

COMET

THE BACK PAGE
IS A FRONT PAGE
TOO!

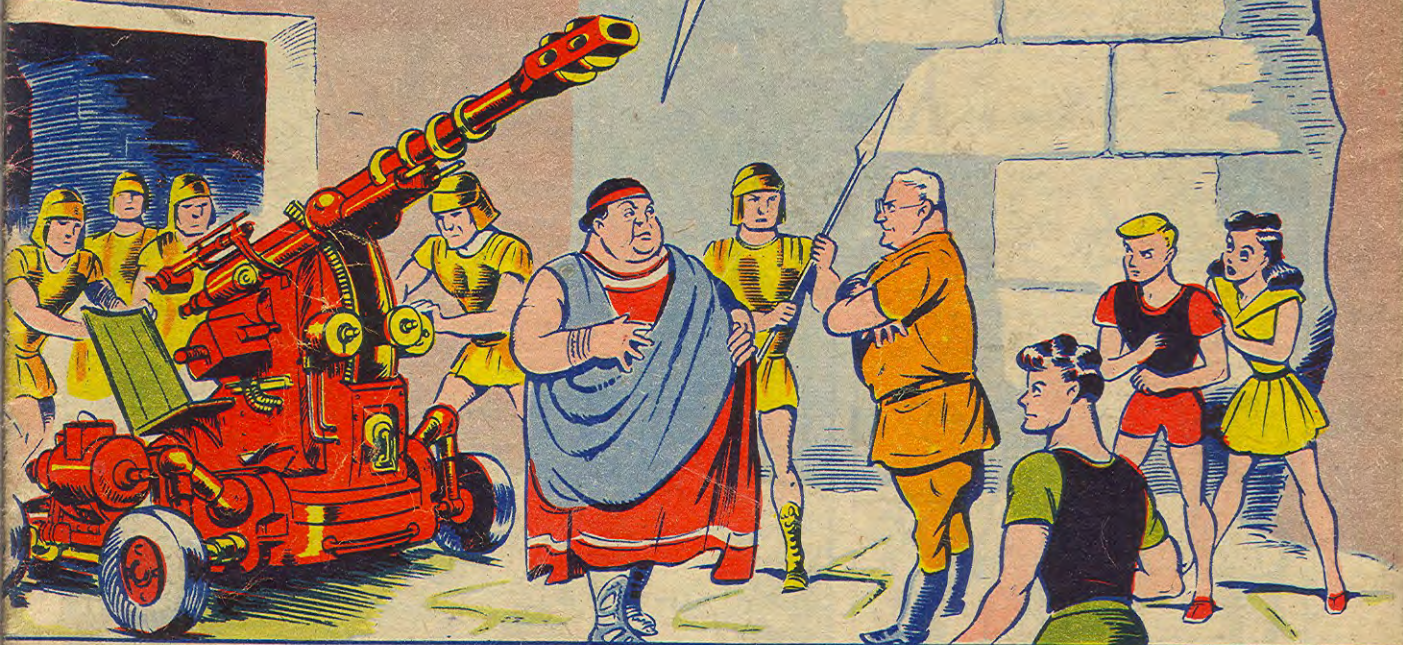
3RD EVERY
MONDAY

No. 230, December 13, 1952

THE SKY EXPLORERS

THE EMPEROR CAMBUSTA
SWAGGERED INTO THE CELL, AS
HIS MEN HAULED IN A
STRANGE MACHINE.... BUT ALL
THE CHUMS COULD THINK OF
WAS -- WOULD HE SPOT
FIDDYCAT?

STRANGERS FROM
THE SKY --- I COME TO
OFFER YOU A CHANCE
OF FREEDOM!



ON THE MYSTERY PLANET,
ROMA, PETER AND ANN,
THEIR UNCLE, PROFESSOR
JOLLY, AND KOSMO, THE
SPACE PATROL-MAN, HAVE
BEEN THROWN INTO
PRISON BY THE TYRANT-
EMPEROR, CAMBUSTA.
JUST AS THEY ARE ALMOST
GIVING UP ALL HOPE,
FIDDYCAT APPEARS. HE
HAS WALKED UP THE
WALL OUTSIDE TO REACH
THEIR CELL, WITH THE
AID OF HIS SUCKER-BOOTS.
HE WILL HELP THEM TO
ESCAPE. IF THEY WILL
HELP HIM TO OVERTHROW
CAMBUSTA --- AND THEN
CAMBUSTA HIMSELF
APPEARS. FIDDYCAT
HAS JUST TIME ENOUGH
TO HIDE --- ON THE
CEILING!

HERE IS A MACHINE WHICH WAS MADE MANY
CENTURIES AGO BY THE ANCIENT PEOPLE OF
THIS PLANET, WHO FLEW AWAY INTO THE SKY
--- OR SO THE LEGENDS SAY. MY WISE
MEN TELL ME THAT THIS MACHINE
COULD STRIKE MY ENEMIES DOWN
LIKE LIGHTNING, IF ONLY I KNEW
HOW IT WORKED. TELL ME THAT, AND
I WILL GIVE YOU YOUR FREEDOM!



More Pictures on the Centre Pages

Hazel-dine, Snoop and Skinner borrow a car, crash it and run away. When asked by a stranger what his name is, Hazel-dine gives Billy Bunter's name. Bunter receives a letter which Hazel-dine and his cronies think is about the car. But inside there is fifty pounds. Hazel-dine thinks the money should be his, so he collars Bunter.

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN

TAKE HIM TO OUR STUDY, SNOOPY! WE SHAN'T BE INTERRUPTED THERE.



A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO WE CAUGHT YOU PINCHING FARMER GRABBLER'S APPLES, BUNTER. REMEMBER WHAT THE HEAD SAID ABOUT THAT LAST TERM? NEXT BOY CAUGHT ROBBING ORCHARDS WOULD GET THE BOOT. NOW - YOU WOULDN'T LIKE ME TO TELL DR. LOCKE ABOUT THOSE APPLES, WOULD YOU?

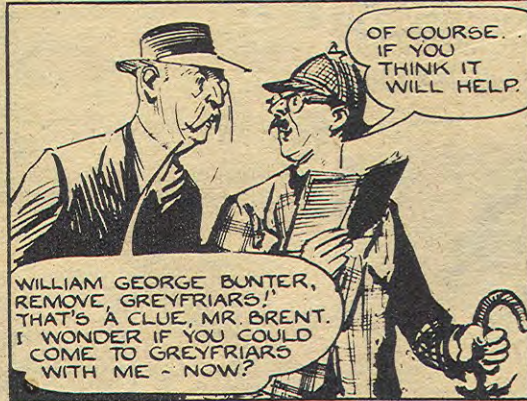
WE WANT TEN GUID EACH - OR WE GO TO DR. LOCKE RIGHT AWAY. NOW - YOU'VE GOT TEN MINUTES TO MAKE UP YOUR MIND. TEN GUID EACH OR YOU GET THE SACK!

MEANWHILE, SIR HILTON POPPER HAS ALMOST TRACED THE VILLAINS WHO HAD BORROWED HIS CAR AND CRASHED IT.

~ AND YOU MET THESE BOYS IN MY WOODS, EH, MR BRENT? THREE OF THEM, YOU SAY. WOULD YOU KNOW THEM AGAIN?



I TOOK NOTICE OF ONLY ONE OF THEM IN PARTICULAR, SIR HILTON. THE BOY WHOSE NAME RESEMBLED MY OWN. I MADE A NOTE OF HIS NAME AND ADDRESS AT THE TIME.



OF COURSE. IF YOU THINK IT WILL HELP.

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER, REMOVE, GREYFRIARS! THAT'S A CLUE, MR. BRENT. I WONDER IF YOU COULD COME TO GREYFRIARS WITH ME - NOW?

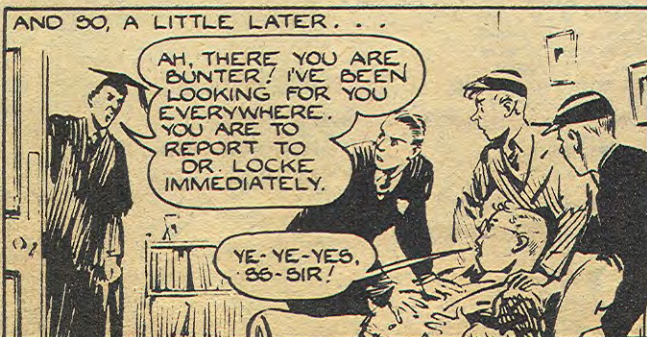


I'VE PHONED DR. LOCKE. HE'LL SEE US IMMEDIATELY.



AND SO MY CAR WAS WRECKED, DOCTOR. NOW - I HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE A BOY NAMED BUNTER WAS CONCERNED. DO YOU THINK WE MIGHT INTERVIEW HIM NOW?

BUNTER? WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER? I'LL HAVE HIM SENT HERE AT ONCE.



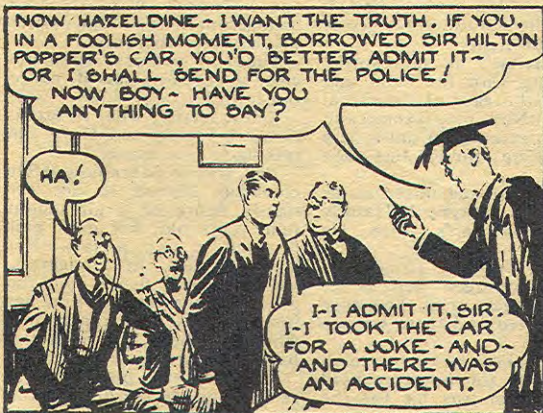
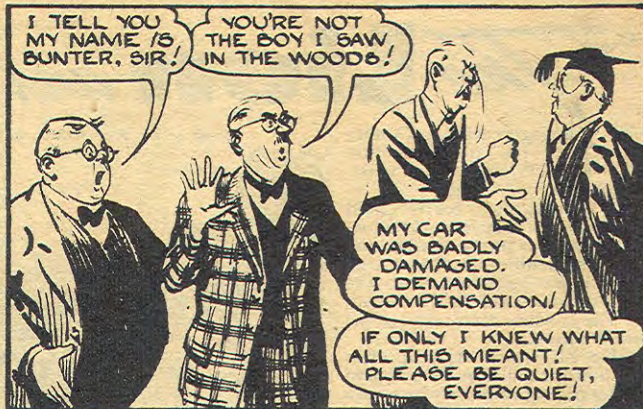
AND SO, A LITTLE LATER. . .

AH, THERE YOU ARE, BUNTER! I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU EVERYWHERE. YOU ARE TO REPORT TO DR. LOCKE IMMEDIATELY.

YE - YE - YES, SS - SIR!



HURRY, BUNTER! DR. LOCKE IS WAITING!



Look out for the grand, fun-filled Christmas adventure, "The Greyfriars Ghost!" It starts next week!

COMET--December 13, 1952--3

The Lion and the Horse

Based on the Warner Bros. film.

IN the ring at Rincon County Rodeo the black stallion was buck-jumping and twisting like a mad thing.

