

INDIANS ON THE WARPATH! A NEW "KIT CARSON" ADVENTURE STARTS INSIDE TODAY!

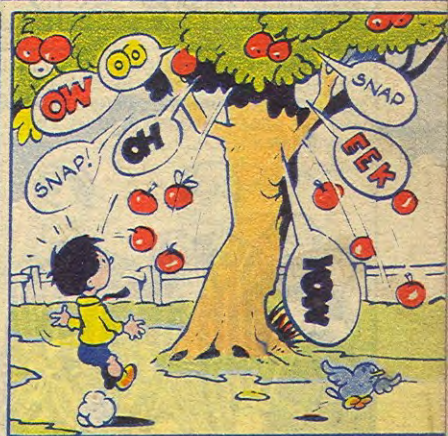
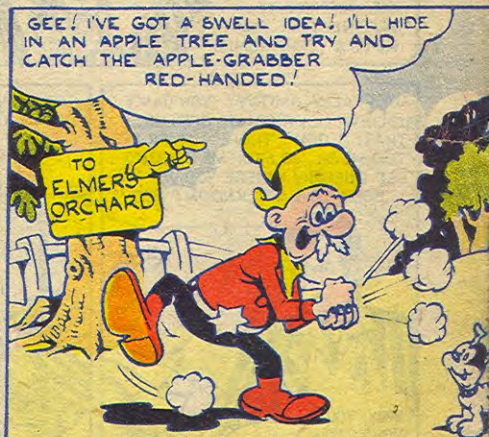
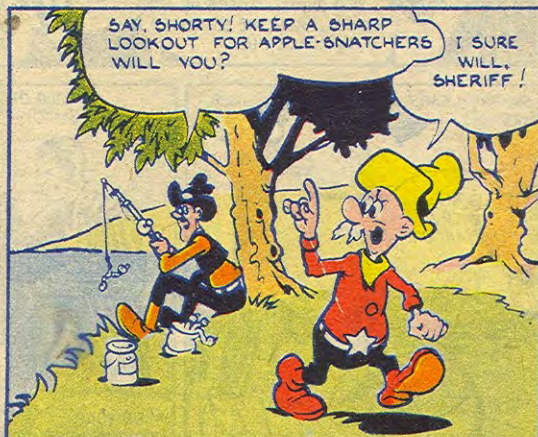
COMET

PRICE
3^D
EVERY
MONDAY

No. 208, July 12, 1952

SHORTY

**The
DEPUTY SHERIFF**



THE WORST BOY AT GREYFRIARS

Vernon-Smith, the bouncer, has let the school cricket team down! Because he didn't turn up, they lost the match. Everyone thinks that he has returned to his old bad ways that earned him his nickname. What they don't know is that the bouncer is in bad trouble, through no fault of his own. He is shielding and hiding his Cousin Alan, who has deserted from the Army!



WHAT A DIRTY TRICK, TO LET THE SIDE DOWN AT THE LAST MINUTE. WAIT TILL I SEE THAT ROTTER VERNON-SMITH!

THE WAITFULNESS WILL NOT BE LONG, OLD CHUM. THERE HE COMES, FROM THE ESTEEMED FRIARDALE BUS!

AS THE BUS STARTS AWAY, BUNTER ROLLS FORWARD TO MEET SMITHY --

I SAY, SMITHY, OLD PAL! JUST A SECOND! I HAPPEN TO BE IN URGENT NEED OF A FIVER!

OH, GET OUT OF MY WAY, YOU FAT FOOL!

OH, REALLY, SMITHY! YOU CAN'T JOLLYWELL BRUSH ME OFF LIKE THAT! I DON'T THINK A FIVER IS TOO MUCH, TO STOP ME TELLING OLD QUELOCHY WHERE YOU'VE BEEN THIS AFTERNOON! SEE!



WHY, YOU -- YOU ROTTEN BLACKMAILING CAP!

SAVAGELY, SMITHY LEAPS AT BUNTER, LASHING OUT IN A FURY --



OUCH! HELP! YAROOH!

HOLD ON, THERE! THAT'S QUITE ENOUGH, SMITHY! THRASHING BUNTER LIKE THIS IS JUST ROTTEN BULLYING! HE'S NO MATCH FOR YOU!



MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS, WHARTON!

KEEP HIM OFF, YOU FELLOWS! YOW! OUCH! I--I JUST TOLD HIM THAT HE WAS A ROTTER FOR LETTING DOWN THE CRICKET TEAM AND-- AND THE BEAST PITCHED INTO ME LIKE A MADMAN --



BUNTER WAS RIGHT! AND YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KNOCK HIM ABOUT FOR TELLING THE TRUTH, SMITHY. HANDS OFF HIM!

SUDDENLY THE BOUNDER LASHES OUT -- TAKING HARRY UNAWARES.



I TOLD YOU TO KEEP YOUR NOSE OUT OF MY BUSINESS, WHARTON! NOW TAKE THAT!

YOU DIRTY ROTTER! WHAT A DIRTY SNEAKING BLOW! I'LL SMASH YOU TO SMITHEREENS!

BLAZING WITH ANGER, BOB CHERRY SPRINGS AT THE BOUNDER --



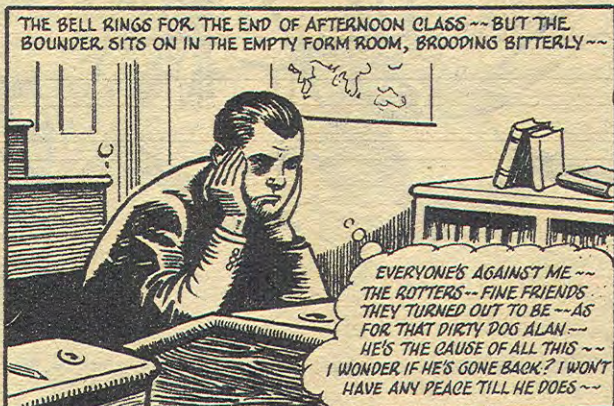
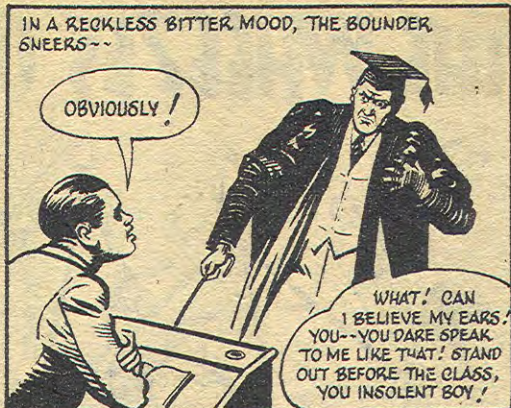
GO IT, ESTEEMED BOB!



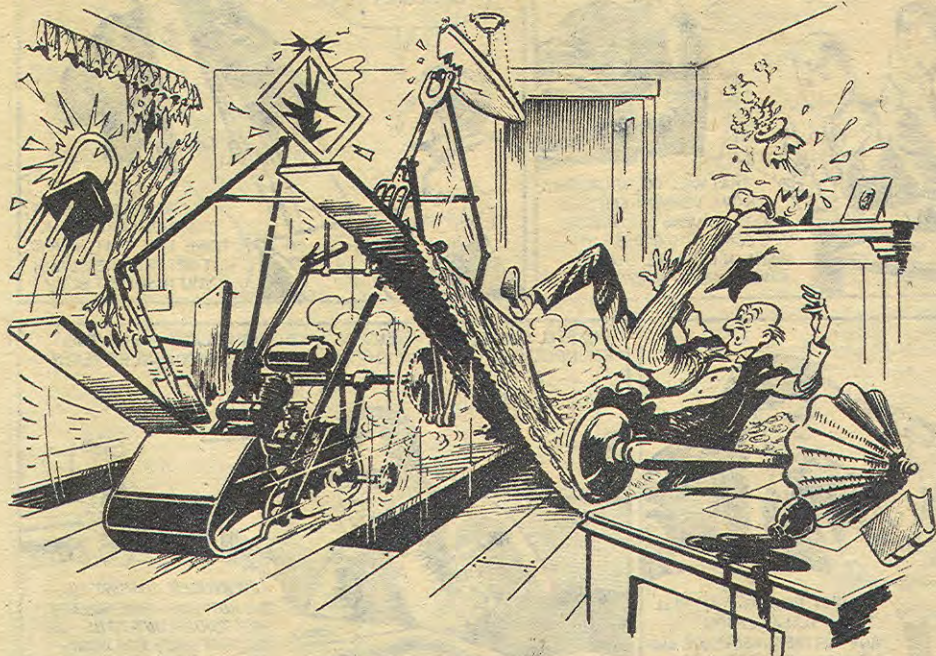
MAN DOWN! WELL DONE, BOB! THAT'LL TEACH THE ROTTER!



SO THEY BELIEVE BUNTER BEFORE ME. WELL, LET THEM, THE ROTTERS! -- I'LL HAVE NOTHING MORE TO DO WITH THEM --



THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD



The Wizzardig sprang into action. The fork and spade dug into the floor, and with a wild yell Dr. Gandybar was jerked off his feet.

WILLIE'S GARDENING MACHINE

MRS. SPROGGS, the housekeeper at Gandybar Academy, marched into the headmaster's study one morning. She was angry.

"That garden of yours," she began with a sniff. "It's in a dreadful state. All sorts of seeds should have been sown by now. As it is, it hasn't even been dug." She sniffed again.

"I—er, I haven't had time," pleaded Dr. Gandybar uneasily.

Mrs. Sprogs scowled. "That may be as may be," she snorted. "Find someone who has got time, then. Employ a man to dig it."

"The school can't afford to pay a gardener," wriggled the head.

"The school can't afford to let the boys go hungry," Mrs. Sprogs snapped. "You'll be in a fine pickle if they complain to their parents about not enough food. That's what it will come to, you mark my words."

Dr. Gandybar groaned.

"There are some gypsies camped just outside the village," Mrs. Sprogs went on. "Husky chaps, they are. Just you go and get them on the job for a few days!"

Saying that, she stamped out of the head's study.

Dr. Gandybar glared after her. The trouble was, she was quite right! Many of the vegetables needed for the boys' meals had to be grown in the garden, and there would be

trouble if something was not done soon.

So that afternoon the head went to the gypsies' camp, just outside the village of Little Mudwump. Nervously he knocked at the door of the first caravan he came to.

The door opened. A burly man with a beard glared at him. "Oh, er, good afternoon," said Dr. Gandybar, stepping back a pace. "I wonder if you . . ."

"Op it," said the burly man in a threatening tone.

"Come, sir," said Dr. Gandybar with dignity. "I was merely going to ask if . . ."

"Op it," said the burly man again, and slammed the door.

The headmaster was about to hammer on the door angrily. He thought better of it, though.

As he turned to walk away he saw another gypsy watching him from the second caravan. This one was lean and sly-looking.

"Ah, sir," called Dr. Gandybar. "Your friend doesn't seem very—ah, friendly. I wonder if . . ."

"Op eet! Getta going," the lean man ordered, in a foreign accent.

Furious and fuming, the head made his way back along the road to the school. He was just passing Mudwump Abbey, a pile of ruins hundreds of years old, when he saw a shabbily-dressed man digging busily.

Dr. Gandybar gazed at the man's back. Here, clearly, was an old fellow who liked digging.

The headmaster cleared his throat.

"Hey, you there, my man!" he called. "Would you like to earn yourself a shilling or two?"

The man stopped digging and swung round fiercely. Dr. Gandybar blinked and then went red in the face. The digger was Squire Perrins, one of the School Governors and the squire of Little Mudwump!

"How dare you, sir!" spluttered the squire. "Oh—it's you, Dr. Gandybar," he added in angry surprise. "Really, I must protest at your remark! Earn a shilling or two, indeed!"

The unhappy head stammered an apology. "I do beg your pardon, Squire," he bumbled. "I—I thought . . . Well, your back was toward me, and you are wearing such old clothes . . ."

Squire Perrins began to see the funny side of the incident. "Quite so!" he chuckled. "I do see how the mistake arose!"

He looked around him and came nearer to the head. He dropped his voice to a whisper.

"As a matter of fact," he said, "I am digging for buried treasure."

"Buried treasure!" echoed Dr. Gandybar.

