

# COMET

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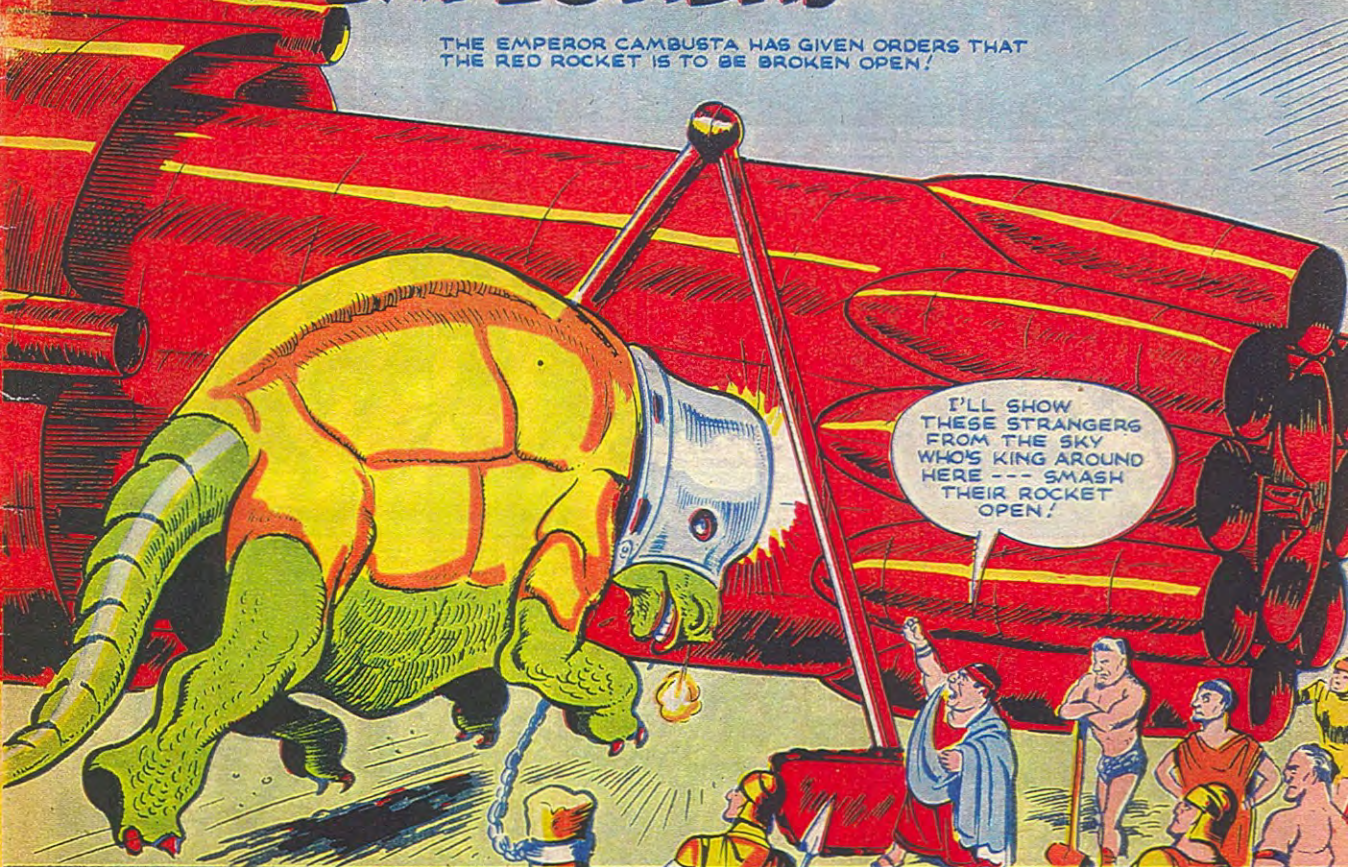
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EVERY  
MONDAY

No. 231, December 20, 1952

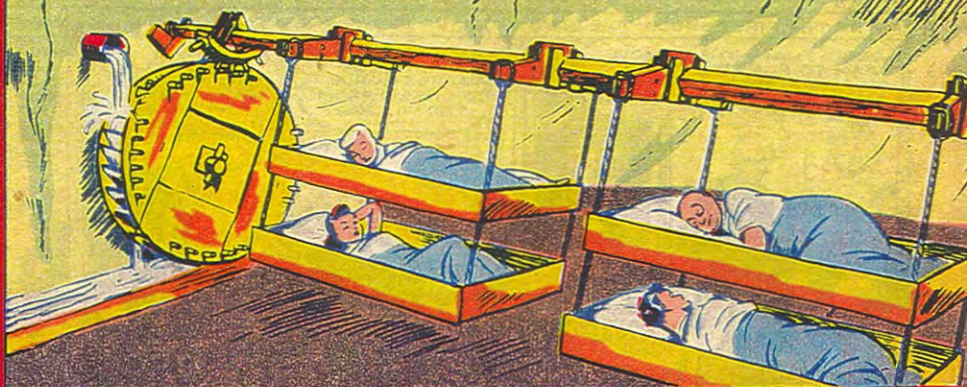
## THE SKY EXPLORERS

THE EMPEROR CAMBUSTA HAS GIVEN ORDERS THAT  
THE RED ROCKET IS TO BE BROKEN OPEN!