Watching, Ben Kirby could see daylight between the cowboy who was trying to ride him, and the saddle. Trying to stay put on that bucking bronco was like trying to ride a whirlwind.

The cowboy didn't stay in the saddle long.

He bit the dust, and after he had picked himself up, paid out a packet of money to a man named Dave Tracy.

For Dave Tracy owned this savage, magnificent black stallion. And Dave Tracy was making a lot of money taking bets with cowboys who thought they could ride him.

One of these days the stallion would break a leg and have to be shot. But that wouldn't worry Dave Tracy. He'd have made his money by then.

Ben Kirby pursed his lips and went over to where Tracy was standing. He wanted that stallion.

For Wildfire, as the horse was now called, was the black stallion—the king of the herd—that Ben had decided was the one horse for him.

As one of Matt Jennings' horse hunters, Ben had captured the stallion and offered to buy him from Jennings. But Matt had sold the horse to a rodeo in Ben's absence, and now, after weeks of chasing around the country, Ben had found his wonder-horse again.

"Yeah?" said Tracy, looking at Ben.

"My name's Ben Kirby," said Ben. "I thought it might interest you to know that I'm the man who caught that horse of yours."

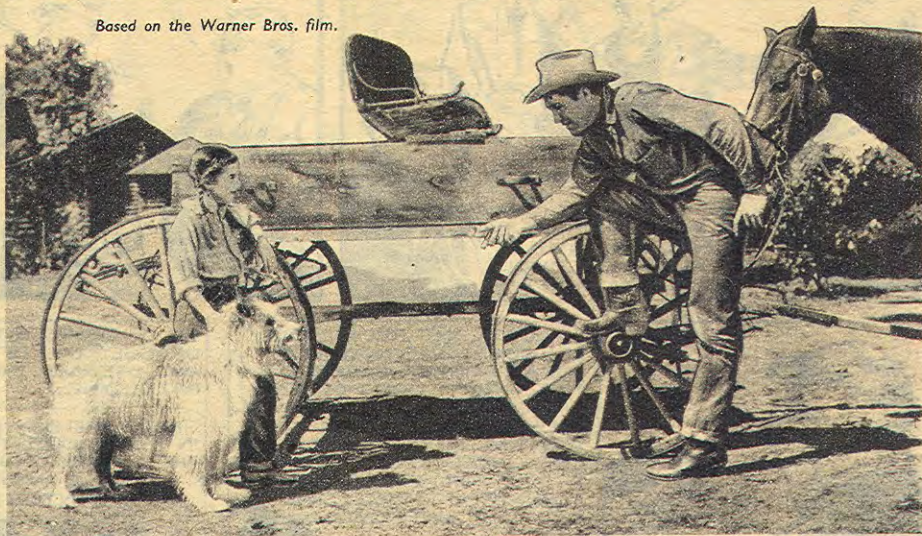
"Well, that does interest me," returned Tracy. "He's the best money-maker I've ever owned."

Ben swallowed. Clearly the horse was just business to Tracy. He cared nothing for the animal itself.

"I had a deal to buy him from the fellas I was working with," explained Ben. "I was a little late with the money and the deal fell through. But I've still got the money and I'd like to take the horse off your hands."



"That horse," said Tracy, "is the biggest money-maker I've ever owned!" Ben's heart sank. There wasn't a chance that the cruel rodeo man would sell Wildfire now.



Ben Kirby soon made friends with Jenny Custer and "Dog"—who didn't like strangers as a rule.

"You would? How much?" "What you paid for him. Six hundred dollars."

Tracy laughed harshly.

"Now, do I look that stupid! Every town I visit, the cowboys line up to bet me good money that they can ride Wildfire and not one of 'em's done it yet. That horse makes a lot of money for me!"

Ben then proposed that he should work for Tracy for a year just for his board and lodging and in addition would give him all the money he had if, at the end of that time, he could take Wildfire away as his own.

But Dave Tracy was a keen business man, with no time for sentiment.

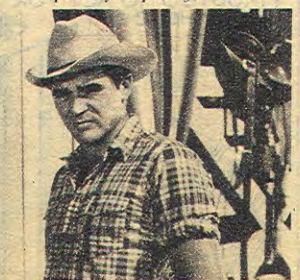
"Man," he said, "you're off your rocker! That bronc's a sure-fire income. As long as he lasts I'm gonna collect!" and Tracy turned away.

So Ben made his plans and began by writing a letter to Tracy.

It ran:

Mr. Dave Tracy,
Dear sir,

At the rate you are working the black stallion, Wildfire, he will be ruined before the season is over. I am enclosing the price you paid for him—



Ben finished the letter, put in the money, sealed it, and sent it off.

That night, carrying out his plan, he made his way through the flare-lit fairground, through the closed side-shows and caravans, past the massive cage holding Brutus, the circus lion, to where Wildfire was corralled.

He called to the horse gently in the half light.

"Hi, fella!" he said softly, beckoning with his hand and opening the gate of the corral quietly. "Now, play it smart and don't go rampaging out-a here and stir up things. Just fade away!"

Wildfire looked uncertain as he listened. Maybe he faintly remembered Ben's voice. He hesitated.

"Come on, boy, come on," softly encouraged Ben as he pushed the gate open. The place was deserted and there was no one to see.

Ben backed away to watch Wildfire as the horse realised that freedom was his for the taking.

Wildfire cantered out, slowly at first. But as the feeling of liberty grew he gathered speed and galloped along the path through the circus, past the cage of Brutus, the African lion, who roared and clawed madly at him through his bars.

On went Wildfire through the fair, chased now by men who yelled to each other in vain to stop him.

But Wildfire was not to be caught, and soon was speeding away to his own open country and his own kind.

Ben followed and caught up with him away on the open range, where he challenged a white stallion for the leadership of the herd which the white stallion commanded.

Ben, judging it to be time to

step in, flung his lariat and caught his stallion for the second time.

At last Ben had his horse. But what was he to do with him, wild as he was, and how were they to live?

Looking round, he saw a ranch not far away, so he took the captured Wildfire and locked him in one of the corrals belonging to the outfit.

Suddenly a voice, small but clear and self-possessed, called out to him.

"Hey, mister, what in tarnation are you up to? Hey—I'm talking to you, mister!"

Ben, with Wildfire now safely corralled, turned to see the sturdy figure of a girl about nine years old, her dark hair fastened in two pigtailed. Her legs, encased in dungarees, were planted firmly on the ground as she gazed at him, her lips set. A shaggy ranch dog, which she held by the collar, barked a warning greeting.

"Pipe down, pipe down!" said the girl to the dog. "I can handle this!"

Ben grinned. "Hallo, there! Looks like you're mad!" he called out as he came near.

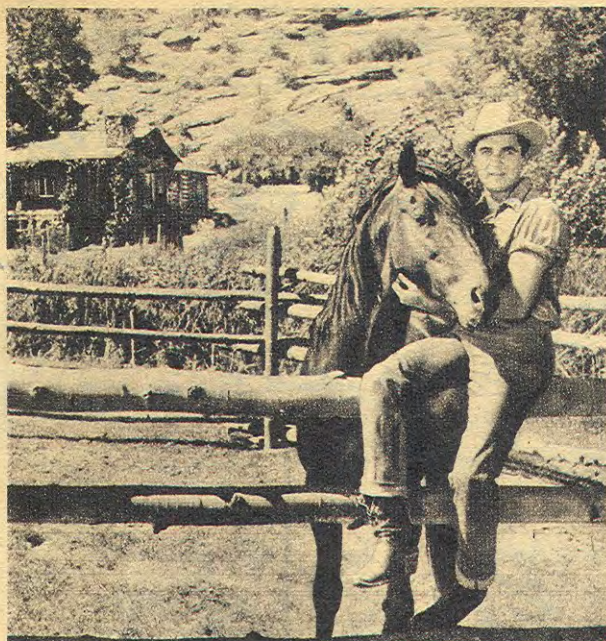
"I am," said the girl. "You got no right to put that crazy jughead in our corral!"

Evidently some explanation was needed right away, as the little miss seemed impatient.

So Ben explained that he had caught the horse yesterday and had nowhere to put him. He went on to win the small girl's approval by making friends with her dog, who was usually dangerous with strangers.

The girl explained that her name was Jenny Custer and that she lived with her grandpa, Cass Bagley, who owned the ranch, known as the Diamond L.

Ben told Jenny his name and



Ben Kirby was happy at Cass Bagley's ranch. And Wildfire, too, learned that all men are not as cruel as Dave Tracy had been.

they had become quite friendly by the time her grandpa arrived to see who the stranger was.

So Ben had to explain once more, and then he asked whether he could stay with Wildfire to work on the ranch.

Cass Bagley did not seem very keen on the idea, but Jenny had taken a strong fancy to Ben and persuaded her grandpa to let Ben stay.

So Ben stayed and worked for Cass, with the other ranch hands. He worked hard and was liked by the hired men with whom he got on well.

There were four of them, Shortie, Pappy, Riggs and Ritchie.

Shortie owned a ukelele and spent all his money on gramophone records which taught him how to play.

The men and Ben put up with his strumming manfully and smiled at Shortie as he struggled with the strings.

But when the rhyme, "The Rustler from Kanab" was played, Pappy, Riggs and Ritchie became as excited as Shortie and joined in the chorus with zest.

They were happy days. Ben's spare time was spent with Wildfire, and he tried daily to train him to see the value of man's friendship.

Wildfire was slow to respond, but gradually Ben made progress and in many little ways won Wildfire's trust.

The first time Ben slung his saddle upon the stallion's back and mounted was an exciting one, and he was watched by Jenny and Cass and the hired men, who flung out many helpful remarks which Ben didn't really need.

Sometimes Ben would talk to Jenny who had grown fond of

him, and she introduced him to her other friends, a crow, a skunk and a raven.

There were no small children nearby, as the ranch was a lonely one, but Jenny was quite happy in Ben's company.

Now that Wildfire knew Ben's voice and touch and let him ride in the saddle, it was time to train him in cowboy duties.

He began by roping a tree stump while riding Wildfire, to teach the horse to stand stock-still under the strain of the rope.

From this he went on to rope a young horse which he freed after the experiment. Wildfire was learning quickly.

Anxious to try him out further, Ben galloped off with Wildfire in search of heavier animal strength, but while chasing a herd of grown horses, his saddle gave way and he was flung into the stream.

Wildfire slowed down and waited for Ben to get up and come to him.



Up to his chest now in clinging mud, Ben whirled his lasso. This was his last chance of escape—and everything depended on Wildfire!

But Ben couldn't get up. He had fallen not only into water, but into quicksand as well. Slowly but surely it sucked him down with every movement he made.

It was useless for Ben to call out. They were miles away from the ranch and there was no one to hear.

It seemed that all he could do was to wait for the end to come.

Luckily he had his lariat in his hand when he was thrown and he clutched it now as he slowly went down.

Wildfire waited patiently.

Ben, with difficulty, flung the rope at a young stunted tree on the bank, in the hope that he would be able to pull himself out. But even as he pulled to tighten the noose, the lariat loop slipped from the branch, which sloped in the wrong direction.