"Sh!" urged the Squire. "Not so loud! A local legend says that the monks who lived here centuries ago, buried a hoard of valuable old coins near the Abbey. I'm looking for it."

Dr. Gandybar was quite excited. "Of course!" he exclaimed. "You collect old coins!

I remember now."

Squire Perrins nodded. "I have a costly collection," he said proudly. "It is worth hundreds of pounds. If only I can find this other lot I shall be a rich man indeed."

The squire was keen to return to his labours, so he wished Dr. Gandybar good afternoon. The headmaster made his way back to the school, his thoughts again turning anxiously towards his garden.

He came to an unhappy decision. There was nothing for it but to get into his old clothes and start the digging himself. Then he had a brain-wave. He would get some of the boys on the job! After all, they were the ones who ate the food!

He spoke about it during geography class.

"I know many of you boys are interested in nature," he beamed. "So I have generously decided to throw open my beautiful garden to those who wish to study the wonders of plant life. I think I can allow about half a dozen boys to come, starting after school today."

He smiled amiably around the classroom.

"There will be nothing added to your school fees for this privilege," he purred. "Now, may I have the names of all those interested? Only six, please."

No one stirred. Dr. Gandybar frowned.

"Come, come," he said sharply. "There must be *someone* who likes digg . . . I mean the glories of nature?"

No one answered.

"Very well, then," snapped the head. "I'll have you Spinks, and you Clunk, and you Gump, and you Twimple, and you Bash, and you Wizzard. Report to me in the garden!" He glared around and walked angrily out of the room.

The six unhappy victims reported as ordered. Armed with spades and forks they set to work unwillingly. Jimmy Bash complained the most after the head had left them.

"Old stinker!" he growled, stabbing his fork, fiercely into the ground. "Making us do his dirty work for him! Can't you get us out of this, Willie? Haven't you got an invention you want to work on where you need my help?"

Willie Wizzard, the schoolboy inventor, was leaning on his spade. His brow was furrowed in thought.

"As a matter of fact, Jimmy," he answered slowly "I think I have got an invention I want to work on. It is a gardening machine. The notion just came to me."

"It couldn't come at a better time!" cried Jimmy, slapping his pal heartily on the back.

"When do we start?" "Why not now?" grinned Willie. "Let me see," he went on, "I shall want one of these digging forks and a spade. But first, will you get the head's petrol-driven lawnmower? I think I have everything else I shall need in my workshop."

Jimmy rushed off and returned with the Head's motor lawn-mower, which he trundled into Willie's workshop. At once the schoolboy inventor busied himself with spanners and pliers on the lawn-mower. He added one or two sprockets, then attached two levers. After bolting the fork and spade to the levers, he stepped back to inspect his work.

"Well?" asked Jimmy Bash anxiously.

Willie nodded slowly. "I think so," he replied. "Let's take it out and try it."

The two boys wheeled the lawn-mower back to the place where their four classmates were still digging.

"Willie will now demonstrate the Wizzardig!" cried Jimmy.

As the others crowded round, Willie set the machine in motion. It moved forward steadily. The fork on the front rose up and down, and after it, followed the spade, which, with every movement, turned up a great clod of earth.

"Well done!" yelled Jimmy. "Now let's take it in turns to steer it backwards and forwards across this patch of ground. Here—let me have first go!"

Just as he took hold of the lawn-mower's handles an angry voice smote his ear!

"Bash! What are you doing with my lawn-mower?"

All six boys spun round. Dr. Gandybar was standing there. He was furious.

"My prize lawn-mower!" the head howled. "Your parents shall hear of this, Bash! How dare you ruin my mower on rough ground! You will. . ."

Willie Wizzard interrupted him. "Pardon me, sir," he began. "It was I who. . ."

"Silence, boy!" roared the headmaster. "I don't want to hear another word. I will hear anything you have to say in the morning. Now take that mower into my study. I want to examine it and write a full report to all your parents!"

And with an angry red face he marched towards the school.

"Phew!" breathed Wizzard. "He's really got 'em today! I'm sorry, you chaps. I shall, of course, own up in the morning. Meantime, I suppose we had better get the Wizzardig into the head's study."

They carried the machine indoors and went to their rooms. The head returned to his study some minutes later after his rounds of the school. He shut the door and glared at the machine.

"Wretched boys!" he muttered. "What do they think they are up to?"

He bent to examine the mower carefully.

"H'm," he said at last. "I see. I wonder if this could be one of Wizzard's ideas? Let me find out how it works."

He started up the mower. It sprang forward. The fork dived deep into the carpet and through the floorboards. The fork came up again bringing a whole floorboard with it followed by a spadeful of bricks and mortar.

As the carpet was pulled, it jerked Dr. Gandybar off his feet. With a wild "Wow!" he landed flat on his back on the floor. He scrambled to his feet again. By this time the Wizzardig had ripped up another floorboard. The head dashed towards the machine to try to stop it. He tripped over the carpet and fell down the huge hole in the corner of the room!

Dr. Gandybar landed with a bump and a howl about twelve feet below. The howl echoed. Picking himself up the head found himself in a kind of underground passage, damp and dim. Many hundred yards away he could see a patch of daylight.

Above him he could hear the Wizzardig still plunging around his study. The head peered around. There was nothing to stand on. He tried to leap upwards, but he could not jump high enough. He would have to shout for help and hope some of the boys heard him.

Dr. Gandybar opened his mouth, then shut it. It would never do for the boys to find him in this undignified state.

There was only one thing to do. He must make his way towards that patch of daylight. He stumbled forward. Sometimes he splashed through puddles. At other times he walked face first into cobwebs. He bruised his shins and bashed his ankles. At last he came to where the patch of light was.

The daylight came from a hole in the roof of the underground passage. From the hole hung a rope ladder!

Thankfully Dr. Gandybar started to climb. He had taken two steps upwards when an angry voice reached him. It came from farther along the passage.

"Hurry up with that swag!" someone was saying harshly. "Carlo on guard up there will be getting anxious!"

A cold shiver ran down Dr. Gandybar's back. He recognised that voice. The speaker was the burly gypsy he had met that afternoon!

He had another shock the very next moment. Another voice spoke. It came from the hole above him!

"Quick!" it hissed. "We gotta make-a da gettaway!"

Dr. Gandybar crouched back into the shadows. He could see a man's head framed against the daylight. That must be the man Carlo on guard!

He thought quickly. Carlo must have seen him on the ladder. Disguising his voice as much as he could be called back: "We are nearly there. The others are coming now!"

Carlo grunted. "Good," he said, thinking he'd heard one of the men he was waiting for. He moved out of Dr. Gandybar's sight.

The headmaster jumped nimbly to the ground and hid himself in the darkest corner he could find. He was just in time.

Around a bend in the passage came three men. The two in front carried something between them. But it was the third who made Dr. Gandybar gasp. In his arms was a big box crammed with coins!

The three men came to a halt by the rope ladder. The headmaster's eyes nearly popped out of his head. The thing the first two men were carrying was—Squire Perrins himself, bound and gagged!

Dr. Gandybar gave a loud yell and sprang forward to rescue the squire. Fists flying, he leaped at the burly man. Caught by surprise, and still holding the squire's feet, the burly man didn't have a chance. A terrific biff caught him right on the nose. With a howl he clapped a hand to his face.

Dr. Gandybar turned on the second man and clipped him neatly on the jaw. He went down without a sound.

The third man had now recovered from his surprise. He had dropped the box of coins and pulled a blackjack. He took a mighty swipe at Dr. Gandybar who dodged in time. The headmaster recovered his balance and thwacked the man on the ear. It was not a heavy blow,

however, for with a snarl the man lifted his blackjack again.

Once more Dr. Gandybar dodged, and this time he moved forward to grapple at close quarters. He was just about to dig the fellow in the ribs when he heard a fierce whisper in his ear.

"Peeg dog!" It was Carlo, who had clambered down the rope ladder!

Carlo's strong arms gripped him. Then the burly man he had hit first came towards Dr. Gandybar, holding a handkerchief to his bleeding nose. He lifted his fist.

Dr. Gandybar waited for the blow, but it didn't come. A strange clanking sound was filling the air.

"Lumme!" cried the burly man, turning pale.

"Caramba!" hissed Carlo.

Dr. Gandybar turned to look. Coming rapidly along the passage was the Wizzardig. Just behind it were Willie Wizzard and Jimmy Bash!

The Wizzardig jabbed merrily at the ground as it rattled along, churning up earth and stones. It headed straight for Carlo.

"My feet!" screamed Carlo. "It will dig my feet!" He turned on his heels and ran as fast as he could. The other two villains paused for a second. Then they too scampered off in the same direction, leaving the fourth man unconscious on the floor beside the bound Squire Perrins.

The Wizzardig clanked swiftly by the astonished headmaster (Continued on page 18)



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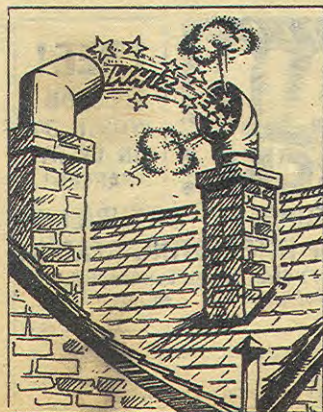
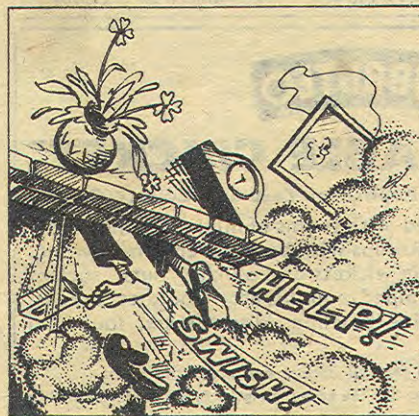
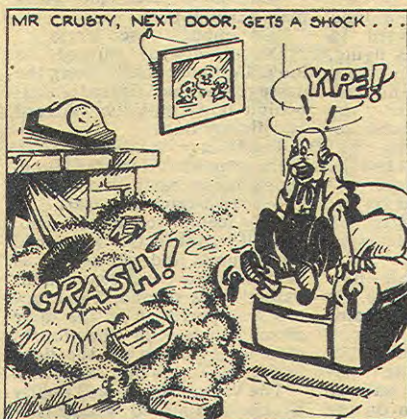
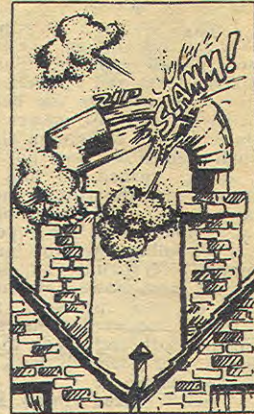
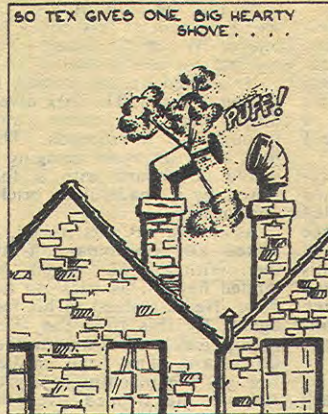
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The Mystery of the Ivory Mandarin

SOMEWHERE in the world was a huge hidden treasure—a great hoard of stolen property, the loot from dozens of clever robberies. The master crook who had planned these robberies and hidden the treasure was a cunning old Chinaman named Wan Chen.

Wan Chen had the ivory mandarin made to hold the secret of his treasure hoard. It was a little ivory statue, with clockwork to make it dance, and if you counted the steps carefully, and watched which way the mandarin faced, you could discover the exact spot on the map where the treasure lay.

A second master-crook, called the Professor, was determined to get the treasure for himself. He had tried all sorts of desperate tricks to get hold of the ivory mandarin, and he had succeeded at last. But before he had time to read more than half of the secret, the mandarin had been snatched from him by Bob Harley. However, the Professor thought that he could guess the other half.

Bob Harley, the son of Inspector Harley of Scotland Yard, and Lotus Chen—Wan Chen's daughter—had been the Professor's prisoners. When they escaped from him, they took the ivory mandarin with them, and now it was in the hands of the police. But it wouldn't work—for it had been soaked in water!

The Professor had been caught by the police—largely thanks to Bob and Lotus. But he had not been under arrest long, when he managed to make a daring escape, fleeing from the country in one of the world's fastest air-liners, a new De Holland "Rocket".