PETER AND ANN, WITH THEIR INVENTOR UNCLE, PROFESSOR JOLLY, AND KOSMO, THE SPACE-PATROL MAN, HAVE REACHED THE PLANET ROMA. THERE ARE MANY WONDERFUL CITIES, FULL OF STRANGE MACHINES ON ROMA, BUT THEY ARE ALL IN RUINS, FOR THE PEOPLE WHO BUILT THEM FLEW AWAY LONG AGO. THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE THERE NOW, THE ROMANS, DON'T UNDERSTAND MACHINERY AT ALL. THE EMPEROR, CAMBUSTA, IS IN A TOWERING RAGE BECAUSE THEY HAVE ESCAPED FROM HIS PRISON, AND HE VOWS TO BREAK INTO THEIR ROCKET SHIP, AND FIND OUT THEIR SECRETS -----

MEANWHILE, THE SKY EXPLORERS ARE SAFE IN THE SECRET CAVE OF FIDDCAT, THE ROMAN INVENTOR WHO HELPED THEM TO ESCAPE -----

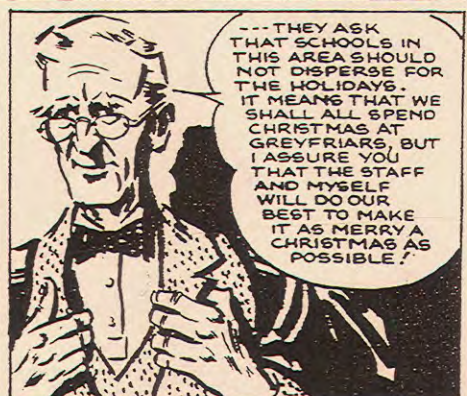
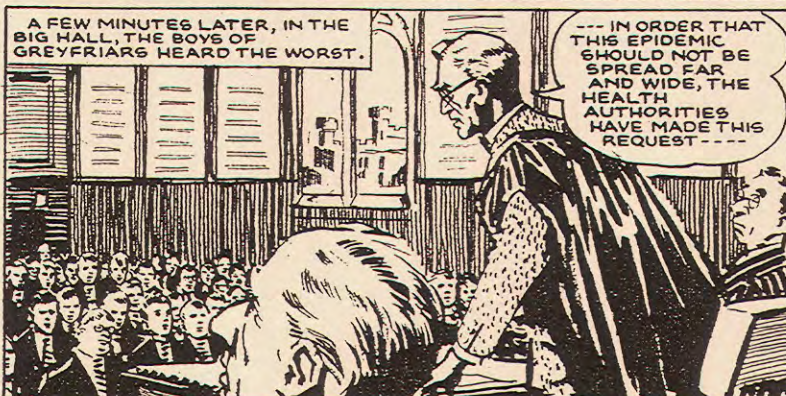


THEY ARE SLEEPING LATE, FOR THEY HAVE BEEN UP ALL NIGHT.

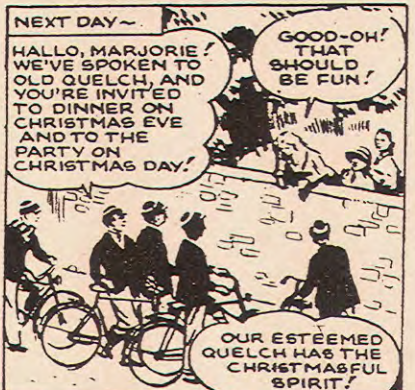
(More pictures on the centre pages)

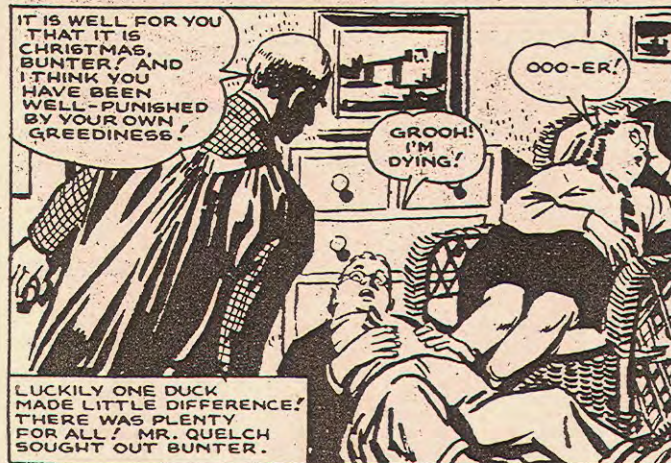
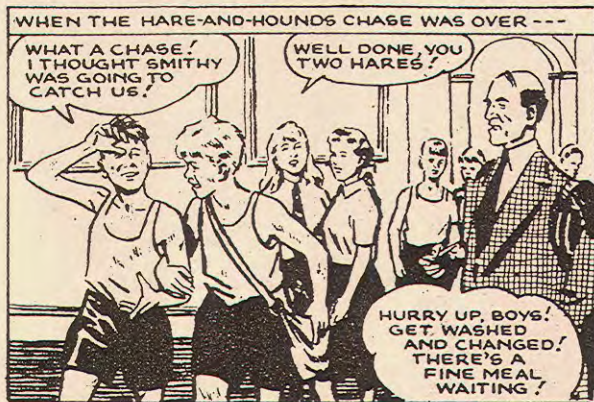
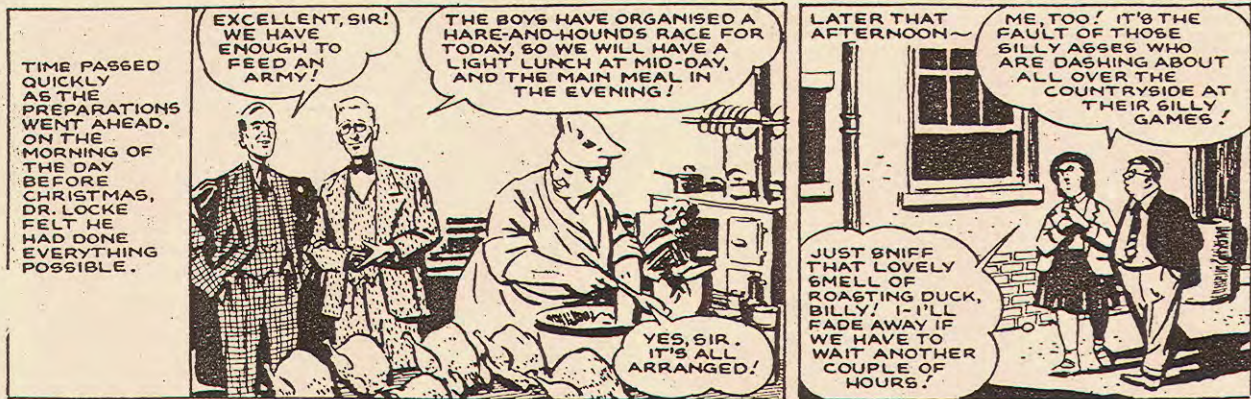
At Greyfriars it was the end of term. The Christmas holidays were ahead. Everyone was in a fever of great excitement and packing trunks and cases for the homeward journey.