Ben despaired of ever

Carefully he flung the lariat and the noose dropped over Wildfire's head. Wildfire stood stock-still.

"Hold it, boy. Steady!" gasped Ben as he drew on the rope. "Turn, boy, turn!"

Slowly Wildfire turned and walked away, fully understanding what was required of him.

From the deadly drawing quicksand Wildfire pulled Ben as he held grim and gasping on the rope which he had fastened round himself under his armpits.

He was hauled out on to the bank at last. Wildfire, his own horse, had saved his life.

Ben knew, as he lay exhausted with Wildfire nosing affectionately around, that he had at last won the stallion's trust and friendship completely.

Ben was happy now and life at the Diamond L ranch went on pleasantly, until one day



Ben struggled, but the quicksand had him in its deadly grip!

getting out now, and glanced wildly about as he sank to his waist.

Wildfire, wondering what was causing Ben's delay, slowly came forward to the bank and looked across at his master with large dark eyes.

With every minute more precious than the last, Ben looked at his horse with longing and a last hope was born. But was Wildfire trained enough to understand what he could do?

Ben must take the chance. It was the last and only chance he would have.

Shortie, reading from a newspaper, recited the following extract:

"BARKER'S WILD ANIMAL SHOW. During the show, Brutus, an African lion, escaped from his cage and made a bee-line for the open country—"

Shortie whistled. Here was excitement and danger for them all. A man-eating lion was at large not far away!

"Hey, fellers!" he shouted, rushing into the bunkhouse. "A lion's escaped and the Cattle Association are offering fifteen hundred dollars for its hide."

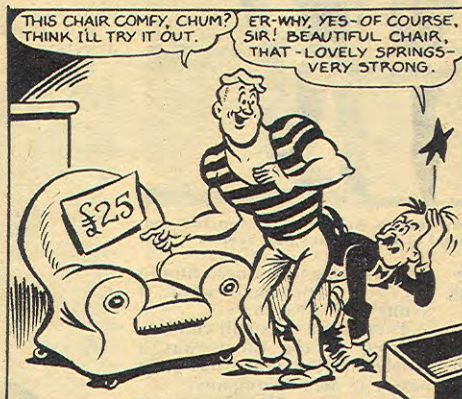
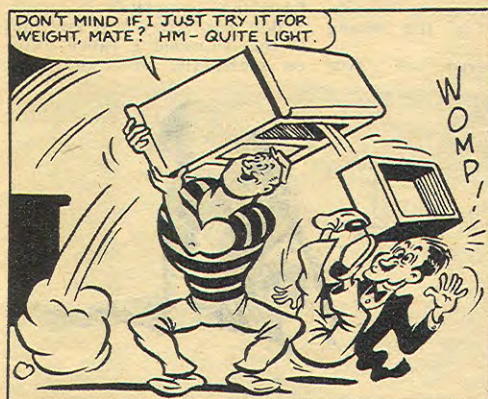
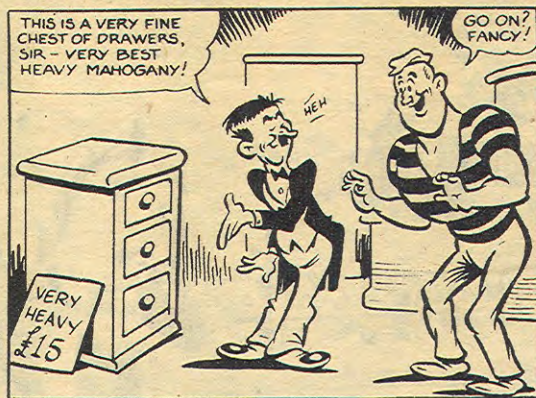
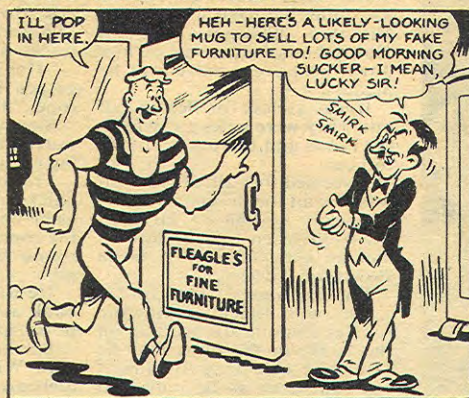
"Say," exclaimed Ritchie, "that's more than we can earn in six months."

Just then Cass Bagley entered. "Listen, men," he said, glancing round. "We've got plenty of work on hand right here, so if any of you leave to go lion hunting you'll be losing your job."

"But, Boss, what happens if that cat starts messing around with your horses?" said Ritchie hopefully.

Cass replied grimly, "That's just why I want you all around here, to see that it doesn't happen!"

Next week: Dave Tracy claims Wildfire! Don't miss what happens!



BOB HARLEY - SPECIAL AGENT

The Shark, a ruthless, stop-at-nothing crook, was now the dictator of the South American country of Incaragua. His one idea was to increase his own power by making war.

And he had a mighty secret weapon, for he had captured the "Prowler", the huge sea-going tank which Malcolm Franklin invented. The "Prowler" could crawl upon the sea-bed, and reach the very deepest depths. It could sink any ship afloat by attacking it from below.

Only two people stood between the Shark and his plans for war. They were Malcolm Franklin himself, and Bob Harley, the young Special Agent from Scotland Yard. They were determined to get the "Prowler" back from him, and to foil his wicked plans.

They had a good friend in Amanda Prando. She was the daughter of General Prando, who had been president of Incaragua until the Shark had thrown him into prison.

Now the Shark thought that he had Franklin and Bob trapped in the jungle. With a squadron of paratroopers, he tried to cordon them into a rocky valley, and was demanding their surrender. But they were already hidden in the tree-tops outside the ring of his men.

There was a good chance that they might escape—and then through the jungle came the sound of Franklin's sea-jeep approaching. Only one person could be driving it—Amanda, who must have set out to find them.

She was driving straight into the Shark's trap!

THROUGH the jungle came the purring throb of the powerful car engine. Bob and Franklin knew only too well what it was, and their hearts sank. Now it seemed as if the sea-jeep must fall into the Shark's hands, and that Amanda would become his prisoner!

"What can we do, chief?" Franklin shook his head. "I don't know, Bob," he whispered back, "It's the sea-jeep all right. I don't know how we can stop Amanda!"

The throb of the engine was drawing nearer.

Down below, the Shark had heard the sound—he stood there with his hand raised for silence, while his paratroopers, too, stood listening—but as yet he didn't know what to make of it.

He barked an order. "Out of sight—all of you!"

Instantly the paratroopers in the jungle clearing faded into the undergrowth. One hid himself beneath the very tree where Bob and Franklin were hiding.

The Shark himself stood undecided for a moment, then he too darted from sight, as the throb of the sea-jeep's engine



Bob crashed into the steel-masked dictator like a thunderbolt from the sky!

grew louder and louder.

Bob looked swiftly at his chief, seeking the sign for action, for some plan. But Franklin just shook his head, and signalled for silence.

The Sea-jeep rolled into the clearing, and now they could see that it was indeed Amanda at the wheel. The sea-jeep was a sort of car that Franklin had built for travelling under water, where the depth was not great, and it was topped by a tough turtle-back of clear, transparent plastic.

They saw the girl pull sharply on the brakes, and stop the jeep as she came into the clearing, for there before her was the big helicopter which had brought the Shark to the spot. She had thought that Bob and Franklin had crashed in a bomber in the jungle, and she had come seeking the wreckage of a crashed aeroplane. For all she knew, her two friends might have been badly hurt, and be needing her aid.

Now, here was this strange helicopter, seemingly abandoned in the jungle.

Bob and Franklin saw her look this way and that. But not a leaf stirred in the sultry jungle. She was clearly puzzled. She switched off the engine, got out of the jeep, and stood listening carefully.

She took two steps towards the helicopter.

Bob felt Franklin's hand tighten on his arm.

There came a stir among the

undergrowth. Amanda half turned, and took a step back towards the sea-jeep—but it was too late. The Shark leaped forward like a panther, and seized the girl.

"Ha! Got you, my beauty!" he snarled "You shall join your father in captivity." He pinned her tightly, with one powerful arm, as the paratroopers flooded back into the clearing.

"The microphone!" snapped the Shark "Give it to me! then back to your stations! You are here to trap those two accursed Englishmen—I can manage this little wild-cat!"

He took the microphone, which was connected to loud-speakers in the helicopter, while the paratroopers hurried away to complete the large cordon of men that surrounded the valley where, as far as the Shark knew, Franklin and Bob were still hiding.

"Franklin!" called the Shark into the microphone, "Franklin! Your little friend, Amanda Prando is now my prisoner! As gallant Englishmen, you would not wish to make things worse for her—so surrender! Come out of that valley with your hands up—or I will send my men in to rout you out! You cannot escape—the valley is surrounded. Surrender, Franklin!"

The paratroopers nearest to the Shark could be seen, their tommy-guns levelled, their gaze intent upon the valley-mouth ahead of them.

Malcolm Franklin leaned across, and whispered rapidly into Bob's ear, pointing swiftly with his hand. Bob nodded keenly, and his eyes gleamed.

Action at last!

Great rope-like tendrils of creeper trailed across the jungle tree-tops. Bob moved to where one of them looped itself onto a nearby branch, and cut it away with his knife, holding onto the free end. It curved down and away across the clearing ahead of him, until it wrapped itself in among the branches of another tree.

Bob paused, while Malcolm Franklin did much the same as he had done with another creeper a couple of yards away.

Then Franklin nodded silently across to Bob.

Bob took a firm grip on the creeper-rope, and launched himself into empty air!

He dropped like a plummet, and then raced across as the creeper snapped taut, straight towards the Shark and his prisoner. He had aimed his swing to a nicety, and when he let go of the rope, he hurtled like a thunderbolt, feet first, straight at the steel-masked dictator!

The Shark saw him coming in the last split instant, and so did Amanda. Then Bob crashed into him, sending him staggering, and Amanda tore herself clear.

Before the Shark could struggle to his feet again, Bob's gun was rammed into his ribs.

(Continued on next page)

"One move, and your leader dies!" yelled Bob at the startled paratroopers.

Malcolm Franklin thudded, feet first into the clearing, and long, bounding strides carried him to the helicopter, a dozen yards or so away.

One of the paratroopers opened fire, and bullets tore into the undergrowth as Franklin ran.

"Stop firing, you fool—stop!" screamed the Shark, as he felt the warning movement of Bob's gun-hand.

The paratrooper lowered the muzzle of his gun. Franklin shouted.

"Amanda—over here—into the helicopter!"

As the girl obeyed, Bob reached round the Shark with his left hand, and tugged the big automatic from its holster at the Shark's waist. He had two pistols now. One, he kept tightly pressed into the crook-dictator's side. With the other, he covered the paratroopers to his left.

He pushed up the safety catch with his thumb, and loosed off a couple of trial shots, to be sure the gun was loaded. They whined into the trees between the two nearest paratroopers.

"Throw down your guns!" Bob commanded.

They did so, and Bob turned his gaze to the right of the clearing.

There were no paratroopers to be seen.

"Chief—some of them have scuttled!"