A DE HOLLAND "Rocket" can do six hundred miles an hour, and keep it up for ten thousand miles!" said Inspector Harley. "The Professor may be almost anywhere in the world by now. We don't know where even to begin looking for him!"

It was the morning after the Professor's getaway. The Inspector, with Bob and Lotus, was sitting in Superintendent Smith's office, back at Scotland Yard.

Bob and Lotus had just finished telling the full story of their own adventures of the day before, and a police officer had taken it all down in shorthand for the official record.

The Superintendent picked up the ivory mandarin, and shook it.

"And now this little chap won't work," he said, "we seem further than ever from getting all that stolen property back."

"Couldn't the ivory mandarin be mended?" asked Lotus. She and Bob Harley had become firm friends during their adventures of the last day or two.

Lotus had known nothing of her father's crooked past, until the affair of the ivory mandarin had brought it to light. Now she wanted to help right her father's wrongdoing—all the more so, because she loved him dearly. In any case, she had no idea where he was now, since he had made a daring get-away from the police in a helicopter.

"We're going to try to get the mandarin mended," Bob's dad answered her.

"But I doubt whether it will help us very much. A good watchmaker will probably be able to make the little chap dance again quite easily. But will he be able to make him dance in exactly the right way? There's all sorts of wheels and levers and things inside his clockwork, and according to the way you put 'em together, so you can make him do thousands of different little dances." "I don't think we've got much chance of hitting on the right one, you know."

"You make it sound pretty hopeless, Dad," said Bob.

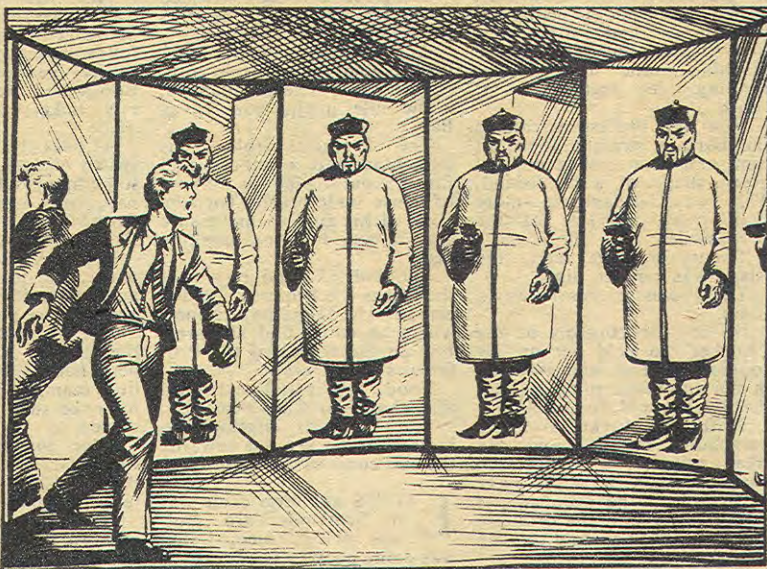
"No—I don't think it's quite that," returned the Inspector thoughtfully. "It seems to me that we've got one very good clue. Before Bob here snatched the mandarin from under the Professor's nose, the Professor had counted off the first set of steps that the mandarin made, and so he'd got hold of the first part of the secret. That first set of steps adds up to the figures 34 and 26. He does this facing East, which gives us 34 degrees, 26 minutes East longitude. But we don't know the latitude. If we did, we'd know just exactly where to look for the treasure. But we do know something else!"

"What's that?"

"That the Professor got very excited when he learned that this longitude could mean that the treasure was somewhere off the South-East coast of Africa. Bob and Lotus here heard him!"

"That's right!" put in Bob. "He said it made him think of something in the past!"

"Exactly!" said Bob's dad. "And we know a good deal



Bob stopped dead in his tracks. Facing him from every side were a dozen or more Wan Chens, all exactly alike, and all holding guns!

about the Professor's past. Let's look up his record, and see if he has ever been in that part of the world, or had anything to do with it!"

The Superintendent sent for the file which contained the Professor's official life-story—so far as it was known—and together he and the Inspector pored over it.

Suddenly the Inspector gave a shout.

"Here we are!" he cried. "Listen to this! 'In 1932 the Professor was among those believed lost when the oil-tanker *Southern Star* sank off the South-East coast of Africa!'"

The Super snapped his fingers together.

"It might be interesting to know the exact position in which she sank!" he said.

Bob's dad reached for the telephone.

"Get me Lloyds," he said.

Nobody spoke as he waited to be connected through to the head office of the famous insurance company. Almost every ship afloat is insured with Lloyds, and he knew that they keep exact records of every sinking.

He was soon able to speak to the official whom he knew could tell him what he wanted to know. There was a short wait while the necessary book was fetched. Then came the reply.

"Thank you very much!" said Inspector Harley at last. He hung up the phone, and turned to the others.

"The position at which the *Southern Star* sank is 34 degrees 26 minutes East, and 37 degrees 14 minutes South, and what's

more, the vessel was owned by a Hong Kong company of which Wan Chen was a director!"

"Holy smoke!" gasped Bob. "So Wan Chen stowed his treasure on board this tanker, and then hid it by sinking it to the bottom of the sea!"

"It certainly looks that way!" Inspector said Harley.

ON and on the "Rocket" had thundered. High in the air—far above the levels of ordinary aircraft—the sleek silver monster was far out of sight of anyone on the ground. Even the mighty thunder of four jet engines that pulled with the power of forty-eight thousand horses could hardly be heard. She had been flying for more than eleven hours. Southern Europe—the Mediterranean—the Sahara Desert—tropical Africa and the rolling forest lands of Tanganyika had slipped past under her speeding wings.

The Professor had held the great machine on a steady south-easterly course for nearly seven thousand miles now. Below him stretched the blue of the Indian Ocean.

This was by no means the first time the Professor had flown a big aircraft. During the world war he had piloted many different types as a special agent in the pay of the enemy.

Parachute drops were nothing new to him, and he planned to make one now.

He peered down to his left, seeking to find out just where he was. From that great height, he could scan over vast distances, for the earth below looked almost like a section of a class-room globe.

Then his searching gaze picked out a cluster of little islands, dropping back below his starboard wing. These must be the Seychelles. He glanced at his compass, and putting on a little right rudder brought the machine round until it was heading a few degrees west of south.

Now the Professor scanned the horizon straight ahead of him, and soon picked out the green shape of a big island. This was Madagascar—more than twice the size of the British Isles.

Twenty minutes later, the island was beneath him.

The Professor was ready to jump.

He set the controls of the "Rocket" to hold her on her southerly course, and switched in the automatic pilot, so that the plane would fly herself.

Swiftly he checked over his parachute harness, and the small cylinder of compressed oxygen, which he would have to breathe as he dropped. At that great height, the ordinary air is too thin and cold to keep a man alive.

The Professor adjusted his oxygen mask over his mouth and nose, slid back the metal door of the "Rocket", and jumped.

He dropped swiftly through the thin upper air. He wanted to be as near the ground as was safe before he pulled the rip-cord of his parachute, for he knew how easily a high, drifting parachute can be seen from the ground. The Professor had no wish to let the French authorities on the island know of his arrival in Madagascar.

He turned slowly over and over as he fell. First he saw the sky above him, with the silver shape of the abandoned "Rocket" winging on over the Southern Oceans. She would go on, he knew, for an hour or more yet before her fuel ran out and she spun down to a watery grave.

Over he turned again, and now he was looking at the island below. His sharp eyes

made out the shape of Tavga Bay, on the East coast. So far, so good.

The green forest below rushed up at him, faster and faster as he dropped lower and lower.

At under two thousand feet, the Professor pulled his rip-cord.

He landed, as he had planned, a few miles inland from Tavga Bay.

The Professor rolled his parachute into a bundle, and thrust it out of sight in a clump of dense underbrush. Then he checked his gun, to make sure that it was in good working order.

Food, drink, and rest were the things the Professor needed now, and in Tavga Bay he knew where he could find all three. For an old friend of the Professor's lived there.

Food, drink, and rest. And after that, Wan Chen's treasure.

The Professor chuckled to himself as he set out towards the east coast of the island.

LOTUS and Bob came out of Scotland Yard. Bob was going home. Lotus was going back to her boarding school in Buckinghamshire.

"I'll see you off at Baker Street Station," said Bob. "We'll walk along the Embankment to Westminster Underground, and get a train to Baker Street from there."

Lotus nodded. To tell the truth, she was not at all eager to go back to school. Something told her that the affair of the ivory mandarin was not yet over. And Lotus didn't want to be out of it. And anyway, where was her father?

Bob's feelings were somewhat the same. He knew that he would be going back to school, too. Back to the routine of the police cadet college. Bob sighed. He would have liked to be in at the finish—on the spot when Wan Chen's treasure was at long last discovered.

Both of them were very much wrapped up in their own thoughts as they walked along the Embankment towards the Underground station.

Neither of them noticed the little sun-burned man in the shabby suit and the cloth cap.

The little man had been waiting for them when they left Scotland Yard. Now he was following them carefully.

They reached the station, and Bob joined the short queue to buy tickets at the booking office.

At once the little man sidled swiftly up to Lotus, muttered something, and slipped a folded paper into her hand. Then he darted away, and was lost from sight in the crowd.

Lotus frowned, unfolded the paper, and glanced at it. Then her eyes widened in surprise, and her face paled.

Just then Bob came back with the tickets. He had not seen what had happened. In fact the little man had been very careful to make sure that Bob should not do so.

"I've got the tickets," said Bob. Then he saw the girl's face. "Here—I say—what's the matter? Are you feeling groggy?"

"I'm all right," Lotus spoke with an effort. Then she pulled herself together, and smiled at Bob. "It's nothing, really." She pushed the folded scrap of paper into her pocket.

Bob saw the action, and wondered to himself. Lotus had had nothing in her hand when he had left her, he felt sure. What was that scrap of paper that she was pushing away in such a hurry? Bob almost asked her, and then stopped himself. After all, she didn't have to tell him about it if she didn't want to.

"Bob—you don't have to come to Baker Street with me. After all—it's out of your way, isn't it?"

Bob was about to argue, but something in the girl's manner stopped him. She wasn't looking at him. Bob sensed that she had some very strong reason for what she was doing.

"Just give me the ticket. I can manage—really I can."

"Okay—sure," said Bob awkwardly, as he handed over one of the two tickets he had bought.

"Thank you, Bob. Goodbye." Lotus squeezed his hand. Then she was gone through the ticket barrier.

Bob frowned, and stood thinking hard. Below him on the underground he could hear the sound of a train coming in to the platform.

Then Bob made up his mind. He sprinted through the barrier, waving his ticket as he went, along a passage at the double, and down some steps two at a time.

Bob dived into a carriage, just as the automatic doors were shutting, and prayed that this wasn't the carriage Lotus had entered.

He looked around him as the train moved off. No—not a sign of Lotus. He walked to the end of the carriage, and peeped through the window which gave a glimpse into the next one.

There was Lotus, sitting sideways-on to him. In her hands was a sheet of paper.

It seemed to be a letter of some sort. Bob wished that he could read it. He had a hunch that in that letter was the reason for the girl's sudden wish to go on her way alone.

There was some mystery here. And after the adventures of the past three days, Bob could easily believe that some new peril might threaten Wan Chen's daughter.

Bob made up his mind to follow her, and keep watch until he was sure that Lotus was out of danger.

In the next carriage, Lotus sat and looked at the paper.

It was a letter.

A letter from Wan Chen, her father, telling her where he was, and asking her to come to him at once, alone.

An hour and a half later, Lotus reached Ketterwick.