# The GREYFRIARS GHOST



AFTER THE FIRST SHOCK, THE BOYS FACED UP TO THE PROSPECT CHEERFULLY.





ALONZO TODD WAS CHOSEN TO PLAY THE PART.

I TRUST YOU WILL MAKE ME SUFFICIENTLY FEARSOME, MY DEAR FELLOWS!

YOU MAKE A FINE GHOST, LONZY!

THIS LUMINOUS PAINT WILL SHINE LIKE ANYTHING IN THE DARK!



WE WANT TO LURE BUNTER DOWN TO THE CLOISTERS. HOW CAN WE WORK THAT?

LEAVE IT TO ME! IT'S SEVERAL HOURS SINCE BUNTER SCOFFED THAT DUCK --- AND HE'S GETTING HUNGRY AGAIN!

I'VE GOT A BIG PARCEL OF TUCK THAT I HID IN THE CLOISTERS TO KEEP IT OUT OF BUNTER'S WAY! WE'LL HAVE A MIDNIGHT FEAST IN THE DORM WHEN HE'S ASLEEP!

WHAT-HO!

THE WHAT-HOFULNESS IS TERRIFIC!

SMITHY WANDERED DOWN TO THE COMMON ROOM WITH JOHNNY BULL AND INKY.

TEN MINUTES LATER ~ ~

HE'S TAKEN THE BAIT?

FANCY THOSE SUSPICIOUS BEASTS THINKING I'D PINCH THAT TUCK! NOW -- I WONDER WHERE SMITHY HID IT?

AND ALONZO IS WAITING FOR HIM! IT SHOULD BE FUN!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER ~ ~



YAROOGH! A GHOST!

EEEE -- OOOOWW!

WHATEVER ARE YOU BOYS UP TO? AND -- AND WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH BUNTER?

IT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR! WE'RE JUST PLAYING A JOKE ON BUNTER. HE THINKS HE HAS SEEN A GHOST!

MR. QUELCH WAS WALKING THROUGH THE CLOISTERS TO HIS ROOMS.

MR. QUELCH HID A SMILE... AND THEN A SECOND EAR-PIERCING YELL RANG FROM WITHIN THE CLOISTERS --- AND LONZY HURTTLED OUT!

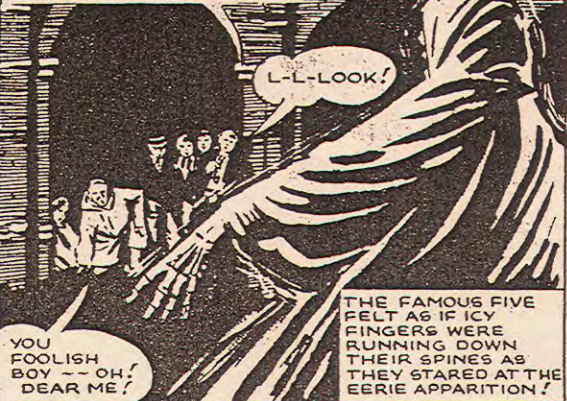
WHOOPS!

...YAROOOOGH!

TH-TH-THERE'S A GHOST IN THE CLOISTERS!

YOU FATHEAD!

OUT OF THE CLOISTERS A GHOSTLY FIGURE EMERGED!



L-L-LOOK!

YOU FOOLISH BOY -- OH! DEAR ME!

THE FAMOUS FIVE FELT AS IF ICY FINGERS WERE RUNNING DOWN THEIR SPINES AS THEY STARED AT THE EERIE APPARITION!

# The Lion and the Horse



Ben Kirby and the boys having a sing-song in the bunkhouse.

