TWO TO MOVE THE PIANO TO THE MAIN HALL RIGHT AWAY!

GOLLY, IS HE?
ER I MEAN,
YES, SIR!

GOSH! NO
CRICKET,
CLAUDE!

I DON'T WANT TO LISTEN TO A SILLY RECITAL, CUTHBERT. SO LET'S GET THIS JOB DONE QUICKLY AND THEN MAKE OURSELVES SCARCE!

A JOLLY GOOD
IDEA, CLAUDE!

CRUMBS, CLAUDE!
THE STAIRS!

WOW! I FORGOT
ABOUT THEM!

GOLLY! WHAT
ARE WE GOING
TO DO NOW,
CLAUDE?

WE'LL JUST HAVE TO
TAKE THE BITS INTO THE
HALL AND FIX THEM
TOGETHER, CLAUDE!

THERE! THAT'S THAT
CUTHBERT! NOW WE'LL
NIP OFF BEFORE OLD
CROTCHET COMES!

I WONDER IF
IT STILL PLAYS,
CLAUDE!

AH! ZEE PIANO! I WILL
JUST PRACTICE A FEW
SCALES BEFORE I GIVE
MY RECITAL!

CORKS!!
DR CROTCHET!

S'FUNNY, NOT A SOUND!
I MUST STRIKE ZEE
PIANO A LITTLE HARDER!

OOR! NOT
TOO HARD
I HOPE!

GOSH!

CRUMBS!
THAT'S
DONE IT!

BOO! HOO! THE PIANO!
SHE IS BROKE! WHAT
SHALL I DO NOW?
I CANNOT PLAY MY
RECITAL!

YOU CAN
COME AND
PLAY CRICKET
WITH US, SIR!

A GOOD
IDEA!

PLAY CREEKIT?
WHAT SORT OF INSTRUMENT
IS ZAT? HOW DO YOU
PLAY IT?

COME ON,
DR CROTCHET! BUNN
AND I WILL
SHOW YOU!

AH! ZISS CREEKIT IS
BETTER THAN PLAYING
ZEE PIANO! I AM JOLLY
GLAD SHE BREAK!

BAH!

SO ARE
WE!

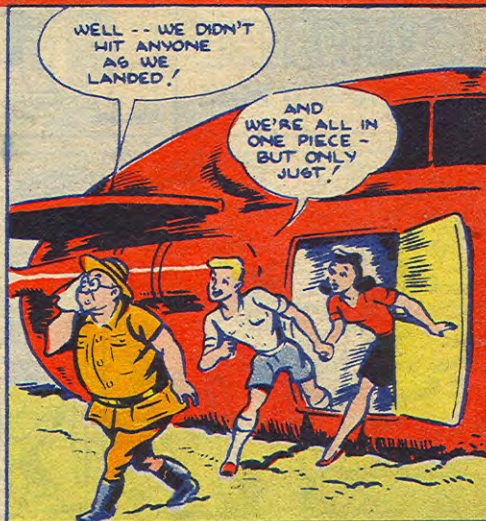
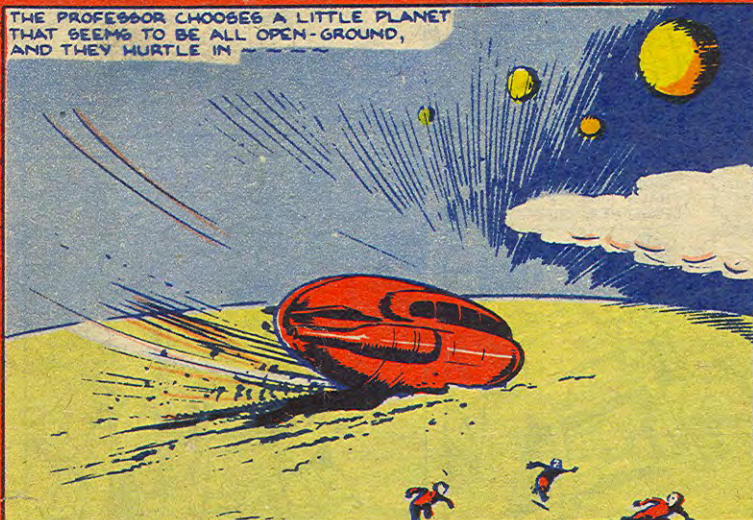
COMET

PRICE
3⁰
EVERY
MONDAY

THE SKY EXPLORERS

(Continued from page 11)

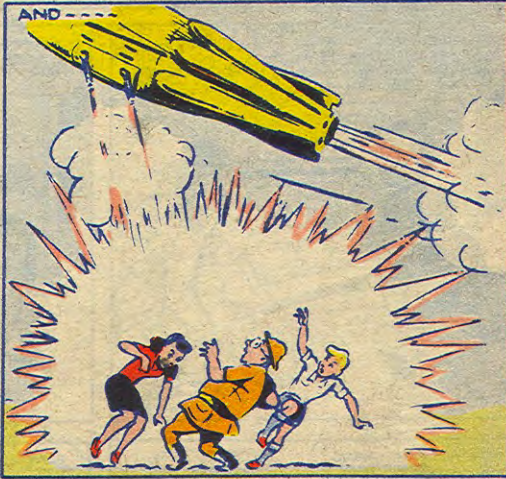
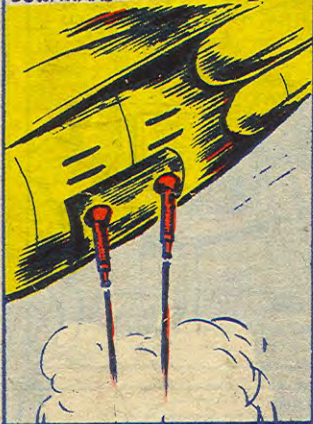
THE PROFESSOR CHOOSES A LITTLE PLANET THAT SEEMS TO BE ALL OPEN-GROUND, AND THEY HURTLE IN



BUT AS THEY STAND THERE, A LONG RAUISH CRAFT COMES SPEEDING TOWARDS THEM



BUT THINGS LIKE GUNS ON THE STRANGE AIRCRAFT POINT DOWNWARD



PETER, ANN, AND THEIR UNCLE SUDDENLY FIND THEMSELVES COMPLETELY IMPRISONED



WHILE INSIDE THE STRANGE CRAFT



Next week the three explorers are taken to Atlanta, the wonderful capital of the Milky Way!