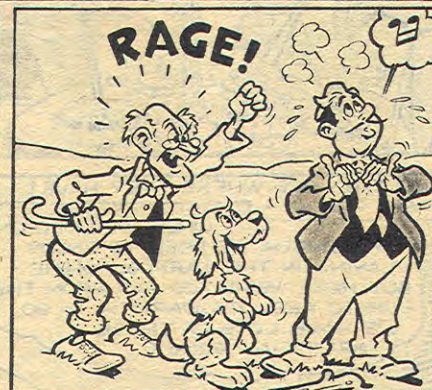
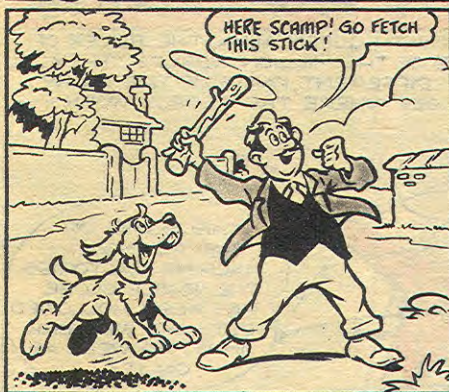
Ketterwick is a little market town, fifty miles from London. This week it was busier than usual, for a travelling fair and circus was visiting the place, and many people were coming into the town from the surrounding countryside to enjoy the fun.

The day's business had not

CHUCKLE TIME - Some jokes to keep you laughing!



SCAMP OUR HAPPY HOUND



THE MYSTERY OF THE IVORY MANDARIN (Continued from page 8)

yet begun, as Lotus picked her way among the sideshows and booths.

Fifty yards behind her, Bob Harley was watching from the cover of a merry-go-round.

Lotus stopped at last before one particular sideshow. It was a big tent, with a bright red pay desk outside the entrance. Over the top was a big lettered board, painted in bright colours with a design of dragons and stars. The lettering read:

ALL THE MAGIC OF THE MYSTIC EAST! AMAZING! MYSTIFYING! SEE CHEN WANG—THE GREATEST WIZARD OF ALL TIME!

From where he stood, Bob could read the big lettering easily. Chen Wang—Wan Chen! Could it be?

Lotus pushed up the flap of the tent, and looked inside. Then she entered.

Bob thought for a moment. Then he carefully worked his way round the outside of the various tents and booths. He was very careful to seem as though he was just strolling round, as any boy might do, out of idle curiosity. He reached the back of the Wizard's tent without anyone taking any special notice of him.

He stood for a moment until he was sure that no one was watching him. Then he moved silently into the narrow gap between the Wizard's tent and the next one and crouched down.

Wan Chen's voice came to him through the canvas.

"Dishonourable father of dithful daughter play many parts, like actor. Some bad parts. If all plans had gone well, daughter never hear of these. Now must face truth about worthless parent. Have done much that is wrong. Using disguise as Chen Wang, have visited many parts of England and planned robberies for gang to carry out. Police never suspect that Chinese wizard in sideshow and Wan Chen, Chinese ivory merchant, are one and same person. Not know now. But one cat is out of proverbial bag. Police now looking for Wan Chen."

"What are you going to do, Father? Why did you send for me?"

"Had meant to leave you here in England and return to land of honourable ancestors. Had meant you to read secret of ivory mandarin in time to come. Then police give you reward for finding Wan Chen's stolen treasure, and maybe you never know truth of parent's life of crime. But now you know truth—I take you to China."

"And the treasure, Father? Can't you give it back—it isn't—" Lotus broke off.

"Father—what's the matter?"

The fright in the girl's voice sent a chill of alarm shooting up Bob's spine.

"Honourable eavesdropper on outside of tent please not to move! This unworthy person has gun in hand!"

Bob could have kicked himself. The sun had come out from behind a cloud and thrown his shadow on the side of the canvas tent.

"Please to raise hands and stand still!" came Wan Chen's voice again.

At that moment the sun went behind a cloud.

Bob took a chance and leaped for the open towards the front side of the show-tent.

He heard the plop of a silenced gun and a bullet tore through the canvas behind him. Bob sprinted along in the open, heading down the midway of the fair. Surely Wan Chen wouldn't dare to shoot at him in the open where other people might see him.

Bob meant to dodge Wan Chen if he could. He saw the open doorway of a wooden sideshow building ahead of him. Inside was semi-darkness. Bob dived inside, hoping that Wan Chen had not seen him. He forged ahead in the gloom and bumped into something.

Dimly he could see his own reflection and guessed that he had dodged into one of a fair-ground's best-known side-shows—a mirror maze.

Bob stretched his hands out in front of himself and felt his way round three or four corners, hoping to find a way out. He couldn't go back to the front entrance, for that way he would be almost certain to run into Wan Chen, even if he hadn't seen him dodge inside.

But that was a vain hope. A second later the lights of the maze suddenly came on. Wan Chen clearly knew that he was somewhere inside and was coming after him.

Bob bumped himself against a couple of clear glass panels that had been placed among the mirrors to make the maze more baffling. Then he found an opening again and dived through. The mirrored passage took two more turns, then Bob blundered suddenly out into a many-sided space in the middle of the maze.

He stopped dead in his tracks. Facing him from every side were a dozen or more Wan Chens, and all holding guns.

Bob knew that only one was real—that all the rest were just reflections.

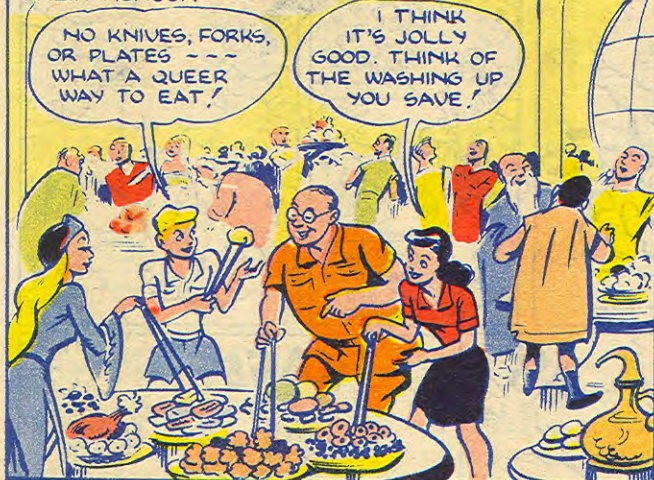
But which way should he go now?

Next week: The battle for the sunken treasure!

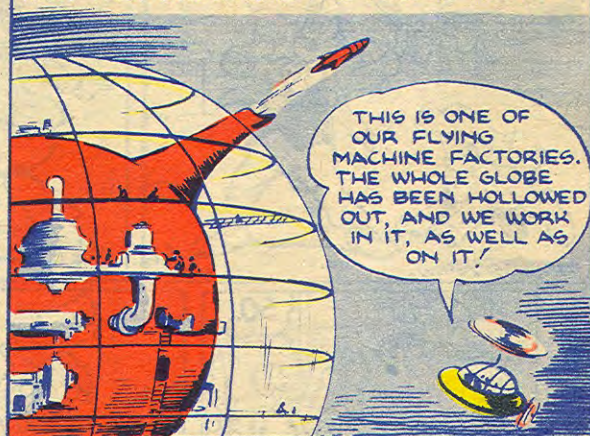
Peter and Ann, with their inventor uncle, Professor Jolly, have landed on one of the tiny worlds of the Milky Way. There they find a race of people called the Atlantans, who came from the earth thousands of years ago. They are made welcome and have a wonderful time. But Prince Grimbolt, the cousin of Queen Alva, is plotting to seize the throne.

THE SKY EXPLORERS

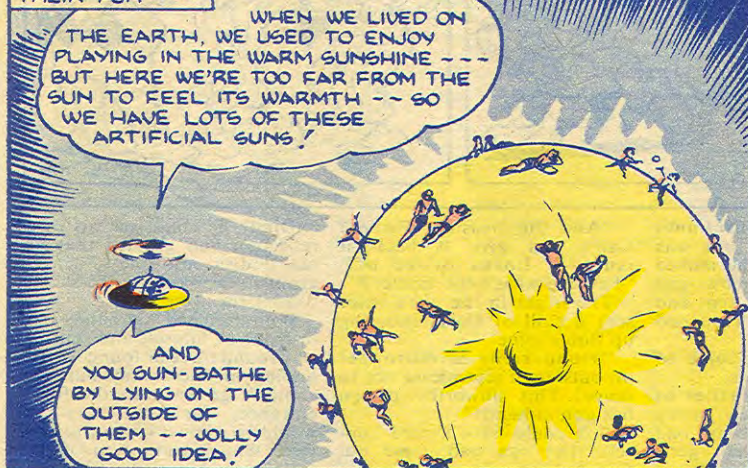
A GREAT FEAST IS HELD IN THEIR HONOUR ~ ~ ~



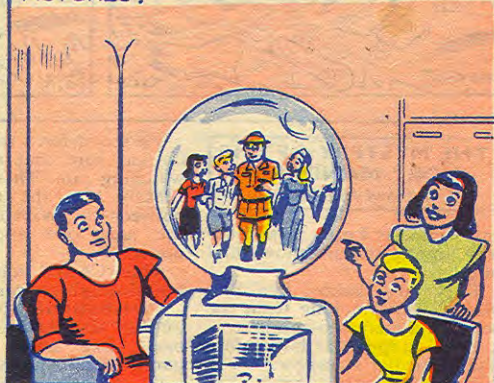
IN COMPANY WITH QUEEN ALVA, THE RULER OF THE EMPIRE OF THE MILLION WORLDS, THEY VISIT MANY DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE MILKY WAY. THEY SEE WHERE THE PEOPLE WORK ~ ~ ~



AND THEY SEE WHERE THEY HAVE THEIR FUN ~ ~ ~



THEIR PICTURES ARE SEEN IN EVERY TELEVISION GLOBE IN THE HOMES OF THE MILKY WAY FOLK ~ ~ ~ THEIR TELEVISION IS FAR AHEAD OF OURS ON EARTH. THEY HAVE "ALL ROUND" PICTURES!



ONE PERSON STUDIES THE EARTHLINGS VERY CAREFULLY INDEED. HE IS PRINCE GRIMBOLT, THE QUEEN'S COUSIN, WHO IS PLOTTING TO SEIZE THE THRONE FROM HER ~ ~ ~



AND SO, ABOUT A WEEK LATER, PRINCE GRIMBOLT SETS OUT IN HIS PRIVATE SPACE-SPEEDSTER ~ ~ ~



HE SPEEDS AWAY FROM THE WORLDS WHERE PEOPLE LIVE, AND MAKES HIS WAY TO THE COLD WORLDS, WHERE ALL IS BLEAK AND DESOLATE.



WHAT IS GRIMBOLD'S PLOT? TURN TO THE BACK PAGE!

HE LANDS AT LAST ON ONE OF THEM.



HE GETS OUT OF HIS AIRCRAFT IN THE LEE OF AN IMMENSE BLACK ROCK ----



THEN A MIGHTY DOOR IN THE ROCK RUMBLES SLOWLY OPEN, AND HE GOES INSIDE ----



INSIDE THE ROCK, PRINCE GRIMBOLD GOES DEEP DOWN IN A LIFT TO HIS SECRET FACTORY ----

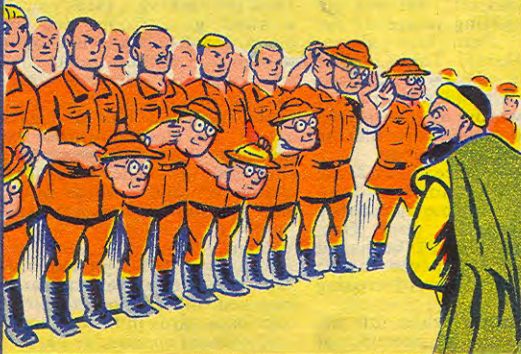


THE FIFTY COPIES OF THE EARTHLING SPACE-SHIP ARE READY, HIGHNESS, AND THE MEN OF YOUR ARMY AWAIT YOUR ORDERS IN THE LOWER CAVE!



AFTER MAKING SURE THAT THE COPIED SPACE-SHIPS ARE TO HIS LIKING, GRIMBOLD MAKES FOR THE LOWER CAVE. THERE, DIVIDED INTO THREE SQUADS, ARE A HUNDRED AND FIFTY PICKED MEN FROM GRIMBOLD'S ARMY ---- DESPERATE, TOUGH ADVENTURERS EVERY ONE!

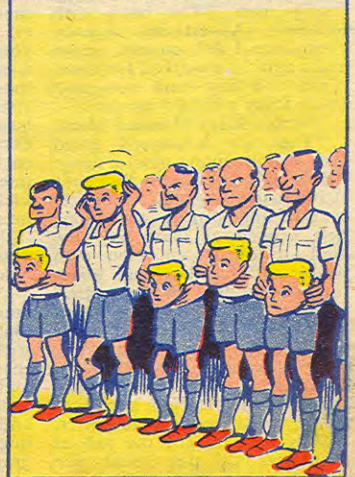
THE FIRST GROUP OF FIFTY ARE AMONG THE BIGGEST MEN HE CAN FIND, FOR THE MEN OF THE MILKY WAY ARE MOSTLY A LOT SMALLER THAN EARTH-FOLK. EACH ONE HAS A PLASTIC MASK ---- SPECIALLY MADE AT GRIMBOLD'S ORDERS.