Ben Kirby found a wonderful black stallion called Wildfire when wild horse hunting with Matt Jennings and his outfit. Unable to buy the horse Ben toured the rodeos to raise enough money. On his return he found that Jennings had already sold the horse for six hundred dollars to a man called Dave Tracy. Ben found Wildfire again and turned him loose leaving Tracy the six hundred dollars he gave for him.

Ben followed the horse, roped him once more and then took him to Diamond L ranch where Cass Bagley and his nine-year-old grand-daughter Jenny Custer lived. One day Shortie, a ranch hand, read in the newspaper that Brutus, a man-eating lion, had escaped from a circus and was roaming around the country.

CASS BAGLEY turned to Ben.

"Ben," he said urgently. "I'm going into town. While I'm gone I want you to ride over to Deep Canyon and look for strays and mend fences. We can't take any chances with that lion roaming about!"

Cass and Ben saddled their horses and were off, leaving Jenny all on her own.

Jenny soon decided what she would do with her day. She would pack some cake and go to Deep Canyon to find Ben, whose company she sought whenever she could.

She saddled her mare, Susie, and set off down the trail, the ranch dog whose quaint name was Dog, panting along by her side.

No one had told Jenny that a circus lion was loose, as they were afraid of alarming her, so she had no fears for her safety as she cantered along.

They had gone nearly the whole distance to Deep Canyon when a stealthy noise in the

panic of Susie, and would have panicked herself, because the lion from the circus had trailed them and was stealthily watching Dog and Jenny through the leaves.

Jenny stood there for a moment looking. She was undecided whether to move the branches apart to make sure there was nothing there, or whether to run for it.

She knew that animal instinct never fails, and that Dog could sense danger more quickly than she could.

Suddenly she turned away and ran, calling to Dog.

"Come on, come on! We gotta find Ben!"

The lion trailed them a little way, but luckily found better sport nearby when he saw a herd of wild horses, and so he changed his course.

"Ben, Ben!" cried Jenny again and again, very afraid as she stumbled along the track.

At last she found Ben in the gorge eating his lunch.

"Ben, Ben," she gasped as she rushed up to him.

Ben looked up at her amazed. "Jenny, what are you doing out here?" he asked.

"Oh," said Jenny, more composed now in Ben's company. "Something was after us. Something in the trees along the creek," and she explained Susie's and Dog's strange behaviour.

Ben was grave as he thought of the lion. He told Jenny that she ought not to wander away so far from the ranch house.

Suddenly they heard the roar of stampeding horses.

Down the canyon, full tilt, came the herd of wild horses, galloping towards them.

Jenny screamed and Ben snatched her up in his arms and ran down the canyon looking for some place of shelter.

Ben was just in time to slip Jenny into a hole in the ground overlapped by a flat rock. He flung himself in too, shielding Jenny with his body. Then the fear-stricken horses were galloping madly over their heads.

Luckily there was just enough shelter under the rock to guard them from harm, and in a cloud of dust and stones the mad herd passed away down the canyon.

Thinking all was clear, Ben put out his head. Then his flesh crept as he saw the cause of the stampede. The lion was rapidly following the horses and coming towards him.

He drew his gun and fired at random. The sound of the shots startled the lion and he turned tail and made off in the opposite direction.

Ben and Jenny were very shaken, but the lion had disappeared, and they were able to make their way home without further trouble.

(Continued on page 17)



Ben drew and fired at the oncoming lion.

bushes lining the trail made Dog prick up his ears.

He barked noisily, and stopped. He made a dart towards the bushes and barked again—and again and again.

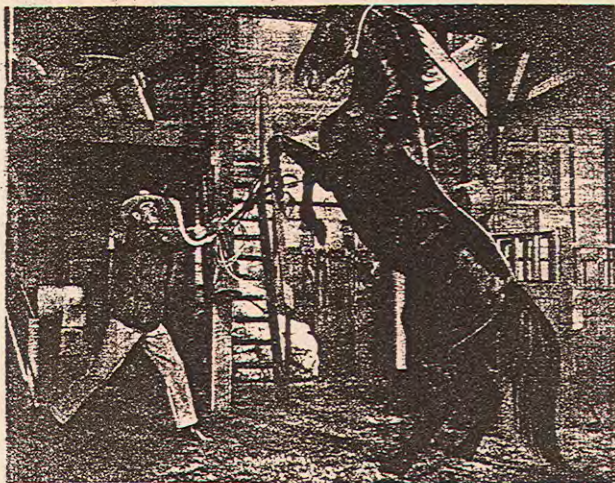
Jenny reined in and dismounted, wondering what was wrong, as Susie had become nervous and was very disturbed.

Dog went on barking, and Susie, now riderless and very much alarmed made off down the creek, leaving Jenny peering into the bushes with Dog.