"Confound it! They'll pass warning on to the rest of the cordon round the valley!" said Franklin. "Bring him over here—get him into this helicopter. The sooner we're air-borne the better—they won't dare do a thing to us while we've got their precious leader!"

Bob urged the Shark forward at gunpoint, and prodded him into the helicopter.

"Keep close to him, Bob—don't give 'em a chance to pick you off!"

Even as Franklin spoke, there came the stammer of a tommy-gun from somewhere among the trees, and a stream of bullets whined past, uncomfortably close to Bob Harley, who had let the Shark get about half a pace ahead of him.

Bob instantly tugged the steel-masked man close to him, but the bullets came again. Bob dropped to the ground, tugging the Shark with him.

"Stop firing—stop!" roared the Shark in terrified anger. "Fire at the helicopter you fools—if—"

That was as far as he got, for Bob pressed his steel-masked face hard into the ground, and stifled the rest of the order.

But it was too late to stop its effect.

He heard the paratroopers' guns crackle into life, and he saw Franklin tug Amanda down out of danger below the level of the helicopter's windows.

"Another peep out of you, chum—and you're for it!" Bob

gritted harshly into the Shark's ear.

He lifted his head carefully, but bullets from the jungle were whining past on their way to tear into the body of the helicopter. Bob wondered how Franklin and Amanda were faring, for he could not see them now. That helicopter was a death-trap, and he himself was only safe because of the nearness of the Shark. Meanwhile, every moment that passed made the situation worse, for the paratroopers from the more distant parts of the cordon around the valley would have heard the firing, and be moving in to join the battle. Even if they kept the advantage of having the Shark as hostage, there was not much hope of their escaping from this jungle siege. Every one of those paratroopers would have iron rations in his pack, while they had nothing.

Every moment that passed lessened their chances of escape!

Bob felt something very like despair clutch at his heart, though, strangely, he was not afraid for himself. What most troubled him was that they would have failed—he and Franklin—and the Shark's schemes to use the "Prowler" as a weapon for total war would succeed.

But they mustn't fail!

It suddenly became clear to Bob what he must do.

"Mr. Franklin—chief!" he yelled above the racket of the chattering tommy-guns, "Chief—are you okay? Can you hear me?"

"I'm okay, Bob—keep talking!"

"Get that helicopter started, chief—get away!"

"Are you going to make a run for it?"

Franklin's tone was startled, unbelieving—for the tommy-gun fire was lacing the air from all directions now, and if Bob rose at all, even the closeness of the Shark would not help him, for he would simply be rising into a hail of lead.

"Never mind me, chief—leave me here. I'll take my chance of striking a bargain with the Shark. Get moving, chief!"

Bob felt sure that Franklin could reach the controls of the helicopter from a lying position on the floor, where at least he had some shelter from the deadly gunfire. He could do it—if he would.

"I can't leave you here, Bob! Besides—we need the Shark as a hostage!"

"We'll never get away from here, chief—not if we all stick together. Besides—" another thought had just struck Bob—"any moment you may get a bullet through the petrol tank of that thing. Get moving chief—you're the only man who can stop the Shark using the 'Prowler'. You've got to go!"

There was no reply to that, and the rattling gunfire hadn't stopped. Bob felt a sudden fear clutch at him. Perhaps a bullet...

He raised his head a little. "Chief!" he yelled.

But before he could hear a reply, or shout again, the Shark erupted into violent action.

He had sensed that Bob's attention was concentrated on Malcolm Franklin for the moment. He took a chance, and with a sudden fierce movement, twisted himself away from under the barrel of Bob's right hand gun. At the same time, both his hands clamped solidly onto the two gun-barrels.

The next instant, using the gun barrels as "handles", and kicking upwards with his knees, he sent Bob hurtling up and over his head, to thud sickeningly over onto his back!

The jerk twitched off the trigger of Bob's own gun, and it roared orange flame. Bob found himself fighting desperately to hang onto both guns, and to hold his own with his bigger, tougher enemy.

The leverage which the length of the guns gave was all in the Shark's favour. Bob gritted his teeth, and hung on, but already his wrists were almost breaking.

Then, from all around in the jungle, came a sudden, blood-curdling yell!

It seemed to echo from every direction at once. Even locked as he was in a life and death struggle, Bob was startled by its screaming ferocity.

What could it be?

But all he could do was battle on—grapple desperately to stop the kicking, snarling Shark from getting those guns to use.

Bob was half aware that the gunfire was no longer ripping through the air above him, but that the paratroopers' tommy-guns must be firing in other directions, for he could still hear them.

Somebody—something—had struck at the paratroopers out of the green darkness of the jungle!

Then the gunfire lessened into a few scattered, more distant bursts, and a second later, the Shark was tugged away from Bob by strong hands.

Bob rose to his feet, a little dizzily, but still clutching his two guns, to see the Shark held firmly in the grasp of two powerful Ochoonee Indians.

Chilka and his tribe, who had

sheltered Amanda, and who were her father's good friends, must have followed her when she had set out to seek them!

Old Chilka appeared, grinning, as Franklin and Amanda jumped down from the helicopter, and hurried across to Bob.

"Chilka follow missy Amanda: Warriors take treepath from river—then—Ugh!"

Chilka made a gesture with his last grunt, describing how he and his men had pounced out of the trees onto the paratroopers.

"Gosh!" gasped Bob, feeling suddenly weak, "I was never happier to see anyone. You certainly arrived in the nick of time!"

This was the respite they needed—this was another chance. For with the Shark himself as their prisoner, they could now plan ways and means of getting back the "Prowler".

They had no way of knowing that already, back in Porto Visto, a new menace threatened them.

In his laboratory, Doctor Nero, the Shark's scientist crony, frowned at the big radio panel before him.

"Strange!" he murmured to himself, "I can get no reply from the Shark's helicopter!" he looked at his wrist watch again. Yes—it was past the time when the Shark had said that he would radio in a message, giving his further orders. That was why Doctor Nero had tried to get in touch from his end.

It was clear that something had gone wrong.

He picked up a telephone, and waited while he got a connection to the dockyards.

"Is the 'Prowler' ready for action yet?"

He nodded as he listened to the reply. The new motor-windings, to replace those which Malcolm Franklin had sabotaged to keep the "Prowler" out of action, were ready to connect up.

"Good!" Doctor Nero nodded again. "Post the crew to action stations. I'll be there in five minutes. We're going to look for the Shark!"

Next week: The secret city in the jungle!

ENGINE-SPOTTERS CLUB

MORE presents waiting for you in Club Corner, Spotters—if your Album number has come up this week! So look at the number on the back page of your Album and check it with the thousand printed below.

All those with numbers between 48,500 and 49,000 inclusive, and between 67,000 and 67,500 inclusive may send up for a present.

If your number is here, this is what you do. First of all choose any one of the following presents: Cowboy Belt and Holster, Box Game, Charm Bracelet, Wrist Compass, Jack-knife, Autograph Album, Ball-point Pen, or Water Pistol. Write your choice in the space in your Album marked "For Official Use"—at the same time making sure that your name and address are filled in on the Membership page. Then write the name of the character or story you like most in COMET—and in a few words say why. Add your name and address, and post in a 2½d. stamped envelope addressed to:

COMET E.S. CLUB, 3 Pilgrim Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.), to arrive by Tuesday, December 23rd. Presents will be despatched about a week after this date and Albums returned at the same time.

THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD

TWELVE o'clock was striking. Silence had settled over Gandybar School. The place was dark, except for a light burning in Dr. Gandybar's study.

The headmaster had been working late on some exam papers. Now he was sitting back in his chair, wondering about Willie Wizzard.

The more he wondered, the more the affairs of the toffee, and the mothball in Mr. Half-spun's gown, and the invisible ink puzzled him. It was unlike Willie to play practical jokes of that kind.

"The boy does not tell lies either," he muttered to himself. "If he says he has not made these things for many months, then I believe he has not made them."

The headmaster began to wonder if, perhaps, someone could have gone into Willie's room and stolen the formulas.

He decided that he must take a look at the room. Then he could see if there were any signs of anything having been disturbed.

He reached the corridor leading to Willie's room and switched on the light. He walked down the corridor.

All at once his ankle touched a strand of cotton.

Startling things began to happen!

A bag of flour whizzed down from above and emptied itself over Dr. Gandybar's head! It was followed by a deluge of cold water from a bucket!

Finding his head and shoulders now covered with a sticky mess of dough, the astonished headmaster opened his mouth to yell "Wow!"

But before he had got the cry out a boxing glove on the end of a spring whanged forward and caught him a biff on the chin!

Almost at the same moment a rope snaked downwards and looped itself around his waist. It jerked tight.

Frantically Dr. Gandybar struggled to undo the rope. But he was too late. With a squawk he was whisked upwards into the air.

Up he sailed for ten feet or so. Then he just dangled!

Poor Dr. Gandybar was well and truly caught in Willie's latest invention. Several of Willie's ideas had been stolen and he'd fixed up this burglar trap to catch the thief.

Now Willie Wizzard's trap was a very well worked-out affair. This rope on which the yelling headmaster writhed was the rope of the school bell.

As the unfortunate head squirmed and wriggled the bell clanged loud and clear high above him!

The noise acted as a fire alarm signal. In the dormitories

boys began to stir in their sleep. Deep snores began to change into disturbed grunts.

Willie and Jimmy, who had been half expecting the sound of the bell, were already sitting up and listening.

Willie beamed at his pal. "It's worked!" he chortled.

Jimmy grinned back. "Either we've caught the criminal who has been stealing the formulas, or the place is on fire!" he chuckled.

Both of them bounded out of bed. As Willie struggled to pull on his trousers over his pyjamas he shouted to everyone around him.

"Come on, you chaps!" he yelled. "There's a burglar downstairs! Come and help us round him up!"

Nearly everyone was wide awake by now and boys on both sides of the dorm were hurriedly putting on clothes. One chap, Johnson, was not, however, quite so open-eyed as the rest. Still drowsy, he heard only one word of Willie's call—the word "burglar."

Johnson leaped to his feet and sprang at the person nearest to him, under the impression that this was the thief!

The boy he attacked was at this moment pulling a shirt over his head. Unable to see who was tackling him, he in turn thought that the burglar had reached the dormitory! He hit back wildly.

For several seconds Johnson and his victim hammered at each other like a couple of all-in wrestlers. Johnson grabbed a pillow and whammed it in the other chap's midriff.

In return, Johnson received a cuff round the head with a bolster!

As several of the boys rushed forward laughing, to separate the two, Johnson swung his pillow again. Half a dozen chaps now went flying into a heap!

"Hey!" roared Willie. "Cut it out! This is no time for larking about! The real burglar will get away if we're not quick!"