EACH OF THE SECOND FIFTY ALSO HAS A MASK, BUT OF ANOTHER KIND.



AND THE MEN OF THE THIRD FIFTY HAVE A THIRD SORT OF MASK --



(Continued on back page)

MICK THE MOON BOY



"BANG!" The cigar exploded with such a report that it knocked the millionaire clean over backwards in his chair!

THE SACKING OF MR. PICKEM

MICK the Moon Boy and his twelve-year-old pal Hank Luckner were sitting in a milk bar in Chicago. A young man came in, flung himself down into a chair and groaned aloud.

Mick and Hank stared at him with interest, for young gentlemen don't as a rule sit groaning aloud in milk bars.

"Oh dear!" he groaned, taking not the slightest notice of Mick and Hank. "This is terrible. But I might have known. I saw it coming."

"What's the trouble?" asked Mick.

The young man stared at him. "I don't want to butt into your affairs," said Mick, "but perhaps my pal and I can help you."

"I've got the sack!" cried the young man. "I've been with Pickem's Advertising Agency ever since I left college, seven years ago. I've worked for them night and day—and now that brute Riley's kicked me out."

"Who's Riley?" asked Mick. "The new manager," cried the young man passionately. "He's only been with Pickem's Advertising Agency about a month and during that time he's sacked at least half the staff—a lot of 'em men with wives and families and absolutely dependent on their jobs."

"But what's he done that for?" demanded Mick.

"What for?" cried the young man. "Because he's the most heartless brute in Chicago, that's what for. He's supposed to be a live wire, a go-getter. That's why he got the job as manager. To put some pep

into the firm. And the way he's doing it is by steadily sacking the whole of the present staff."

"Why, aren't they doing their jobs properly?" asked Mick.

"Of course they're doing their jobs properly," cried the young man fiercely. "You won't find a better bunch anywhere. The only reason Riley is sacking them and bringing in new people is to show everybody around that he's the boss."

He wiped his face with his handkerchief and went on:

"It's like this, you see. Mr. Pickem doesn't come to the office very much now. He hasn't been very well and he's had to take a complete rest. So he hires this Riley, who's from New York, to take charge of the business in his absence. He's given the swab an absolutely free hand and Riley's taking advantage of it to sack men who've been with the firm all their lives. If he doesn't like your face you're out. If you're a couple of minutes late in the morning you're out. If you stand up to him when he's bawling at you you're out. Any excuse is good enough for him to kick a guy out. In fact, he doesn't need an excuse. He kicks 'em out without that, like he's kicked me out."

"And does Mr. Pickem know about these sackings?" asked Mick.

"No, he doesn't," said the young man. "His doctors say that he's not to be bothered with business at all. Riley knows that and knows that he can do as he jolly well likes. He's the absolute boss—the big shot—and, being a complete brute into the bargain, he's having a grand time bringing misery and

unhappiness to decent men and women who have worked for years and years for Pickem's."

"I see," said Mick. He eyed the young man steadily. He liked the look of him. "Well, I think I can put this Riley in his place for you and get your jobs back for all you people who've been sacked."

"You can?" cried the young man, looking at Mick in amazement.

"I'll handle him," said Mick coolly, "and I'll do it right now. What's your name and where is this Pickem's Advertising Agency?"

The young man told him that his name was Harold Tubbs and gave him the address of the agency.

"Okay, you and Hank amuse yourselves for a couple of hours, then I'll meet you back here," said Mick, rising. "And don't worry. Everything's going to be all right."

He stared very hard at Harold Tubbs for a moment then turned quickly away. And as he did so an amazing thing happened. For he was no longer his handsome, boyish self, but was the absolute spitting image of the somewhat thin and sharp-featured Harold Tubbs. What was more, he was dressed exactly as Harold was dressed. In other words, anyone seeing him would have sworn that he really was Harold Tubbs.

Harold didn't see this amazing change in Mick, for the Moon Boy was already moving swiftly away towards the door. Outside on the sidewalk he hailed a taxi and was driven to the offices of the Pickem Advertising Agency.

It was by means of his wonderful magic powers, of

course, that Mick had changed himself into the double of Harold Tubbs; and when he walked into the offices of the advertising agency all the clerks, typists and secretaries thought that he really was Harold.

They all greeted him very warmly indeed, which showed Mick that Harold was a very popular guy, but one of the clerks said to him gravely:

"You shouldn't have come back, Harold. Riley'll have a fit if he finds you in here after he's sacked you."

"It's Big Cheese Riley that I've come to see," said Mick, speaking in Harold's voice. "Where is the stinker?"

"He's in his private office," replied the clerk. "He's got John Ronson, the millionaire motor-car maker with him. They're discussing business. Big business. Harold," he almost screamed, as Mick made towards a polished oak door with the name Oscar Riley on it. "You can't go in there!"

"Can't I?" grinned Mick. "You'd be surprised!"

With that, and leaving white-faced clerks and typists staring after him, he opened the door, walked boldly into the private sanctum of the great Oscar Riley and shut the door behind him.

Oscar Riley, a big fat man with cold little eyes and a square-jawed, brutal face, was sitting at his expensive desk. Sitting talking to him across the desk was the well-dressed millionaire motor-car maker.

At sight of Mick, whom he took to be the sacked Harold Tubbs, Riley's little eyes opened wide with surprise and fury, and his fat red face went purple with passion.

"What in thunder do you want in here?" he roared, blundering to his feet. "How dare you—get out at once before I have you thrown out!"

"You talking to me?" asked Mick sweetly, making a curious movement with his hand.

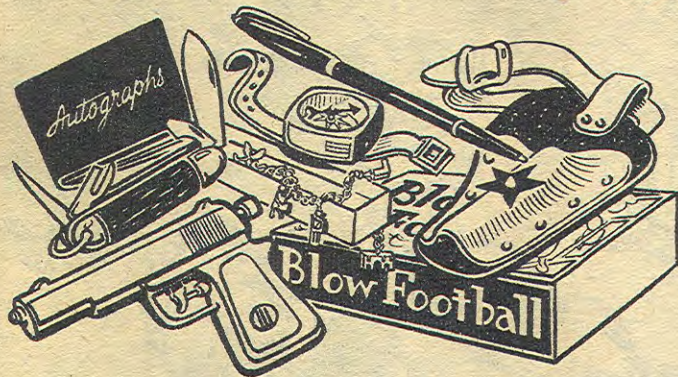
That movement put the magic 'fluence on the fat Riley, who immediately beamed all over his face and cried:

"No, no, Harold, my boy, I was only joking. I think you're a swell guy. Come and sit down. Mr. Ronson is just about to sign that million dollar contract with us. Have a cigar, Mr. Ronson."

He shoved a box of cigars across the desk towards the millionaire. Looking somewhat surprised at Riley's sudden change of tone towards Mick, Mr. Ronson took a cigar and lighted it.

Bang!
The cigar had exploded with such a shattering report that it knocked the millionaire clean over backwards in his chair and
(Continued on opposite page)

THE COMET ENGINE SPOTTERS CLUB



THE CLUB PRESENTS!

A Water Pistol, Wrist Compass, Ball-point pen, Jack Knife, Autograph Album, Box Game, Cowboy Belt and Holster or a Charm Bracelet

See those super presents above? Well, every week 150 members of this grand club can choose one of them—free. You can find out if it's your turn this week by comparing the number printed on the back of your Club Album with those in the next column. Do it now!

ARE YOU A NEW READER?

Then Here's How to join the C.E.S.C.

If you have not yet joined our grand new Club, all you have to do is write to us on a piece of paper saying, "Please make me a member of the C.E.S.C.," adding your full name and address. Then pin two 24d. stamps to the paper and enclose it in an envelope and post to the Club address (given above). The Engine Spotters' Album with your Club Number printed on it and lots of interesting things inside will then be sent to you post free. Once you're a member, you too can join in our Club fun and, of course, watch for your number to appear.

MICK THE MOON BOY (Continued)

made his face as black as soot with some chemical from the explosion.

"Confound you!" he screamed, scrambling furiously to his feet. "How dare you give me a trick cigar, Riley, you blackguard? You must be crazy. This'll cost you a million dollars. I'm going to take my business elsewhere, d'you hear?"

"I should tell Mr. Pickem that, too, if I were you," advised Mick.

"I will!" shouted the rich and raging Mr. Ronson. "I'll get him on the phone at his private house and I'll tell him how this fat fool Riley's conducting the business—giving his best customers dangerous exploding cigars!"

"Phooey!" sneered Riley. "Pickem's no longer in the business. I've been giving every-

body the sack in this joint and now I'm going to sack old Pickem himself!"

"But he's the owner of the business," shouted Mr. Ronson. "You can't sack him!"

"Can't I?" cried Riley, snatching up the telephone. "You just get an earful of this!"

Within a few moments he was through to Mr. Pickem at that gentleman's private house.

"That you, Pickem?" he roared over the phone. "Riley here. I've just rung up to tell you you're sacked. I've been sacking everybody around here and now it's your turn. What's that? You own the business? Har! Har! Har! That's what you think. You're sacked, I tell you, so don't you shove your ugly mug in here again. What d'you say? You're coming along to the office right away. Okay, you come. I've got the sack waiting for you!"

He certainly had. For when Mr. Pickem, a nice little gentleman, came rushing into

the private office some twenty minutes later, Mr. Oscar Riley leapt on him and whipped a huge sack over him and started to tie him up in it with feverish haste, laughing like billy-o as he did so.

"Har! Har! Har!" he guffawed. "I told you I had the sack waiting for you, you pesky little man. How d'you like it? I'm a great hand at sacking guys. Har! Har! Har!"

The grinning Mick, who had been watching the scene with the flabbergasted Mr. Ronson, made another movement with his hand. This movement took the magic 'fluence off Riley and restored him in a jiffy to his usual self.

The fat and bullying manager stared pop-eyed at the struggling sack in which he had tied Mr. Pickem; then with a hoarse cry he ripped it open again and hauled out the raging owner of the firm.

"Gee, Mister Pickem, I just dunno what came over me!" he

cried. "I'm mighty sorry—I hope I haven't hurt you—"

"Yes, you have!" yelled little Mr. Pickem in a towering passion. "You—you—you big, blackguardly bonehead, get out of here!" he screamed. "You're sacked—finished. I won't have you around here another minute!"

He didn't, either. What was more, when he heard how the brutal Riley had been sacking old and valued employees right and left, including Harold Tubbs, he had the whole lot of them back immediately and gave them all a rise in salary just to make up for the way they'd been treated.

But to this day Harold Tubbs denies that he was in the office when the "sacking" of Mr. Pickem took place, and is quite mystified by the way the staff insist that he was there.

Next week Mick and Hank have some fun with a talking scarecrow!

Fun, Interests and Lots of Club Presents, FREE!

HERE'S this week's list of members' numbers—if you see yours here then read the instructions below which tell you how you can send up for a free present!