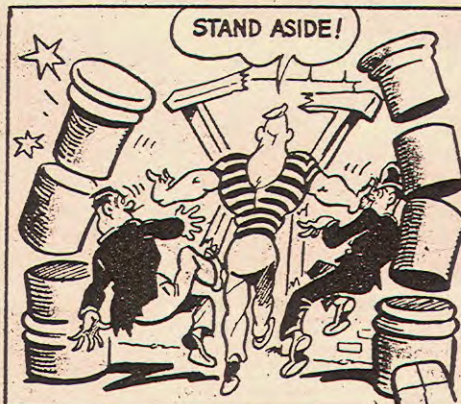
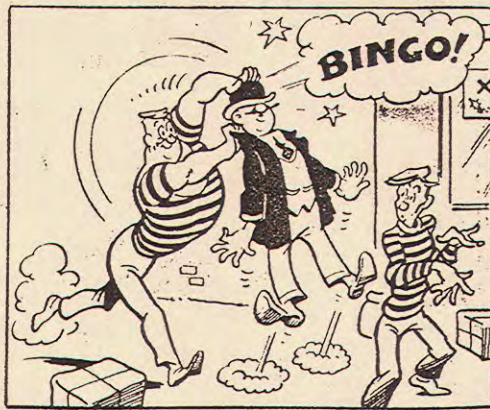
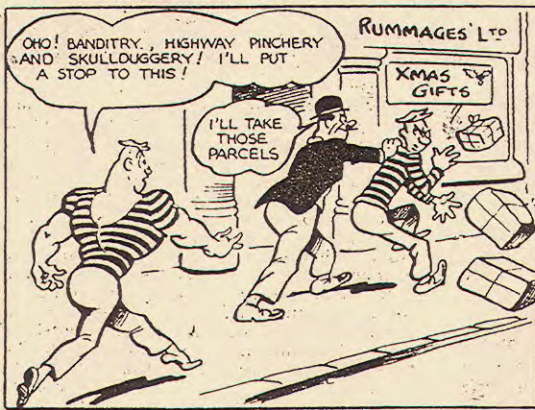
"Come back here!" called Jenny to Susie. "Dad-blame you! You're both crazy. There's nothing in there, is there?"

She became a little nervous herself now, and looked anxiously into the undergrowth. Dog was still barking excitedly.

If Jenny could have seen to the other side of the bushes she would have understood the



Wildfire, knowing his liberty was at stake, reared high as Tracy wielded the halter.



# BOB HARLEY - SPECIAL AGENT



The hanging road stretched ahead of them, and at the end of it was the secret city!

The Shark was a ruthless master-crook whose face nobody had ever seen, for it was hidden under a strange mask, of steel. He had made himself dictator of the South American country of Incaragua, and had thrown the rightful ruler, General Prando into a secret prison.

But becoming dictator of Incaragua did not mark the end of the Shark's schemes. He planned to become even more powerful, and was prepared to fight a terrible war to do it. For he had a tremendously powerful secret weapon. The "Prowler"—a mighty tank-like craft, which could travel on the bottom of the sea, and which could sink the biggest battleship afloat, by attacking it from below—was in his hands. And he meant to use the "Prowler" ruthlessly.

The "Prowler" was the invention of Malcolm Franklin, from whom the Shark had stolen it. Together with Bob Harley, the young special agent from Scotland Yard, Franklin had sworn to foil the Shark's evil schemes, and to get the "Prowler" back from him.

On their side was Amanda Prando, General Prando's daughter, and the Ochonee Indians, who lived in the Incaraguan jungle. Thanks to them, Franklin and Bob managed to capture the Shark and his helicopter, together with a squad of paratroopers, who had been dropped in the jungle to hunt them down.

With the Shark as their prisoner, things looked a good deal more hopeful for Bob and Franklin.

They did not know that Doctor Nero, the Shark's scientist crony, was at that very moment aboard the "Prowler", which was ploughing swiftly through the jungle towards them.

THE Indians, under the command of Chilka, their chief, were busy trussing up the paratroopers. They bound them hand and foot with

tough vines which they lopped down from the jungle trees with their hunting knives.

The paratroopers' guns lay in a big pile in the centre of the jungle clearing.

Bob Harley jerked a thumb at the Shark, who stood, as yet unbound, but covered by a big pistol in Franklin's hand.

"What are we going to do with him, chief?"

"See if you can get his mask off, Bob," said Franklin. "For one thing, it'll be interesting to see what he looks like, and for another, we can use that mask. I've got a scheme in my mind for getting the 'Prowler' back."

Bob guessed that Franklin's scheme probably consisted of impersonating the Shark, and he grinned to himself as he moved up behind the crook dictator, who stood with his arms raised.

"Don't get between him and my gun," warned Franklin. "He's a tricky customer. Don't give him any chances!"

Bob tugged down the Shark's collar and found the catch that held together the two halves of the back, which could be hinged outwards so that the mask could be taken off.

"There's a lock here, chief," he reported. "We shall either have to force it or find the key."

"I expect he's got the key on him. Search his pockets, Bob."

The Shark laughed hollowly under his mask.

"I will save you the trouble, Mr. Franklin," he said. "I will show you the whereabouts of the key. Allow me—"

The Shark began to lower his hands. But before they had dropped to shoulder level, Franklin's voice snapped out:

"Get your hands up! Up! Above your head!"

But it was too late.

The Shark's right hand flashed like lightning to the slit-like mouth of his steel mask. They got a glimpse of something small as he threw it into his real mouth under the mask.

The Shark had swallowed the key, which had been in his hand all the time.

"I keep my promises, Mr. Franklin!" The Shark's voice was mocking as his hands rose up above his head. "I have shown you where the key—was!"

"I can wait to see your face, Shark!" Franklin kept the anger out of his voice. "I don't suppose it's anything of an oil painting, or you wouldn't be so keen on keeping it covered up. But remember that you're still my prisoner. I want that mask, Shark, and I'll find some way of getting it!"

The Shark snarled angrily, for he knew Franklin's words to be true. And he had very good reasons for keeping his face a secret from the world.