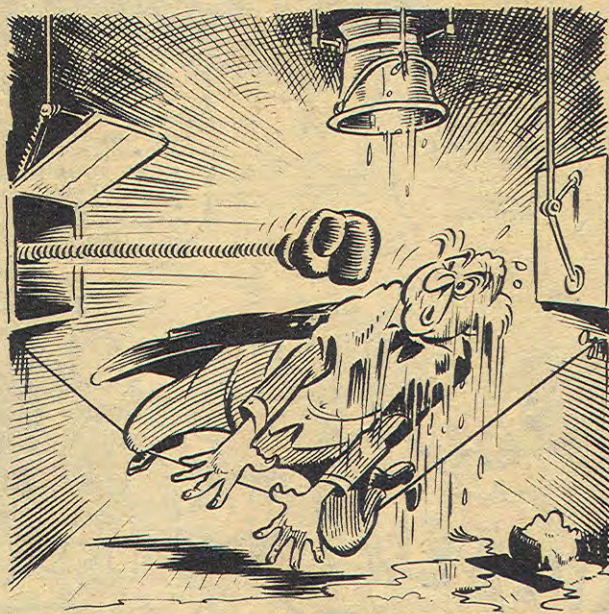
His words reached the two struggling fighters. Johnson pulled the shirt off his opponent's head to see who it was he had been fighting. He grinned a sheepish grin!

"Come on!" urged Willie again, making for the door.

Without waiting for any explanations or apologies, everybody hared after Willie. Down the stairs they hurried, two steps at a time.

The school bell was still clanging merrily as the boys poured into the corridor leading to Willie's room.

"There he is!" chortled Jimmy Bash with glee, pointing up at the dough-covered figure which wriggled at the end of the rope. "I say, what a glorious



Before Dr. Gandybar had time to cry out, a boxing glove on the end of a spring whanged forward and caught him a biff on the chin!

mess he's in!"

Then he stopped and stared. Somehow that figure looked familiar!

Jimmy's knees began to quake!

The next instant all doubts were removed.

An unmistakable voice sailed towards the group of boys below.

"Get me down, you dunder-heads!" roared the furious Dr. Gandybar. "Six thousand lines for every one of you if I am not pulled down in two minutes!"

"Oooh!" moaned Willie. "This has really done it!"

"Phew!" whistled Jimmy. "It's the Head! Now we are for it!"

"Crums!" cried Johnson, now fully awake and as able as anybody to see the horror of the situation.

Dr. Gandybar started shouting again.

"Twelve thousand lines each!" he bellowed. "You dithering nincompoops! Don't stand there gaping! Get me down!"

Johnson sprang into action first of all.

"Out of the way, you lads," he ordered. "I'll clamber up somehow and get him down. Now—wait a minute! Bash, will you go downstairs and get a step-ladder from the basement?"

While Jimmy had run off to find the step-ladder, Johnson tried to reach the howling Head by scrambling up on a couple of chairs. He could not get high enough, however, to reach the rope around the dangling Dr.

Gandybar's waist.

In a few minutes Jimmy had staggered in with the step-ladder. Hurriedly Johnson put it into position and started to climb up.

Before many seconds had passed he was undoing the knot in the rope.

"Will you hold on to my shoulder, sir?" he asked the Head. "Then you can get one foot on the top of the ladder."

"Cut out the cackle, boy!" snorted Dr. Gandybar. "Just undo the rope!"

Johnson re-doubled his efforts. All of a sudden he succeeded.

The result was that Dr. Gandybar came down to the floor—but not by way of the ladder! He just fell!

With a howl the Head frantically grabbed at Johnson as he went whizzing by. He managed just to clutch Johnson's jacket, but it didn't stop his downward dive.

As for Johnson, he began to sway perilously on the top of the step-ladder!

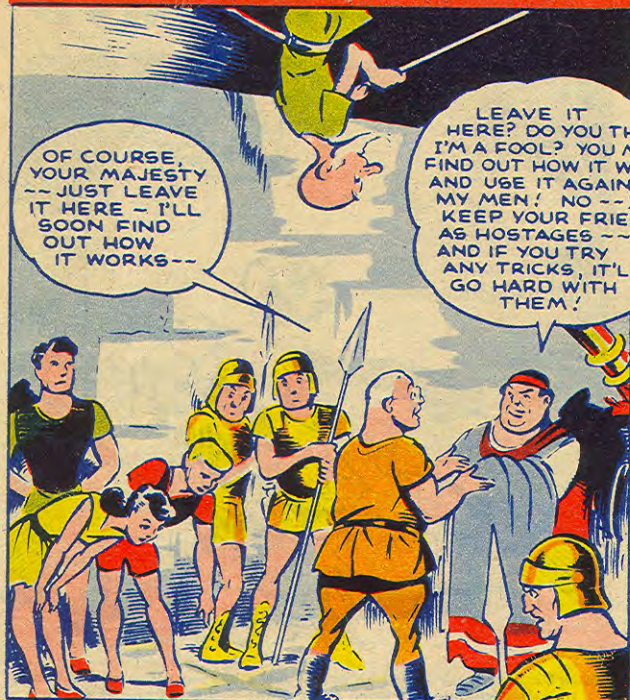
For an instant he waved his arms wildly to try to keep his balance. Then he, too, crashed towards the floor!

There was a loud thump as Johnson landed on top of the prostrate Dr. Gandybar. He still had enough breath left to moan, "Oh, sir, I'm sorry," as he scrambled to his feet.

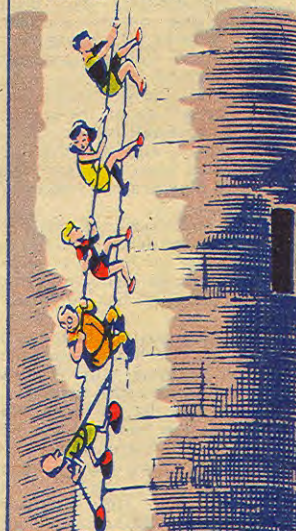
Then Johnson bent down to help the headmaster.

Dr. Gandybar did not, however, get up immediately. He was stretching out a hand to

(Continued on page 17)



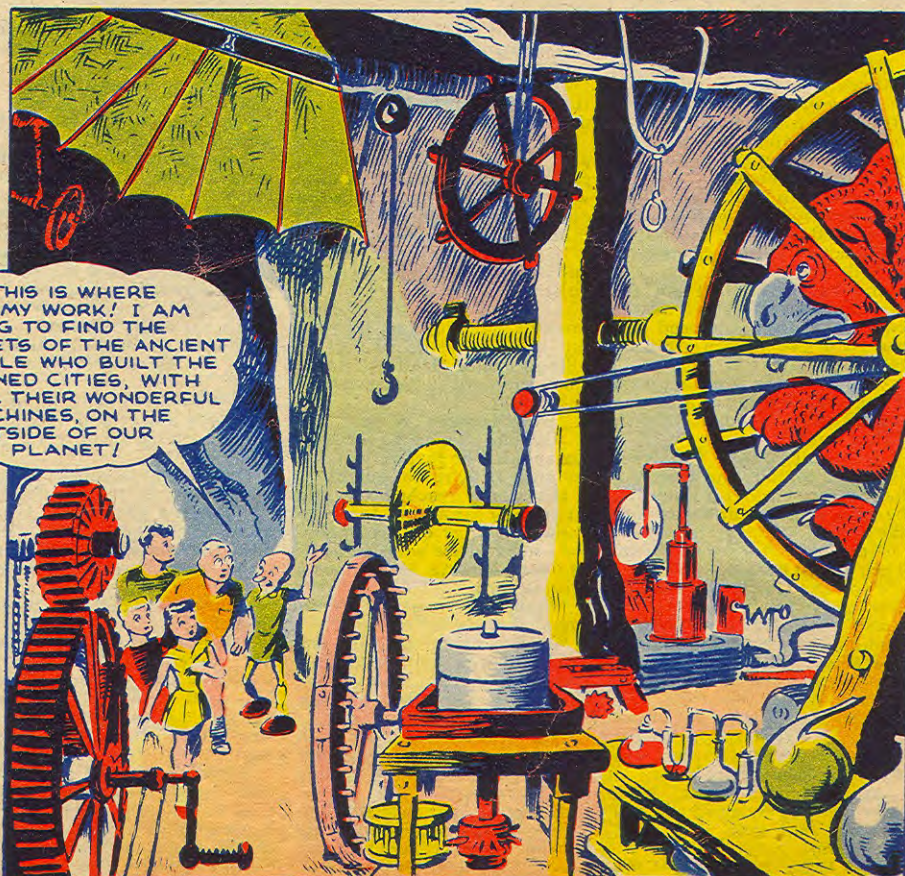
SO THE EMPEROR LEFT AND TOOK THE RAY GUN WITH HIM. THE SKY EXPLORERS LOSE NO TIME IN MAKING THEIR ESCAPE WITH THE AID OF FIDDCAT'S WALL WALKING BOOTS AND A ROPE ~~~



FIDDCAT LED THEM AWAY THROUGH THE NIGHT, AWAY FROM THE CITY, AND INTO THE MOUNTAINS WHERE THEY CAME AT LAST TO A HUGE AND BLASTED TREE THAT GREW ALONE AMONG THE ROCKS.



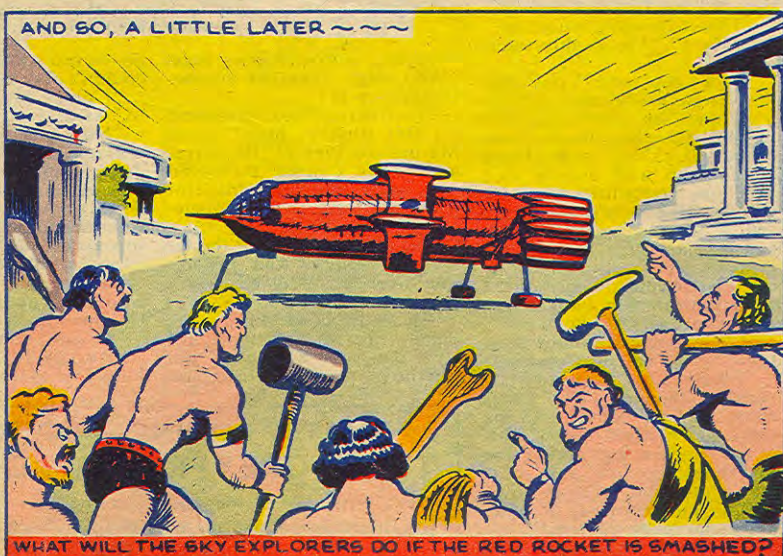
THIS IS WHERE I DO MY WORK! I AM TRYING TO FIND THE SECRETS OF THE ANCIENT PEOPLE WHO BUILT THE RUINED CITIES, WITH ALL THEIR WONDERFUL MACHINES, ON THE OUTSIDE OF OUR PLANET!



SOON AFTER THIS, "DAWN" BREAKS OVER THE KINGDOM OF THE ROMANS. THERE IS NO NIGHT AND NO DAY ON THE PLANET ROMA, BUT THE EVERLASTING DAYLIGHT CAN BE BLOCKED OFF FROM THE KINGDOM IN THE CAVE BY THE HUGE ROLLING "LID", WHICH THE PEOPLE OF LONG AGO BUILT. BUT NOW THERE ARE NO MACHINES TO WORK IT.



AND BELOW, IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF ROMA, THE EMPEROR CAMBUSTA IS WAKING UP ~ ~



Be sure to find out next week!