2,580	91,788	144,164	44,799	142,486	58,263
22,974	148,775	195,173	72,585	3,377	143,821
85,217	193,735	94,055	152,060	49,293	194,374
183,384	25,230	50,816	86,716	163,130	89,569
119,498	5,266	159,640	1,381	188,111	24,580
84,438	51,477	27,231	23,990	51,401	58,088
212,181	175,640	52,754	132,818	24,615	125,659
91,168	154,666	179,753	194,321	211,149	188,548
151,628	59,976	137,841	2,075	169,130	6,685
361	16,427	200,510	186,175	88,537	60,634
47,895	142,330	8,168	37,306	7,147	88,589
86,157	116,633	52,178	5,184	30,239	175,600
142,109	204,329	59,192	141,897	89,833	113,653
188,282	6,708	144,622	151,800	140,637	216,729
49,831	149,367	162,483	210,512	200,557	196,386
26,202	194,893	79,441	118,184	7,678	184,564
96,849	88,370	51,660	157,179	1,124	31,149
142,179	31,832	9,658	188,923	59,259	91,292
9,305	65,285	52,570	15,455	220,956	185,482
58,976	137,695	144,591	101,739	179,371	139,425
209,427	188,534	198,787	142,982	118,735	59,619
16,177	142,439	120,265	194,132	59,605	32,554
58,842	84,759	50,470	59,290	202,206	7,739
93,677	34,735	116,265	217,562	130,218	130,441
163,675	196,252	154,032	41,269	176,456	211,634

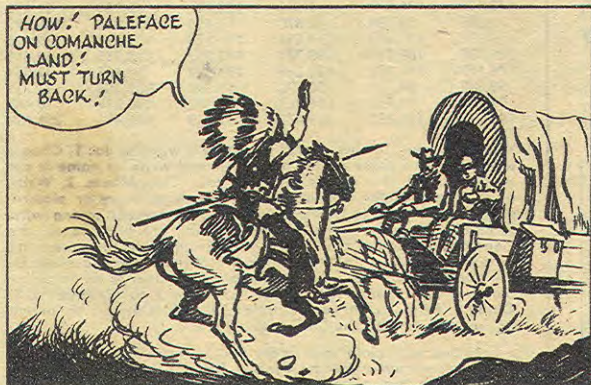
Well, was your number there? If so, this is what to do: 1. Choose a present from those named on the left and write its name in the space marked "For Official Use" in your Club Album. 2. Write on a piece of paper the name of the character, story or picture-story you like best in COMET and add a few words saying why. 3. Make sure your name and full address are filled in on the Membership page of the Album. 4. After checking to make quite sure your membership number and one of those above are exactly the same put both your Album and piece of paper in an envelope, seal it and stick on a 24d. stamp. Post at once to: COMET E.S. Club, 3 Pilgrim Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.) to arrive by Tuesday, July 22, the Closing Date.

Provided your claim is in order your present should reach you about seven days after the Closing Date, Albums are returned at the same time—post free!

KIT CARSON AND THE REDSKIN RISING

WHEN THE WHITE MEN AGREED TO KEEP AWAY FROM THE COMANCHE HUNTING GROUNDS, THE REDSKIN TRIBE WAS SATISFIED, AND PROMISED PEACE. ALL WENT WELL UNTIL ONE DAY ~~~

PALEFACE
BREAK TREATY!
I STOP HIM!



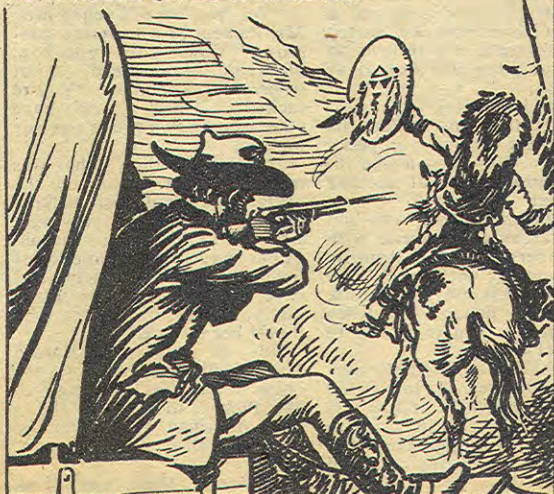
HOW! PALEFACE
ON COMANCHE
LAND!
MUST TURN
BACK!



GEE, MIGHTY SORRY, CHIEF!
WE DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT THAT!

YEAH, WE'RE
STRANGERS!

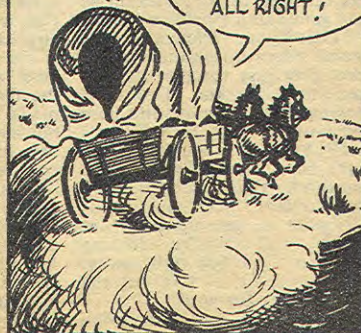
BUT AS THE CHIEF TURNS TO RIDE OFF
KURT HOGEN GRABS A RIFLE AND ~~~



NEXT MOMENT THE WAGON IS
TEARING ACROSS THE PRAIRIE ~~~

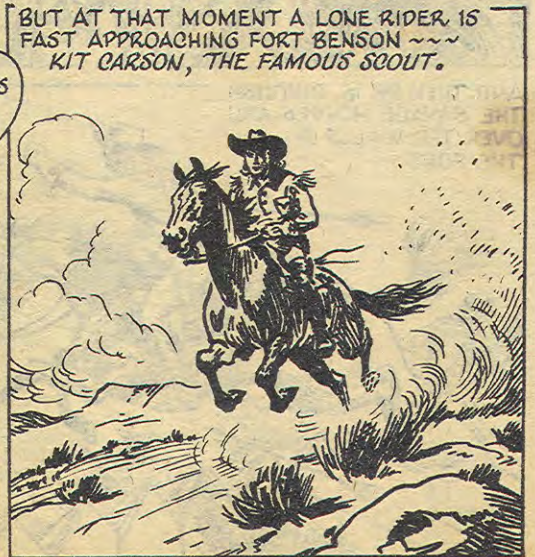
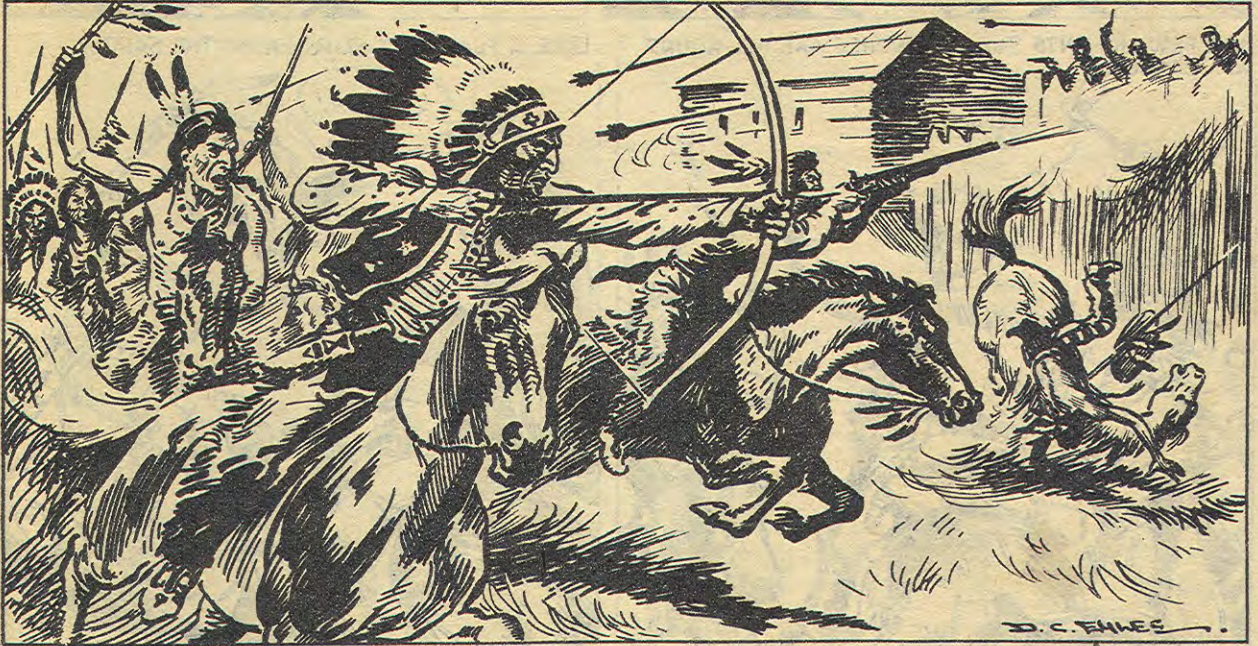
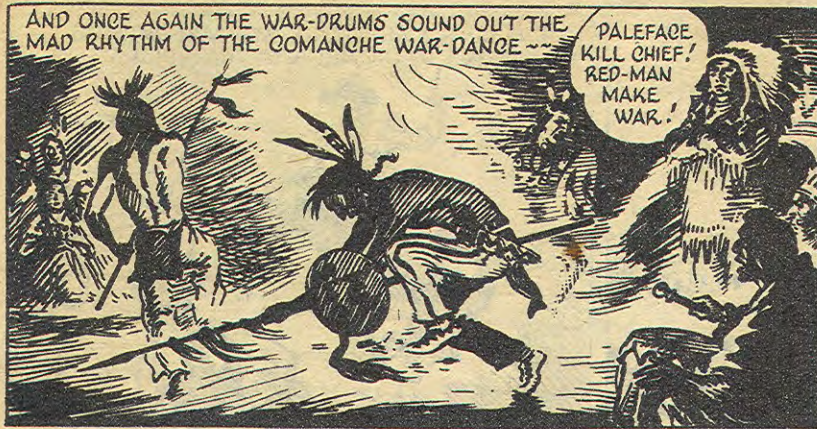
WHAT D'YOU
WANT TO DO
THAT FOR,
KURT?

THERE'S GOT
TO BE A WAR.
IF WE'RE TO SELL
RIFLES TO THE
INDIANS, AND THIS
SHOULD START ONE
ALL RIGHT!



AND THE VILLAINOUS
KURT HOGEN IS RIGHT!
SOON, SMOKE-AFTER-SMOKE
SIGNALS RISE OVER THE
PRAIRIE, SUMMONING THE
COMANCHE BRAVES ~~~

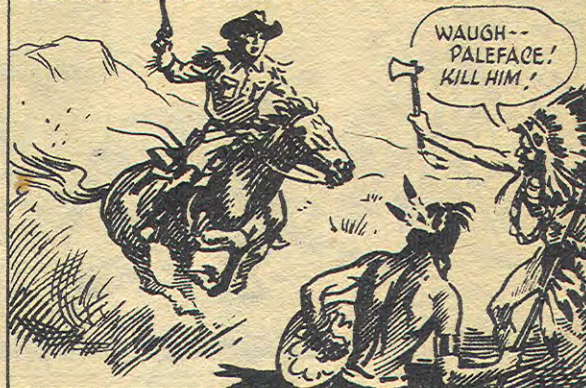




AS HE NEARS THE FORT, THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE MAKE HIM DIVE FOR COVER ~~



MOUNTING HIS MUSTANG, KIT CARSON GOES THUNDERING HEADLONG INTO THE INDIANS ~~



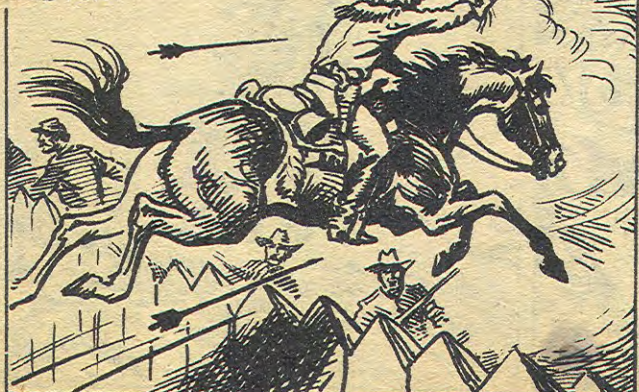
IN A FEW MOMENTS THE COMANCHES ARE ALL ROUND KIT CARSON ~~



LIKE A FLASH KIT SLIPS FROM THE SADDLE ~~



AND THEN HE IS THROUGH THE SAVAGE HORDES AND OVER THE WALLS OF THE FORT ~~



KIT DELIVERS HIS MESSAGE TO THE COLONEL ~~



Next week Kit has a plan to stop the battle--But Hogen and Shayne stir up more trouble!

DR GRUNTER'S ZOO SCHOOL

BILLY THE BUNNY BEATS THE BOASTERS

"HELP!" yelled Billy Bunn the rabbit.

He had a jolly good reason for shouting for help. For poor Billy was caught in a rabbit snare. He had been frisking and gambolling merrily through the woods, when without the slightest warning he had found himself caught in a cunningly-placed snare.

Billy hadn't always been a rabbit. Not so very long ago he had been just an ordinary schoolboy—one of a party of boys who had come to Meadow-sweet Farm to help Farmer Whipstraw with the harvest.

One morning, however, the whole lot of them 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 that you could meet anywhere. He got his bottles mixed up and, instead of giving the boys a dose of medicine he gave them a dose of a wonderful liquid which he had invented for changing people into birds and animals.