"Lower your hands behind your back and put your wrists together. Bob—tie them—tightly!" said Franklin.

At that moment Amanda came up beside Franklin. She had been looking at the captured paratroopers, and she was frowning about something.

"Senor Franklin—" she began, "these paratroopers—they were organised and recruited by my father when he was ruler of Incaragua. They are all trained fighting men, but besides fighting, each one of them is trained to do one thing that the others cannot do so that each squad shall be a complete unit, with many skills. Always, the squad works as a complete unit."

Franklin did not take his eyes off the Shark for an instant.

"Well?" he said, "what about it, Amanda?"

"Senor—there should be twenty-four men in a paratroop squad, and we have only twenty-three prisoners!"

"Then one of them is still free in the jungle!"

"Yes, Senor. He must have hidden himself from Chilka and his Indians when they attacked. Chilka tells me that nobody

was killed by his warriors—all were taken prisoner!"

"Confound it!" said Franklin quietly. "I was hoping we'd got the lot. While one of them's free he may manage to rescue some of his pals—though I think we can guard against that. What's worrying me is that he may get back to Porto Visto and tell what has happened!"

Chilka, the old chief of the Ochonee Indians, had been listening gravely to Franklin's words. Now he turned to his men and rapped out orders in the Ochonee tongue. At once the men began to slip away in all directions into the green depths of the jungle.

They would find the missing paratrooper, if anyone could.

But there was no need.

Suddenly there was a noise of something crashing through the branches above their heads. All of them—the Shark included—looked up.

Something small, round and black, whisked over their heads and thudded to the ground just beside the helicopter that was standing at one end of the clearing.

"A hand-grenade!" yelled Franklin. "Down—flat on your faces!"

They had barely time to dive to the ground before there was a loud explosion, and shattered fragments of the bomb whined through the air in all directions, trailing snaky tails of white smoke.

As the smoke cleared they saw that a great jagged hole had been torn in the fuselage of the helicopter.

Then before anyone could move there came a WHUMP! and in an instant the helicopter was a mass of orange fire.

Chilka's Indians plunged into the jungle towards the spot from which the grenade had been thrown. There came a rattle of shots and the sounds of struggle.

Then the twenty-four para-

(Continued on next page)

trooper was dragged into the clearing.

"Tie him up with the others!" snapped Franklin.

"You have done well, trooper!" The Shark's voice sounded triumphant. "Doubtless Mr. Franklin planned to use my helicopter to return to Porto Visto, wearing my ma—"

"Shut up, you!" said Malcolm Franklin, a dangerous note in his voice. He hefted his gun menacingly.

"Pah!" sneered the Shark. "I am not afraid of you, Mr. Franklin. I am too valuable to you as a hostage. You will not harm me!"

"I wouldn't be too sure of that if I were you," said Franklin quietly. "I want that mask you're wearing—I want it badly. And since you've been stupid enough to swallow the key, I might turn you over to the Indians and let them get the mask off. I believe the Ochoones used to be head-hunters..."

Bob knew that Franklin would never carry out such a dreadful threat, but at least his words had silenced the Shark.

All the same, Franklin's plans had suffered a severe blow. Wearing the Shark's mask and flying his private helicopter, he could have landed in Porto Visto and passed himself off as the crook dictator with no trouble at all. Now things would be much harder. He would have to make a new plan.

True, there was still the sea-jeep. This was a car which could travel under water which Malcolm Franklin had invented, and which was standing nearby.

But the sea-jeep would not be recognised by the Shark's forces, and would probably be fired upon as soon as it was seen. It wouldn't do to travel into Porto Visto in the sea-jeep.

As these thoughts raced through Bob's head he put the

finishing touches to the lashings which bound the Shark's wrists. The first fierce fire which had swept over the helicopter as the fuel tanks blazed up was dying down, and now a pillar of black smoke was climbing into the sky above them.

The roaring of the flames died down.

"Bob—listen!" Franklin was suddenly tense. "Listen!"

Bob held his breath and listened.

Faintly in the distance he could hear a sound that was a mixture of clattering and roaring, the sound of some mighty machine driven by powerful engines.

Bob did not need to be told what machine that was.

"The 'Prowler'!"

He gasped the words out. Malcolm Franklin nodded grimly.

"If they've got any sort of a look-out posted in the upper turrets they'll spot that column of smoke twenty miles away! The 'Prowler's' only out for one reason—to join up with the Shark here. They're bound to head this way..."

"We'd better get moving in the jeep," said Bob.

Rather to his surprise, Franklin shook his head.

"Not if there's any other way," he said. "It'll leave a trail as wide as Broad Street for the 'Prowler' to follow, and you know as well as I do that the 'Prowler' can outpace the jeep." Franklin frowned for a moment, then went on. "We'd better split up. Amanda—you speak Chilka's language. Tell him to send his braves away—every way—and for them to take the paratroopers with them. We'll stick together and take the Shark to try to find some sort of a hiding place. We need a breathing space to make new plans."

Amanda nodded and spoke

swiftly to the old Indian chief. He nodded, spoke a few sharp words to his men, and as they began to fade into the jungle in threes and fours, taking their prisoners with them, he turned back to speak to the girl again.

Amanda's face lit up as he spoke. She turned excitedly to Franklin.

"He says that long ago the fathers of his father's father built a great city in the jungle with many secret places. He will guide us to it!"

"Good! Let's get moving!"