MICK THE MOON BOY

THE MAN WHO STOLE NELSON'S COLUMN!

"SO this is the famous Trafalgar Square, hey?" demanded Hank Luckner the twelve-year-old American boy. "This is it, Hank," said his pal Mick the Moon Boy. "And that's Nelson's Column right in the middle of it."

"Gee, we've gotta take some pictures of this!" cried Hank, unslinging his camera. "It's a mighty fine column, Mick. And is that the famous Lord Nelson away up there right on the top of it?"

"That's him," said Mick. The two boys were on holiday in England and were starting off by seeing the sights of London. "Tell me about Lord Nelson, Mick," urged Hank when he had taken several pictures of the Column. "I want to know so I can write in my photo album about him when I stick the pictures in. He was a great British Admiral, wasn't he?"

Before Mick could answer, a hearty voice behind them boomed:

"He suttin'ly was, son. Lord Nelson was one o' the greatest sailors in hist'ry."

Mick and Hank turned. Standing beaming at them was a fat, red-faced, jolly-looking man wearing a bowler hat and an old blue suit. With him was a stout lady and a boy and a girl who looked as though they might be his wife and children, as indeed they were.

"Ar, he was a grand chap was Lord Nelson," cried the fat man. "He licked the combined fleets o' France and Spain at the great Battle o' Trafalgar and didn't lose an English ship. That's why they put the Column up to his mem'ry and that's why they call this Trafalgar Square."

"Thank you very much, sir," said Hank. "I'm mighty interested."

"More fool you!" put in a nasty, sneering voice.

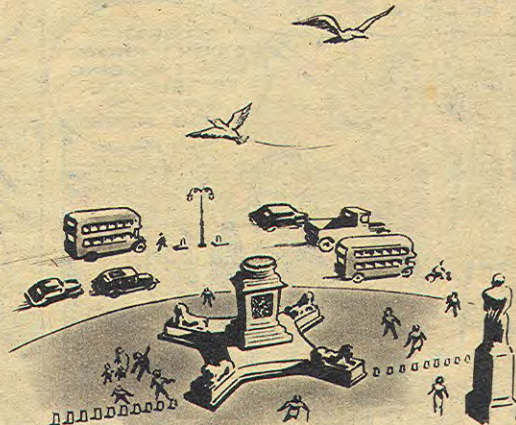
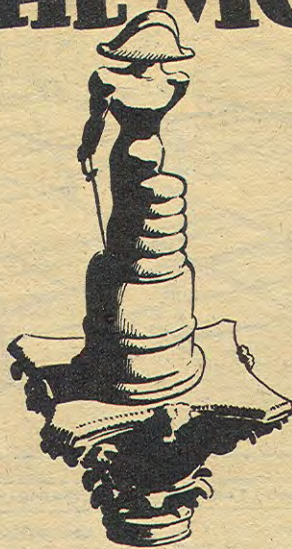
Hank, Mick and the fat man turned. Standing beside them was a tall, skinny, spotty-faced young man with a long thin nose and ferrety little eyes. He was wearing a green shirt, a yellow tie and baggy trousers and his name was Marmaduke Pippin.

"Wot are you talking about?" cried the fat man indignantly.

"Ow dare you say the lad's a fool to be interested in the great Lord Nelson and his Column?"

"Because he is," sneered Marmaduke Pippin. "Who cares about silly old Nelson and the Battle of Trafalgar to-day? This is the modern age and if the British public had any sense they'd pull that Column down and put another one up to somebody who really matters."

"Ho, and who might that be?" cried the fat man fairly



Nelson's Column had completely vanished and all that remained was the figure of Nelson away up high in the air, standing as though suspended in space!

trembling with righteous rage. "Who might they put another Column up to?"

"To Charlie Snozzletwit and his Hot Rhythm Boys!" cried Marmaduke Pippin. "He's a real hero is old Charlie. Have you ever heard him and his Hot Rhythm Boys play boogie-woogie or bebop?"

"No, I haven't," cried the fat man furiously. "And I don't want to either. Why, he doesn't even sound English to me!"

"He isn't!" cried Marmaduke Pippin. "But what's that matter? He's the cat's whisker is old Charlie—you should hear him

on the drums—and I bet Nelson couldn't play a blessed note."

"I don't suppose he wanted to," said Mick.

"No, because he bloomin' well couldn't!" cried Marmaduke Pippin fiercely. "And yet they put a monument up to him. So why don't they put one up to Charlie Snozzletwit? There'd be some sense in that. Charlie's an important bloke!"

He flung out a pointing hand towards the tall, towering Column.

"D'you know what?" he cried excitedly. "If I had my way I'd get rid of that great silly eye-

sore this very minute and put a proper monument up to Charlie Snozzletwit, the man that matters. I'd—"

Abruptly he broke off, his finger still pointing, his mouth wide open and his eyes nearly popping right out of his head.

For Nelson's Column had completely vanished and all that remained was the figure of Nelson away up yonder high in the air, standing as though suspended in space!

"Cor, stone the crows!" gasped the fat man, his eyes bulging. "Now you've been and gorn and done it. Where's the—where's the Column?"

Marmaduke Pippin didn't answer. He was glaring wildly about him as though in search of the missing Column.

"Come on, where is it?" roared the fat man. "You said if you 'ad your way you'd get rid of it and now it's gorn, so you must know summat about it. Where is it? What've you done with it?"

"I—I don't know!" gasped Marmaduke Pippin. "I didn't do anything. I—I never touched it!"

"No, but you were pointing at it!" shouted the fat man. "You were pointing at it with that nasty, skinny finger o' yours and saying you wanted to get rid of it and now it isn't there at all, so you must've done summat to it. Come on, where is it?"

"I don't know, I tell you!" screamed Marmaduke Pippin nearly off his head with fright.

He wasn't the only one who was frightened. There were a lot of people in Trafalgar Square and they were standing staring in awe and amazement at where the vanished Column had been and up at the stone figure of Nelson, standing high in the air without any visible means of support.

Several big, burly policemen were pushing their way quickly through the gaping crowd of on-lookers and one of them cried: "What's going on here? Where's Nelson's Column? Does anybody know anything about this?"

"Yes, this covey does!" roared the fat man, grabbing Marmaduke Pippin by the scruff of the neck as that frantic young gentleman tried to bolt. "E's the bloke that's done it. 'E said 'e wanted to get rid o' Nelson's Column and put one up to a pal o' his called Charlie Snozzletwit and now 'e's been and gorn and started on the job!"

"Is that right?" demanded the copper, grabbing the struggling Marmaduke by the arm. "Is it you that's shifted the Column?"

"How the dickens could I shift it, you great silly fool?" screamed Marmaduke. "I never touched it!"

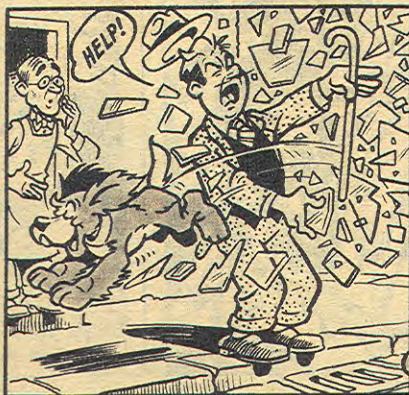
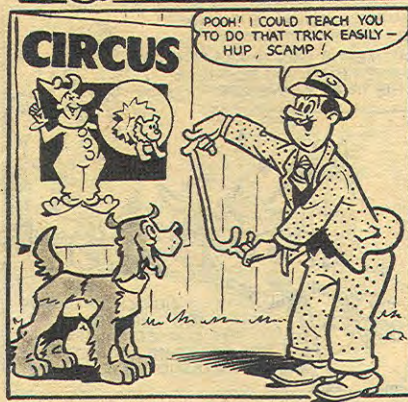
(Continued opposite)

XMAS IS COMING—AND SO IS—THE GREYFRIARS GHOST!

Don't miss this exciting new picture-story of the boys of Greyfriars School and the girls of Cliff House. STARTING NEXT WEEK!



SCAMP OUR HAPPY HOUND



MICK THE MOON BOY (Continued from page 12)

"No, but you pointed at it!" shouted the fat man. "You pointed at it and then it vanished, so you know summat about it. He does, constable, and no bloomin' error!" he cried to the copper. "I reckon he's one o' these modern scientists wot the newspapers are talking about and he's shifted it with a soundless, invisible bomb or summat!"

"Then you'd better come along with me while we make enquiries about this", said the copper, beginning to drag the frantically struggling Marmaduke away.

"I won't!" screamed Marmaduke and kicked him violently on the shins. "Lemme go, hang you!"

After being kicked on the shins, of course, the policeman was more determined than ever not to let him go. But it took four of them to get the madly struggling Marmaduke to the nearest police station.

They had him up in front of the beak right away and Marmaduke was charged with stealing, destroying, or otherwise removing Nelson's Column.

Mick, Hank and the fat man and his family were in court and when the beak heard the charge he nearly had a fit.

"Stealing Nelson's Column?" he gasped, gazing at the prisoner in the dock as though he could believe neither his eyes nor his ears, as indeed he couldn't. "Pon my word, I've never heard of such a thing. How did he do it?"

"I didn't do it!" screamed Marmaduke.

"Silence!" thundered the beak. "You'll have your chance to talk later and if I find you guilty of this charge you'll go to prison for a very, very long time. Stealing Nelson's Column, indeed! I've never heard of such a thing!"

But Marmaduke didn't go to prison, for at that moment a copper rushed into court saying that the Column was back again in its place and was quite sound and safe.

So Marmaduke was discharged with a very severe warning from the beak to be very careful what he was up to in future. But to this day the mystery of the missing Column has never been solved. Only Mick and Hank know that Mick used his marvellous scientific powers to make the Column invisible for a while as a lesson to Marmaduke Pippin not to sneer in future at one of England's greatest heroes.

Next week: Mick becomes a Christmas postman! Don't miss his bagful of fun and adventure!

THIS IS KIT CARSON SPEAKING



Hullo there, folks.

Over the page you'll find some exciting pictures telling my story of the "White Redman's Secret," and just in case you've missed what's happened up till now, I'll tell you about it.

This is the strange tale of two brothers who grew up without knowing each other. Their parents were killed in an Indian raid. One grew up with white folks and was called Dan. The other grew up as Deerfoot, chief of the Teton Sioux tribe.

There was a lot of mystery around these two lads. For one thing there was a sinister Englishman named Mark Raven who had tried to kill Dan, and knew some valuable secret about him. Then there was Tom Stack and Cinnamon Bill, who had killed old Nat Butler, whom Dan had known as his father. And lastly, there was Lieutenant Kenrick, a cavalry officer, who had an old score to settle against Dan. Kenrick managed to get Dan thrown into jail on a trumped-up charge. Tom Stack rescued Cinnamon Bill from the jail and Dan got away at the same time.

But Dan and I ran slap into a trap and were taken prisoner by the Sioux tribe. We were taken to the Indian camp and at the command of Snake Fang, the witch doctor, put to the stake.

But just as Snake Fang went to light the brushwood round our feet Deerfoot and some of his braves arrived. The point was, could Deerfoot save us?