The result was that in a flash the whole bunch of them had been changed into the strangest collection of birds and animals that you ever saw. And birds and animals they were doomed to remain until Dr. Dozey could find a liquid to change them back to their proper selves again.

"But I'll never live to be changed back to my proper self if I don't get out of this beastly snare," almost sobbed little Billy Bunn. "Some awful poacher or some other r-r-rotter'll come along and kill me—that's what'll happen. Help! Help!"

He shouted at the top of his voice, for although they had been changed into birds and animals, he and his pals could still talk in their human voices.

"Oh, why did I ever come out alone?" thought poor Billy despairingly. "If only I'd had one of the other chaps with me he could have gone for help or something. Hallo! Here's someone coming!"

He crouched down, still caught in the snare, his heart beating wildly. Because, for all he knew, it might be the man who had set the snares who he could hear coming along whistling gaily.

Next instant Billy gave a great gasp of relief. For it wasn't a man who came into view round a bend in the path, but a small, cheery-faced boy with his hands in his pockets and a school cap on his head. Billy recognised the school cap as that of St. Anselm's, a school

situated about two miles from Meadowsweet Farm.

"Isay!" cried Billy, as the small boy came abreast of the spot where Billy was crouched.

The small boy looked down. As he did so he nearly jumped out of his skin.

"It—it wasn't you who spoke?" he gasped, gaping at Billy as though he couldn't believe his eyes.

"Oh, yes, it was!" cried Billy.

"But—but I didn't know that rabbits could talk!" gasped the small boy, his eyes nearly sticking out of his head.

"Oh, yes, some of us can!" said Billy. "But do, please, for goodness' sake, let me out of this snare!"

"Oh, yes! Right-ho!" cried the small boy. He stooped down and very quickly released Billy.

"Thanks very much!" said Billy gratefully. "It's awfully decent of you. Perhaps one day I'll be able to do you a good turn."

"You could do me and a lot of my pals a good turn now if you liked," said the small boy, still staring at Billy as though he couldn't believe his eyes.

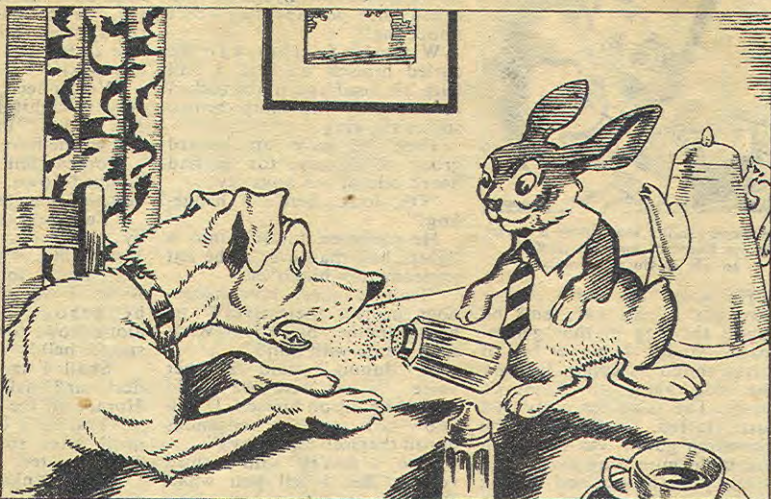
"Could I?" asked Billy. "Well, fire away! What is it you want me to do?"

"I'd like to take you back to school with me," cried the small boy eagerly. "Oh, not for keeps!" he went on hastily, seeing by Billy's face that Billy didn't think much of that idea.

"I'd let you go again, honest I would. You see, it's like this. We've got a boy at school named Ogden Platt who's always boasting about what marvellous pets he's got at home. He says he's got a dog that's nearly as clever as a human being, and he says he's got a white mouse that's nearly as clever as the dog, and he says he's got a rabbit that he's trained to do tricks. He's always boasting and bragging about them, and we're simply sick of hearing him. Now if I was suddenly to produce a talking rabbit, that wouldn't half take the wind out of his sails, wouldn't it?"

"It certainly would," agreed Billy.

"Yes," cried the small boy excitedly, "he'd probably shut up after that and we'd all get some peace. I'll let you go again as soon as Ogden Platt and the



When young Bill Bunn had his pepper-pot wheeze, The quarrelsome dog found it hard not to sneeze!

other chaps have seen you."

"Right-ho!" agreed Billy. "That's a bargain. You've done me a jolly good turn, so I'll be very pleased to do you one. Come on, let's go!"

He went scuttling away with the small boy running along beside him.

"What's your name, anyway?" he asked.

"Tommy Brown," replied the boy. "Have you got a name?"

"Of course," said Billy. "Mine's Billy Bunn. Now you'd better pick me up and put me inside your jacket, Tommy. We're getting near the school, and I don't want to be chased by any horrid dogs or anything."

Picking Billy up, Tommy buttoned him inside his jacket. Then he ran eagerly on until he reached the school. Gathering a lot of his pals, for it was a half-holiday that afternoon—he sent one of them to find Ogden Platt, then led the way into his study.

"What d'you think I've got?" he cried.

"What?" demanded his pals. "A talking rabbit!" cried Tommy, triumphantly producing Billy from out of his jacket. "I bet this won't half put the kibosh on Ogden Platt and his wonderful pets that he's always talking about. Set the tea, somebody. I'm going to stand this jolly little rabbit a whacking fine salad tea!"

"Thanks very much!" said Billy politely.

At the sound of Billy's voice all Tommy's pals stared in absolute amazement. Then, as they broke into a hubbub of excited chatter, Ogden Platt and his pals Marmaduke Mopp and Cuthbert Cropper came marching into the study.

"Oh, there you are, Platt!" cried Tommy. "Well, we've heard a lot about the marvellous

pets you have at home, but I bet you haven't got a talking rabbit!"

"Talking rabbit?" sneered Ogden Platt, who was a fat, pudding-faced boy. "Don't talk such rot!"

"What d'you mean—rot?" snapped Billy the rabbit. "Of course I can talk, you great ignorant, pie-faced, two-legged human. I can talk a jolly sight better than you, let me tell you. What date was the battle of Hastings, anyway? I bet you don't know that!"

Ogden Platt and his two pals got such a shock at hearing the rabbit talk that they just stood gaping at it with their mouths open and their eyes starting out of their silly fat heads.

"Don't stand staring there like a stuck pig, Ogden Platt!" yelled Billy. "I've heard about those so-called wonderful pets of yours at home—your trained dog and your white mouse, and your wonderful rabbit that can do tricks. All right, bring 'em along and let my pals here and me have a look at 'em. I'll teach 'em a few tricks, I bet. Who won the Battle of Trafalgar? And how many times will four go into a hundred? Yah, I bet you don't know!"

Ogden Platt could see now that never again would he be able to swank about his wonderful pets, and he was absolutely mad with rage. Then suddenly he had a brainwave.

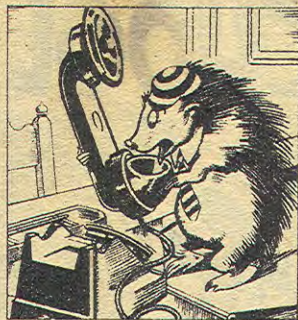
"Come on!" he said to his two pals, Marmaduke Mopp and Cuthbert Cropper.

He rushed from the study, followed by his two henchmen.

"Where're you going?" demanded Marmaduke Mopp.

"I'm going to get old Basher's, the housemaster's dog!" cried Ogden savagely. "He'll soon fix that beastly rabbit."

(Continued on next page)



Horace Hanky was all of a fever, as he heaved, and he puffed, to lift up the receiver!

He knew that Mr. Basher was out in his car, and he found the dog in that gentleman's study. Tying a bit of string round its collar, he took the dog along to Tommy's study. The salad tea-party had just started, and Billy, the honoured guest, was sitting on the table munching away at a lovely juicy lettuce and talking to Tommy Brown and the rest of his excited pals.

The dog made one savage bound up on to the table. But Billy had already seen his peril and had snatched up the pepper pot between his front paws. Yanking off the top of the pot with his teeth he flung some of the contents right in the face of the snarling, savage dog.

"Ha, ha, ha! Good old Billy! Hurrah for Billy!" yelled Tommy Brown and Co., capering delightedly as, snorting and sneezing, and with its tail between its legs, the savage dog turned and bolted from the study. "There you are, Ogden Platt! Your rabbit couldn't do a trick like that!"

And the raging but defeated Ogden had to agree.

Billy and the boys finished up their tasty meal and some while later, amid cheers and more cries of "Good old Billy!" and "Thanks a lot!" the happy rabbit ran off back to Meadow-sweet Farm.

RESCUING A HEDGEHOG!

JUST about the time that Billy was setting out for the farm, Horace Hanky, the hedgehog, was taking a stroll through the woods when he suddenly heard voices.

THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD (Continued from page 5)

and went after the running men. Dr. Gandybar, panting, gave orders to his two rescuers.

"Untie the Squire," he gasped. "Use the rope to tie up that fellow!"

The two boys obeyed quickly. Then everyone spoke at once.

The Squire explained that a gang of crooks, disguised as gypsies, had found that an old passageway led from the old Abbey to the cellar of his house.

"Oh, blow! Here come some of those St. Anselm's school kids," he told himself as he saw three small boys approaching. "I haven't time to run away, so I'd better curl myself up into a ball, then perhaps they won't notice me!"

Without further ado he curled himself up into a ball with his head and limbs tucked in and only his sharp brown spikes showing.

Then he gave an inward groan of dismay, for he had heard one of the boys cry:

"Oh, look, here's a hedgehog!"

He squeezed himself into a tighter ball than ever as he felt someone turn him over.

"Isn't it queer how hedgehogs protect themselves?" he heard another boy say. "What shall we do with him?"

"I dunno," said another voice. "I do wish we could make him unroll himself. D'you know how to make hedgehogs unroll themselves, Dicky?"

"No, I don't!" said a third voice. "But I tell you what. Why not let's take him along to old Wiffles, our old Form master? We have natural history tomorrow morning. He ought to be frightfully bucked if we take him along a real live hedgehog. What d'you think?"

"I think you've hit the nail right on the giddy head, Dicky!" cried one of that young gentleman's pals. "The point is, how're we going to carry it? I don't want its prickles sticking into me."

"Carry it in your handkerchief, that's the best way," suggested one of the voices.

Next moment Horace felt himself picked gingerly up and placed on a handkerchief which had been spread on the ground. Then the owner of the handkerchief put the four corners of it together and lifted Horace up in it and the party set off for St. Anselm's, taking the unfortunate Horace with them.

He listened intently as he heard the boy carrying him say:

"Shall I take it in to old Wiffles before supper or wait until later?"

"No, take it in to him before supper," said one of the others. "Then he'll know he's got it. He may want to swot up some notes about hedgehogs, because I bet he doesn't know an awful lot about them. You'll find

him in his study, I reckon."

So on reaching St. Anselm's, Horace felt himself being carried into the study of Mr. Wiffles.

"Please, sir, here's a hedgehog, sir!" he heard his bearer say. "We found it in the woods, sir, and we thought you might like it for the natural history lesson, sir."

"Yes, indeed, Binks, that was very thoughtful of you," said Mr. Wiffles. "Put it on my desk and let me have a look at it."

Horace felt himself being dumped down. Then the handkerchief was unwrapped.

"Yes, quite a nice specimen, by the look of him," said Mr. Wiffles. "Well, thank you very much for bringing him, Binks. I will give a lecture on hedgehogs tomorrow. Run along now, for there goes the supper bell."

"Shall I leave him on the desk, sir?" asked Binks, rolling Horace off the handkerchief. "Yes, he'll be all right here until after supper," said the Form master.

Young Binks departed. A few moments later Horace heard the master walk from the room, closing the door behind him.

"Here's a jolly nice state of affairs, I must say," he said to himself, cautiously uncurling himself and taking a peep about him. "How the thump am I ever going to get back to Meadow-sweet Farm? It'll take me ages and ages to walk two miles, even if I get out of this beastly school. One of those horrid little kids might want to keep me in a locker or somewhere as a pet."

The very thought so alarmed him that he uncurled himself completely and took a good stare all about him in search of some way of escape.

But there seemed to be no way of escape at all.