Chilka led the way through the undergrowth towards the towering rocks that skirted a dry, boulder-strewn valley nearby. Bob and Franklin had hidden in a cave in that valley earlier in the same day.

The old chief led the way swiftly, treading surely up the steep craggy flanks of the valley on the side farthest from the cave. The jungle trees grew close, and soon, as they climbed, they had to push aside the branches that stretched across in front of them.

Now, surprisingly, there seemed to be a definite pathway—a sort of ledge—hewn in the face to the rock. It remained more or less level, so that they were forcing their way along a path that was shaded over and hidden by the foliage of the towering jungle trees.

Chilka turned his head and said something swiftly to Amanda. Then he plodded on.

"What does he say?"

"He said, 'Soon, there is an ancient road.' I don't know exactly what he means..."

But they did not have long for wondering. The path came to a sudden end and Chilka began to hack at the foliage with the long curved knife that he carried slung from his waist.

"Look!" cried Bob, pointing.

There, uncovered by Chilka's hacking, was a sort of platform amid the branches. Chilka led the way along it and, to their amazement, they found that it stretched on through the tree-tops like a road.

It was made of slats of wood cunningly lashed side by side with some form of woven rope. Every so often was a thicker, more massive slat, and these thicker slats were in turn hung from strong chains that were stapled into the huge trunks of the giant jungle trees.

"Those chains are bronze!" said Franklin in amazed tones. "Heaven knows what ancient people built this road. It must have been here for centuries!"

The tree-top road wound onward through the branches, twisting this way and that, rising and falling as the trees which held it up had grown to greater or lesser heights. Once, perhaps, in days when it had been used all the while, the branches of the surrounding trees had been kept cut back from it. Now they grew thickly over it and they had to hack

their way through solid thickets.

"It must have been a tremendous task to build this," said Bob. "I should have thought that it would have been almost easier to have built a road down on the ground."

"Maybe," Franklin was still keeping the Shark at gun-point in front of him. "Maybe not. But from the look of the foliage down below there I'd guess that the ground is very swampy."

Chilka must have guessed what they were talking about from their gestures, for he spoke rapidly.

Amanda translated.

"He says that the jungle city is on an island in the midst of a great swamp. The ways of reaching it are secret—known only to the chiefs of the Ochoonee!"

They pressed on in silence for a while, and then, quite suddenly, the nature of the bridge-like road changed. Now, instead of trees to support it, there were towering pillars of stone and the roadway itself was more closely made.

The trees thinned until strange green weed was all that lay beneath them. But it was not the weed that held their gaze.

The hanging road stretched ahead of them for a mile or more, and at the end of it was the secret city!

As they hurried on they could make out towering pyramids and age-old temples, all within a surrounding wall that rose sheer out of the "moat" of bright green weed.

"Wait—stop!" Franklin was speaking. "Listen again!"

They stood still, listening.

The noise of the "Prowler" was nearer—a lot nearer, and growing louder every second. The rustle of their own battle through the tree-tops had drowned it before.

Swamps would form no obstacle to the craft which could travel the sea-bottom as easily as a bus runs up a street.

There was no time for wondering what had made the "Prowler" come this way, or what had put its pilot so uncannily on their trail.

"Run for it!" cried Franklin. "If they catch us in the open on this bridge we're finished!"

They ran for their lives along the swaying roadway towards the secret city that loomed grey and mysterious before them.

As they ran the Shark gave a triumphant chuckle that rang hollowly from under his steel mask.

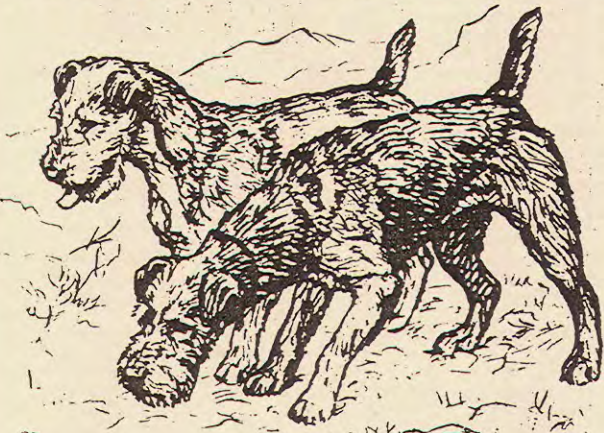
"I'm not beaten yet, Franklin!" he cried. "You dare not harm me, for your very lives depend on my safety! Soon my loyal men will rescue me—and then, Mister Malcolm Franklin, you will be at my mercy!"

And as the thundering clatter of the "Prowler" drew nearer, Bob's heart sank.

For he knew that what the Shark said was true!

Next week: Cut off in the Secret City!

## YOUR FAVOURITE DOGS



### No. 20. THE WELSH TERRIER

The Welsh Terrier makes a sporting pal full of courage and fun. His black and tan coat is thick and wiry; in fact, he looks rather like a Wire Fox Terrier of the wrong colour. He is a game little dog, enjoying above all things a good hunt after any sort of vermin.

"WELL, Coggins!" said Professor Wizzard, standing with his back to the roaring fire, "only two days to Christmas! How is Montague coming along?"

Coggins, the manservant, shook his head gravely.

"I fear, sir," he replied, "that Montague is making no progress at all. I cannot coax him to eat anything substantial. One might almost imagine that he has guessed the fate in store for him and is being deliberately stubborn!"