THE SECRET OF THE WHITE REDMAN

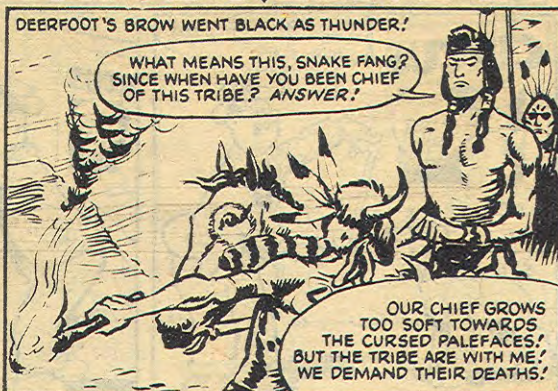
YOUNG DAN LET OUT A YELL OF HOPE!



DEERFOOT!
YOU KNOW ME!
SAVE US!

IT IS THE
YOUNG PALEFACE WHO
SAVED MY LIFE!

DEERFOOT'S BROW WENT BLACK AS THUNDER!



WHAT MEANS THIS, SNAKE FANG?
SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN CHIEF
OF THIS TRIBE? ANSWER!

OUR CHIEF GROWS
TOO SOFT TOWARDS
THE CURSED PALEFACES!
BUT THE TRIBE ARE WITH ME!
WE DEMAND THEIR DEATHS!



IT'S TOUCH AND GO, KIT!
LOOKS LIKE EVEN DEERFOOT
CAN'T SAVE US NOW!

IT'S THAT SKUNK SNAKE FANG!
HE SURE IS POISON! I GUESS
THIS IS THE END....

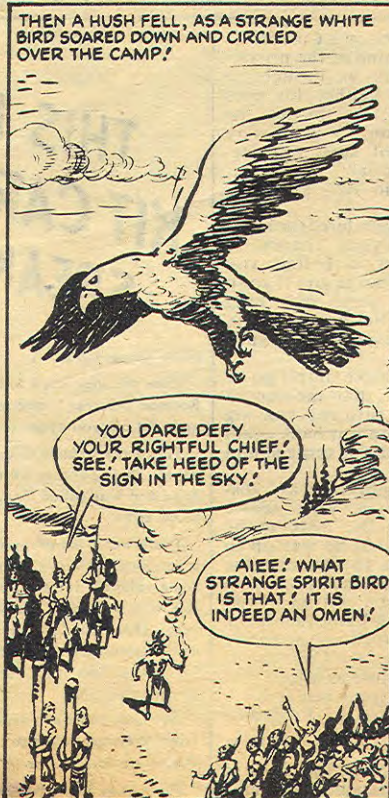
THE EVIL SNAKE FANG TURNED AND
YELLED TO THE TRIBE...



WHAT SAY YOU,
O WARRIORS OF THE
TETON TRIBE?

SNAKE FANG
SPEAKS WISELY!
DEATH!
DEATH TO THE
PALEFACES!

THEN A HUSH FELL, AS A STRANGE WHITE
BIRD SOARED DOWN AND CIRCLED
OVER THE CAMP!



YOU DARE DEFY
YOUR RIGHTFUL CHIEF!
SEE! TAKE HEED OF THE
SIGN IN THE SKY!

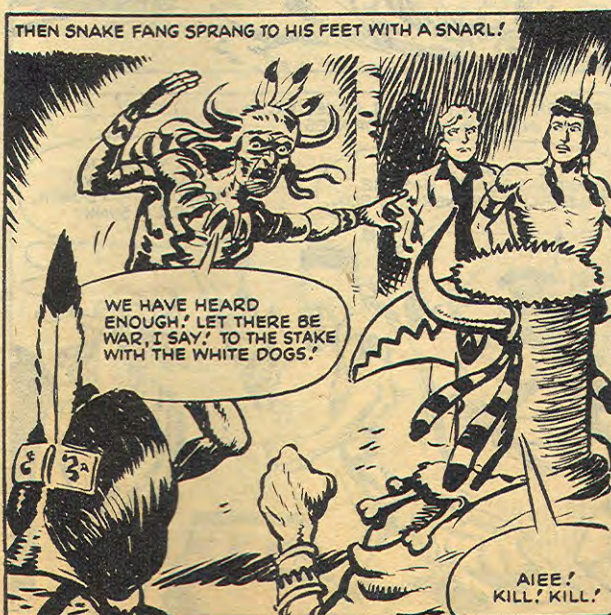
AIEE! WHAT
STRANGE SPIRIT BIRD
IS THAT! IT IS
INDEED AN OMEN!

SWIFTLY, DEERFOOT TOOK COMMAND
OF THE COWED BRAVES!



THE FATE OF THE PALEFACES
SHALL BE DECIDED IN COUNCIL!
I HAVE SPOKEN! TAKE THEM AWAY!

WE'VE A CHANCE
YET, KIT!



GRIM-FACED, DEERFOOT FLASHED HIS KNIFE FROM ITS SHEATH, AND PULLED DAN TO HIS SIDE...



BUT THIS WHITE YOUTH SHALL NOT DIE! SEE! I PRICK HIS ARM AND MINE...

NOW WE ARE BLOOD BROTHERS! LET NO REDMAN HARM THIS PALEFACE YOUTH! I HAVE SPOKEN!



SO BE IT! IT IS THE SIOUX LAW! BUT PA-HE-HASKA SHALL DIE! AT ONCE! I WILL GO FETCH HIM TO THE STAKE!

AS THE WITCH-DOCTOR STEPPED INTO THE TEPEE, I HALF-CLOSED MY EYES, TENSED AND READY!



THEY'VE COME FOR ME! IT'S NOW OR NEVER!... I'VE GOT TO FOOL HIM THAT I'M ASLEEP... THEN TAKE THE RED SKUNK BY SURPRISE...

WAKE, WHITE DOG!

THEN AS THE EVIL MASKED FACE BENT OVER ME, I LASHED OUT WITH ALL MY STRENGTH...



TAKE THAT, YOU RED RAT! THAT TOMAHAWK IS SURE GOING TO COME IN HANDY!

AAAAGHH!

IN A FEW SECONDS I SLASHED MY ROPES AWAY...



HELP! HELP! WHITE DOG ESCAPES...

QUIET, YOU SKUNK!... NOW I'LL HAVE THAT UGLY MASK OF YOURS!... IT MIGHT HELP ME IN A GETAWAY!

PULLING THE MASK OVER MY FACE, I RACED FROM THE TEPEE, SLAP INTO A BUNCH OF BRAVES!



WE HEARD CRIES, O WITCH-DOCTOR! HAS THE PALEFACE PRISONER ESCAPED?

I'VE GOT TO BLUFF MY WAY THROUGH THIS BUNCH, OR I'M SUNK!

THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD (Continued from page 5)

pick up something which had dropped out of Johnson's trousers pocket.

"Boy!" the headmaster thundered as he looked at the papers he had picked up. "What are these?"

Johnson's face had gone almost as white as Dr. Gandybar's dough-covered features.

"I — er — I think, sir — I really don't, sir . . ." he began.

"These," said Dr. Gandybar slowly as he rose majestically to his feet, "are formulas for several Wizzard Wonder devices. The top one, I see, is the formula for Everlasting Toffee!"

"Yes, sir," confessed Johnson miserably. "I had better tell everything, sir, I stole them."

"Go on!" breathed Dr. Gandybar, wiping a lump of dough from his right eye.

"Yes, sir," said the unhappy Johnson. "I intended to put the toffee on the market, sir, and make a small fortune."

"Go on!" insisted Dr. Gandybar, flopping some dough from the back of his neck.

"Yes, sir," sighed Johnson. "It was also I, sir, who put the Super Mothball in Mr. Half-spun's gown, just for a jape. And I put the invisible ink in the inkwell, sir!"

"That is enough," interrupted

Dr. Gandybar sternly. "The rest we shall discuss in private. See me in my study after breakfast, Johnson!"

Dr. Gandybar stalked away, trailing little puddles of watery dough. Then he paused.

"You can then explain this booby trap as well, Johnson!" he commanded.

Back in the dormitory some time later, Willie and Jimmy agreed that in the morning they must confess to setting the booby trap. Otherwise they would leave Johnson to face a well-deserved punishment.

"But don't lose any sleep over the trap, old boy," grinned Jimmy. "I've a feeling that old Gandy will consider you've been punished enough already for one thing and another!"

Willie grinned back. Then he looked thoughtful.

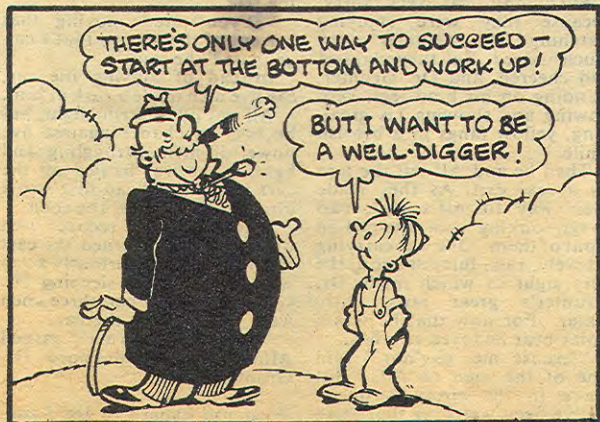
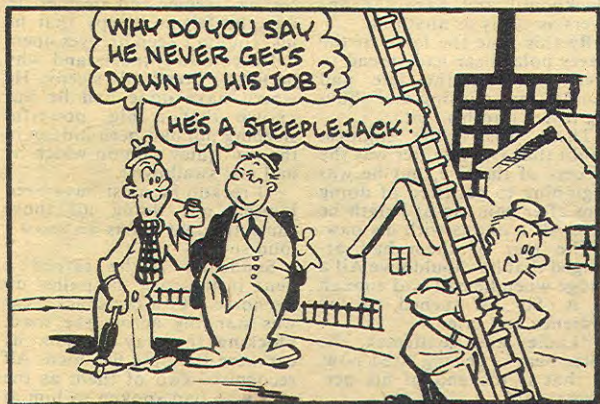
"I am going to lose just a few minutes' sleep," he replied, leaping out of bed again. "I shan't be long, though."

He ran out of the dorm. When he returned about five minutes later he was chuckling.

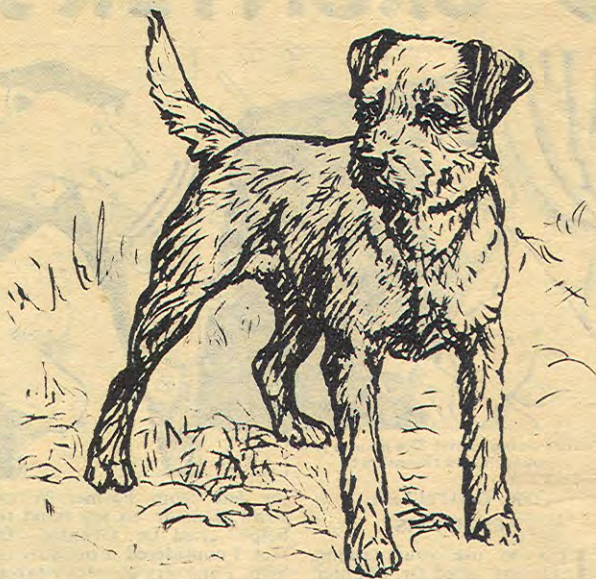
"What's up?" asked Jimmy. "I have just destroyed the formula for the Wizzard Trousers Protector," the school-boy inventor explained. "I shouldn't like Johnson to steal that before he faces old Gandybar. Good! night!"