Then suddenly his tiny little eyes glinted and his tiny little heart missed a beat. For near him on the desk was a telephone.

If only he could manage to lift the receiver and get through to Meadow-sweet Farm he might yet be saved, he thought, tingling with excitement.

Exerting all his strength, he found to his delight that he could just lift the receiver.

Trembling with excitement, Horace gave the telephone number of Meadow-sweet Farm. A moment or two later he

heard the great jovial voice of cheery Farmer Whipstraw come booming over the line.

"Hallo, Farmer Whipstraw here!"

"Oh, listen, Farmer Whipstraw!" gabbled Horace quickly. "This is Horace Hanky speaking. The boy who was turned into a hedgehog, you know. Well, I've been caught by some of St. Anselm's kids and I'm on the desk in the study of Mr. Wiffles, one of the Form-masters. Will you tell Dr. Grunter at once, please, so that he can arrange for me to be rescued."

"Yes—yes, certainly I will, Master Hanky!" boomed the jolly farmer. "Don't worry, we'll soon get you out of that!"

Before Horace could reply the door of the room opened and in came Mr. Wiffles.

"Why, bless my soul!" he cried in astonishment. "Who would believe it? Fancy the little creature playing with the telephone!"

Meanwhile, Farmer Whipstraw was talking to Dr. Grunter, the master in charge of the boys at Meadow-sweet Farm who had been turned into a polar bear.

"Stupid dolt, that Horace Hanky, to get himself caught like that!" snarled Dr. Grunter. "I'll send George Harris to rescue him!"

George Harris was a boy who had been changed into a great hairy gorilla. Reaching the school grounds, George saw a small boy and grabbed him by the arm.

"Where's Wiffles's study?" he growled.

The small and trembling boy showed him and, rushing in, George swept the startled and frightened Mr. Wiffles aside and snatched up Horace.

"Come on, fathead!" he growled. "I've come to take you home!"

He scuttled out of the room and out of the school and headed back towards Meadow-sweet Farm with Horace in one of his great paws. But it was many a long day before Mr. Wiffles got over the shock of his encounter with the mysterious gorilla who had run off with the hedgehog after talking to it in a human voice. Next week: Tubby Tweaks, the greedy pig, becomes an actor! Don't miss the fun!

Don't miss the fun!

They had broken in to steal his coins, but he'd disturbed them and they had tied and gagged him.

Willie Wizzard explained that he and Jimmy Bash had become alarmed at the noise they had heard in Dr. Gandybar's study. They had gone inside just as the Wizzardig had itself fallen through the floor. Lowering themselves into the passage below, they had chased the machine trying to catch it.

"I am glad you didn't, my brave boys!" exclaimed Dr. Gandybar. "But now for those rascals! You, Bash, get up that ladder and fetch the police!"

Jimmy acted at once, while the others hurried along the passage. The sound of the Wizzardig's clanking grew louder and louder. At last they found the machine. It was pushing hard up against one wall of the passage, still digging furiously. Three terrified gypsies were grimly clinging to a ledge of rock directly above!

As they approached, the Squire listened hard. "That is a strange sound," he said. And when the police had arrived to take all the crooks away, he got down on his hands and knees to see what the Wizzardig had

uncovered just by the wall. It was a heap of old coins!

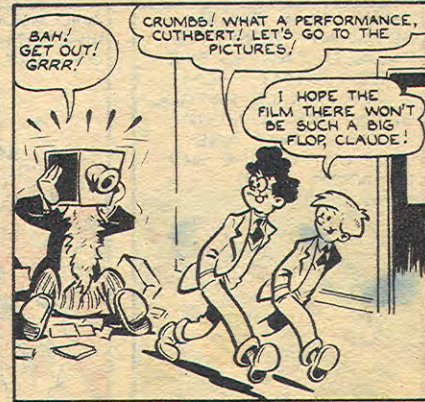
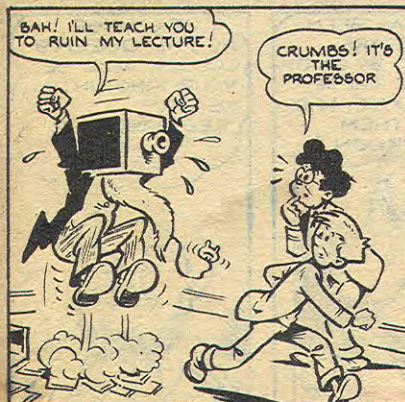
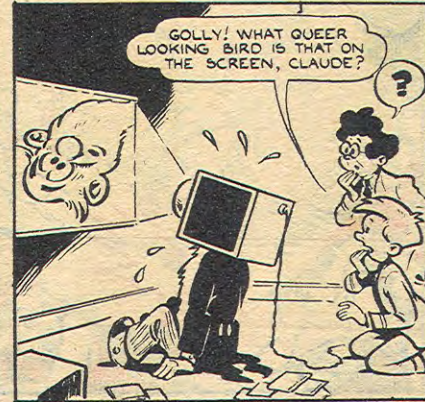
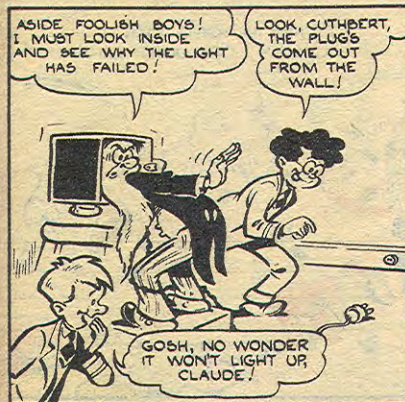
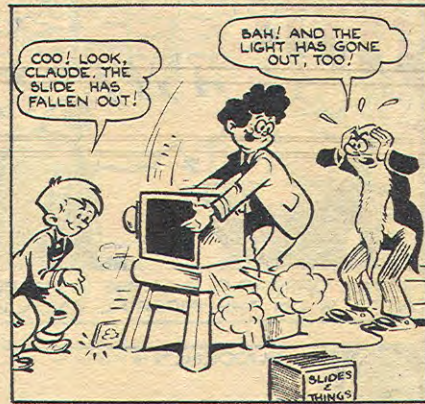
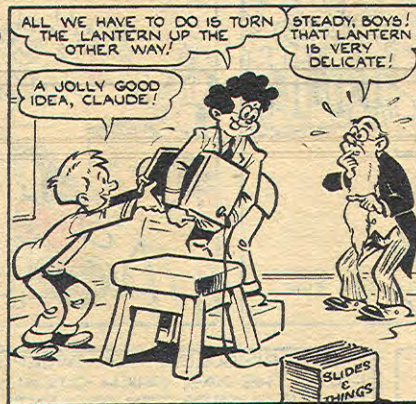
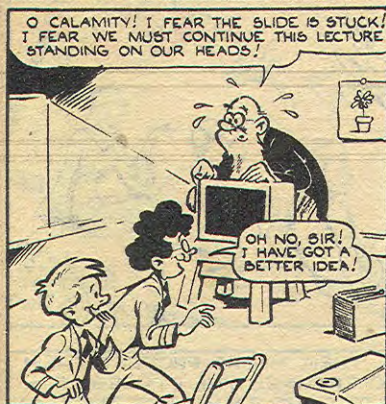
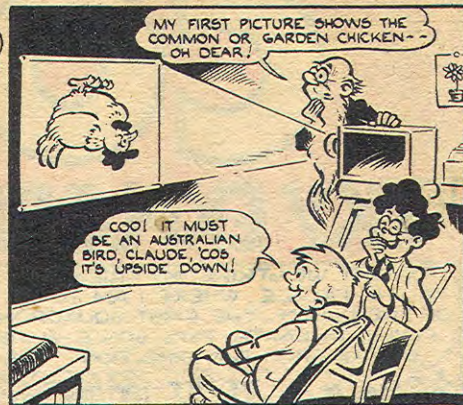
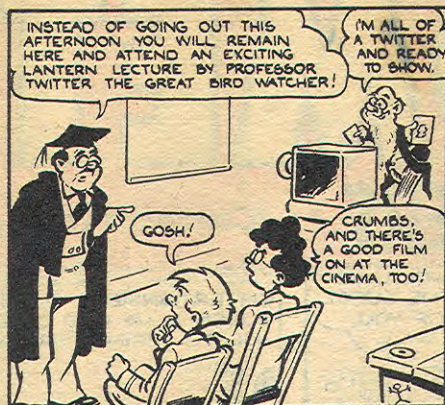
The find proved to be the hoard buried by the monks—the very hoard which the Squire had been trying to find. It was immensely valuable. By the time he had received his share together with the reward for rounding up the crooks, Dr. Gandybar was easily able to pay for the repairs to his study. In fact he had enough, money left over to employ a full-time gardener to grow the school vegetables!

Next week: Willie invents a paper-chasing machine!

THE ADVENTURES OF

CLAUDE
AND

CUTHBERT
THE TWO NEW BOYS



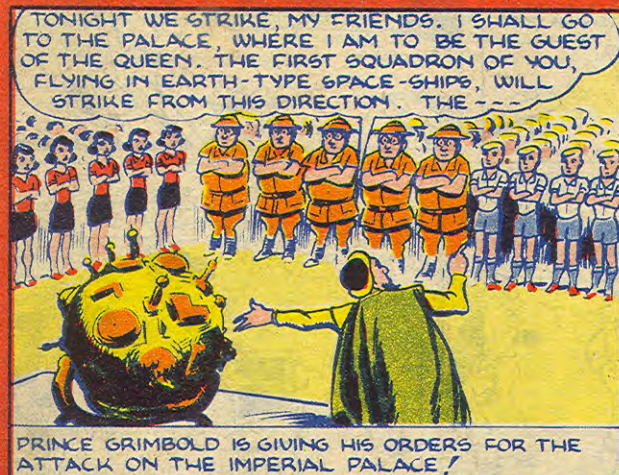
COMET

PRICE
3^D
EVERY
MONDAY

THE SKY EXPLORERS

(Continued from page 11)

TONIGHT WE STRIKE, MY FRIENDS. I SHALL GO TO THE PALACE, WHERE I AM TO BE THE GUEST OF THE QUEEN. THE FIRST SQUADRON OF YOU, FLYING IN EARTH-TYPE SPACE-SHIPS, WILL STRIKE FROM THIS DIRECTION. THE ---



PRINCE GRIMBOLD IS GIVING HIS ORDERS FOR THE ATTACK ON THE IMPERIAL PALACE!

THAT NIGHT, THE EARTH FOLK WATCH AN ENTERTAINMENT IN COMPANY WITH QUEEN ALVA AND OTHER IMPORTANT GUESTS. PRINCE GRIMBOLD IS THERE.



SUDDENLY ~~~~

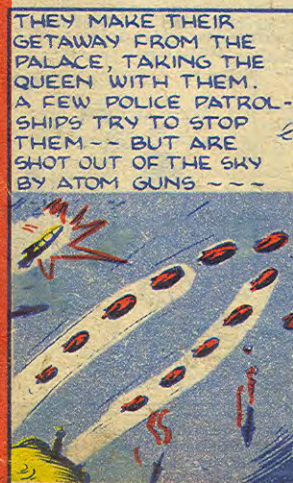


THEN GRIMBOLD'S MEN SWEEP IN. THEIR MASKS PROTECT THEM FROM THE GAS, WHICH QUICKLY OVERCOMES THE OTHERS. THE PALACE GUARDS TRY GALLANTLY TO FIGHT BACK - BUT THEY CAN DO LITTLE.

THIS IS SOME TRICK -- THEY LOOK JUST LIKE US!



THEY MAKE THEIR GETAWAY FROM THE PALACE, TAKING THE QUEEN WITH THEM. A FEW POLICE PATROL-SHIPS TRY TO STOP THEM -- BUT ARE SHOT OUT OF THE SKY BY ATOM GUNS ---



AND ABOUT AN HOUR LATER, WHEN THE EFFECTS OF THE GAS ARE WEARING OFF.

THE QUEEN HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED! WE ARE BEING INVADED BY EARTH MEN! SEIZE THESE SPIES AT ONCE, AND THROW THEM INTO PRISON!



I OF COURSE, AS THE QUEEN'S COUSIN, WILL BE YOUR KING UNTIL WE HAVE RESTORED HER TO HER THRONE!



What can the earth-folk do now? How can they help the Queen? Don't miss the Professor's daring scheme next week!