Next week: Willie Wizzard gets busy on the Christmas turkey!

CHUCKLES



YOUR FAVOURITE DOGS



No. 19. BORDER TERRIER

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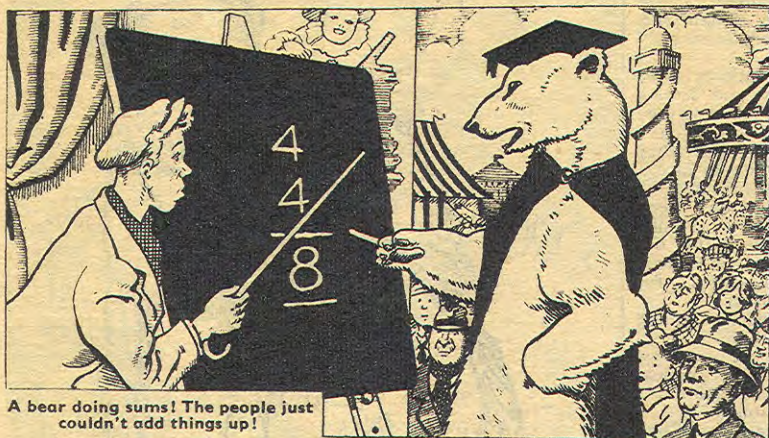
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DR. GRUNTER'S ZOO SCHOOL



A bear doing sums! The people just couldn't add things up!

DR. GRUNTER PERFORMS

"IT'S no use your talking, Drripp!" cried Dr. Grunter, the polar bear. "My mind is made up. I am going to help at the garden fete this afternoon."

"But suppose people discover that you're not really a polar bear at all?" cried Mr. Drripp.

"Pooh, they won't discover that!" snorted Dr. Grunter. "I'm not quite such a fool, Drripp!"

Dr. Grunter hadn't always been a polar bear. Nor had Mr. Drripp always been a turtle. Not so very long ago they had been two masters in charge of a party of boys who had come to Meadowsweet Farm to help Farmer Whipstraw with the harvest.

One morning 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 you could ever meet. He got his bottles mixed up and, instead of giving the two masters and 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. And birds and animals they were doomed to remain until Dr. Dozey could find a liquid which would change them all back again to their proper selves.

Dr. Grunter, the master in charge of the party, had been changed into a savage-looking polar bear. Mr. Drripp, his second-in-command, had been changed into a mournful-looking turtle.

At the moment the pair of them were standing in the wooden hut in which they lived at the farm. They were talking about the grand garden fete which was to be held at the village that same afternoon.

"The moment I heard about

the fete from Farmer Whipstraw, I made up my mind to help!" cried Dr. Grunter. "In fact, I considered it my duty to help. For every ha'penny taken goes to the upkeep of Homes for Orphan Children!"

"A very worthy object!" cried Mr. Drripp. "But I ask again, is it safe for you to help? As you yourself have said, once the news gets about that we have been changed into birds and animals we will be the laughing-stock of every school in the country. So far we have managed to keep it a secret."

"And it's going to remain a secret!" snapped Dr. Grunter. "I'm not going to make a speech at the fete, if that's what you're thinking. Not a soul there will dream for an instant that I can talk. They will think that I'm just an ordinary polar bear."

"Well, then, how are you going to help?" demanded Mr. Drripp.

"As a side-show in a tent all to myself," said Dr. Grunter. "I shall do sums on a blackboard—any sums the audience care to ask. It's my own idea and I think—ah—that it ought to be what is generally called a terrific hit!"

"It will, if you don't slip up and start talking or something," said Mr. Drripp uneasily. "Who's going with you?"

"Alf, one of the farm hands," said Dr. Grunter. "He will pretend to be my trainer."

Once Dr. Grunter had made up his mind about anything, nothing would shift him. So, that same afternoon, he bounded up into Alf's cart and off the pair of them set for the grand garden fete.

Jolly old Farmer Whipstraw had arranged that a big tent should be placed at the disposal of Alf and the polar bear, and within a very short time the tent was absolutely packed with people all eager to see the wonderful polar bear that could do sums.

At one end of the tent was a platform with a blackboard on it. On the platform were Alf and Dr. Grunter, who was standing on his hind legs and wearing his gown and mortar-board.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen," cried Alf, "the polar bear will do any sums you care to give him. Will any lady or gentleman give the polar bear a sum?"

"What's four and four?" cried a lady.

Dr. Grunter immediately wrote 4 and 4 on the blackboard and wrote the answer 8.

"Marvelous!" gasped everybody.

"Wonderful!"

"However does he do it?"

They started to shout all sorts of sums at Dr. Grunter, and some of them were jolly hard ones indeed. But Dr. Grunter wrote them all down on the blackboard and gave the answers as easily as anything.

By this time the fame of the clever polar bear had spread to every part of the fete and people were pushing and shoving to get into his tent.

There wasn't the slightest doubt that Dr. Grunter was the success of the fete, but he was beginning to get tired of doing sum after sum, so at length he gave Alf a nudge with his paw.

The pair of them had arranged that he should give Alf a nudge when he had had enough of it. So Alf turned to the audience and cried:

"Ladies and gentlemen, the polar bear is getting tired now, so that is the end of his performance!"

Everybody was very sorry, because they were enjoying watching Dr. Grunter very much indeed. But they clapped and cheered, and Dr. Grunter, standing on his hind legs, kept bowing and showing his great, long, yellow fangs in a bearish smile.

Then he and Alf left the tent by a rear exit. As they made their way to Alf's cart, two rough-looking men stepped in front of them. One was carrying a lovely, raw, juicy salmon, the very sight of which made Dr. Grunter's great jaws fairly water. For now that he was a polar bear he loved raw fish.

"Excuse me, guv'nor," said one of the men to Alf. "But we're in the circus business. We've been watching that there polar bear of yours doing his

sums and we'd like to buy him."

"He's not for sale," said Alf. "We'll give you a hundred pounds for him," said the man.

"It wouldn't matter if you were to offer me a thousand pounds for him," said Alf. "Well, that's a pity," sighed the man. "Anyway, we've brought him this fish along. I guess he deserves it!"

His pal offered Dr. Grunter the lovely juicy salmon. Dr. Grunter grabbed it with his forepaws and swallowed it in a couple of gulps.

"That's very kind of you," said Alf.

"Not at all," replied the man with a grin.

He and his pal stood watching as Dr. Grunter bounded into the cart and Alf swung himself up and picked up the reins. Then, as Alf drove off, the two men hurried towards a ramshackle motor-car where three other rough-looking men were waiting.

"Come on, let's get going!" said the man who had given Dr. Grunter the salmon. "We'll get that bear all right!"

With that, the five of them climbed into the car and they shot off along the road. Meanwhile, curled up in the bottom of the cart, Dr. Grunter was feeling sleepier and sleepier. In fact, he felt so sleepy that he just couldn't keep his eyes open.

He couldn't understand why he felt so dreadfully sleepy. He would have done had he but known that a big, powerful sleeping pill had been hidden in the raw, juicy salmon which he had just swallowed.

"I reckon he must have tired himself out doing all those sums, thought Alf as he heard a loud snore.

Suddenly, as he turned a bend in the road, he pulled up his horse. For a ramshackle car was standing across the road, blocking the way. Beside the car were standing five men. Alf recognised two of them as the pair who had spoken to him at the fete.

"D'you mind moving that car out of the way so that I can get past?" he said.

Instead of moving the car, the five men made a rush at him.

Alf put up a terrific fight, but he had no chance against five powerful men. Struggling and fighting, he was hauled off the cart and hurled head-first into a ditch by the side of the road.

Before he could recover, two of the men had turned the cart and were driving furiously away with the blissfully sleeping Dr. Grunter. The other three men were following in the car.

"Gosh, that's torn it!" gasped Alf. "They've kidnapped Dr. Grunter!"

What will happen to Dr. Grunter? You'll find out next week!

THE ADVENTURES OF

CLAUDE
AND

CUTHBERT
THE TWO NEW BOYS

AH! BOYS! READY TO START, EH?
TO YOUR PLACES! TO-DAY YOU
WILL SIT FOR YOUR EXAMINATION!

CLASSROOM

HOORAY!

WHACKHO!

WELL! I'M PLEASED
THEY'RE PLEASED,
BUT THEY'RE GOING
THE WRONG WAY!
THAT LEADS TO THE
DINING ROOM!!

WE'RE READY
TO START
AT ONCE!

COME ON - LET'S HAVE IT! -
AND GET ON WITH IT -
I CAN'T WAIT TO
BEGIN!

DINING ROOM

I'M GLAD YOU ARE SO KEEN, MY BOYS!
SINCE YOU SEEM TO PREFER THIS TO THE
CLASS-ROOM, WE'LL HAVE
THE EXAMINATION
HERE!

EXAMINATION?..

DINING ROOM

... WE THOUGHT YOU SAID WE
WERE TO SIT FOR OUR
EGGS, HAM AND BACON!!

TCHAH! WE'LL START WITH ARITHMETIC!
NOW, IF I HAD TEN RICE PUDDINGS
AND GAVE YOU FOUR EACH HOW MANY
SHOULD I HAVE LEFT?

SERVERY

COO! THAT'LL TAKE
SOME WORKING
OUT!

I'LL GIVE YOU THREE
MINUTES TO GET
YOUR TEETH INTO
THAT!

I KNOW HOW WE
CAN WORK THIS
OUT, CUTHBERT!

SERVERY

ONE -
TWO
YUM!

THE ANSWER IS NO RICE - PUDS
LEFT, SIR - WE'VE JUST WORKED
IT OUT!

WHAT? THE
ANSWER SHOULD BE
TWO RICE PUDS LEFT!

IMPOSSIBLE, SIR! WE ATE THE
TWO THAT WERE
OVER, SO
THERE WEREN'T
ANY LEFT
SEE?

BUT IF YOU HADN'T
EATEN THEM, THERE WOULD
HAVE BEEN TWO RICE PUDDINGS
LEFT, WOULDN'T THERE?

CERTAINLY NOT!
YOU SEE...

DINING ROOM

...THERE COULDN'T BE ANY RICE PUDDINGS
LEFT, BECAUSE THEY WERE ALL

JAM TURNOVERS!!

DINING ROOM

NO PUDDING
NO LATE

WE WANT
OUR
AFTERS

DORMITORY

HEAVY LUNCH!
DON'T
DISTURB!

TEE HEE! IF OLD
TWIZZLE WANTS TO WORK OUT HOW
TO FEED THE REST OF THE SCHOOL
HE'LL HAVE TO DO IT BY ALGEBRA!

COMET

3^D
EVERY
MONDAY

SHORTY