Willie Wizzard, the professor's son, turned away from the window of the lounge. Outside, the fields and hedges were blanketed in a white carpet of snow which was quite dazzling in the crisp morning sunlight.

"Who's Montague?" asked Willie, who had arrived the previous day from Gandybar School for the Christmas holidays.

"Montague is our turkey, Master William," said Coggins with great dignity. "He's in a coop at the bottom of the garden."

"I bought him a couple of months ago," said Professor Wizzard with a rueful smile. "I thought he'd be nicely fattened up for our Christmas dinner—but it seems that Montague doesn't intend to co-operate! Ye-e-s," he added slowly, "I must give the matter some thought."

Willie Wizzard did not hear those last words. His inventive brain was busy with a new idea which had just sprung into his mind. For the rest of that morning, and all the afternoon, he was busy in his little workshop at the top of the house.

The professor did not miss his young son—because he was himself busy in his laboratory, oddly enough!

At tea-time Colonel Blotter dropped in. The colonel was a friend of the professor's and a councillor in the village. He was organising some Christmas treats for some of the poorer children.

"Busy day! Very busy!" he said with a sigh of relief, sinking down in an armchair and accepting a cup of tea gratefully. "Got everything arranged at last though, thank goodness!"

"I've been rather busy myself," said the professor with a somewhat smug smile. "Our Christmas turkey, Colonel, was making no attempt to fatten himself up for the great day—so I've invented a little gadget to settle the matter! It's a turkey-fattening ray!"

Willie Wizzard choked on a large cream bun that he was eating.

"C-c-crums, dad!" he croaked when he had recovered his breath. "I've been working on exactly the same thing! I fixed up my gadget in the corner of the coop about a couple of hours ago! In fact, I was just thinking of slipping down to switch off the ray."

# THE WHEEZES OF WILLIE WIZZARD

Montague should be well and truly fattened by now!"

"What?" jerked out the professor, while the colonel stared blankly from the brainy father to the brainy son. "B-b-but I must have fixed up my ray just after that! I didn't notice your gadget there!"

"It doesn't matter whether you noticed it!" Willie said grimly, rising to his feet. "We'd better get down to the coop right away! I shudder to think what may have happened to Montague with both rays working on him!"

A moment later all three went hurrying down the long garden—and drew up short as they came in sight of the coop. There was a long, hushed silence.

The wooden coop was shattered to pieces as if it had been hit by a bomb. Among the splintered wood lay the remains of two black box-like objects, somewhat similar to miniature movie-cameras. The great brains of Willie and his father had thought amazingly alike!

Of Montague the turkey there was no sign.

"Look!" cried the colonel hoarsely, and pointed with a shaking finger. In the deep snow there lay footprints—or rather, claw-prints! And what claw-prints! They measured at least three feet across!

"We've made Montague into a monster turkey!" said Willie, going rather pale. "Golly! If his feet are that size, he must be nearly as tall as a house!"

"Hrrr-umph!" said Colonel Blotter briskly, taking charge of the situation. "This is my pigeon! Or perhaps I should say my turkey, what? Ha, ha! This is second nature to me—big game huntin', and all that!"

He pointed to the enormous widely-spaced tracks running across the field and into the woods on the far side.

"That's the way Montague went!" he declared. "I'll slip across to my house and get my double-barrelled elephant-gun!"

"What—for poor old Montague?" exclaimed Willie.

"Nothing else for it, my boy!" snapped the colonel. "Think of the damage a turkey that size could do! It might terrorise the countryside for miles around!"

"I'm afraid he's right, Willie," nodded Professor Wizzard rather sadly. "And after all, Montague wasn't intended to see Christmas out!"

Twenty minutes later, well muffled in coats and scarves, the three of them set off across the field on Montague's trail. The colonel was in his element. He went tip-toeing ahead, his elephant gun clutched in his hands.

They reached the woods and made their way through the slender pines. Broken bushes and foliage showed Montague's



Montague charged across the field with the yelling colonel dangling from his beak.

path all too clearly, even in the quickly gathering dusk.

"I say," whispered the colonel, struck by a sudden thought. "D'you think he can fly?" Professor Wizzard fingered his chin thoughtfully.

"No," he pronounced at last. "Taking into account the weight and shape of the body, and the area of wing-span, I should say that it was impossible for Montague to fly—aerodynamically speaking, of course!"

"Oh!" said the colonel, rather blankly. "Then what's the answer?"

"Ask Montague!" Willie suggested brightly. "That's if we can find him!" They had now passed through to the far edge of the wood.

The colonel leaned one shoulder against a tree and peered out across the field beyond. There were no tracks to be seen on the snow.

"Odd!" muttered the colonel. Professor Wizzard was looking down, a puzzled expression in his eyes.

"What queer roots that tree has!" he muttered. "Look, Colonel—the tree you're leaning against. They hardly seem to go into the ground, and they're so regular. More like enormous claws..."

"Claws!" gulped Willie faintly. And then, from above their heads there came a loud gobble-gobble-gobble-gobble! Montague, the monster turkey, had been found. Colonel Blotter was leaning against one of Montague's legs!

"Aagh!" yelled the colonel in sudden panic, and dropped his gun. It fell on Montague's enormous foot, and the gobbling

sound became suddenly tinged with anger. Next moment a huge head swept down.

Willie and the professor, stumbling backwards to safety, saw Montague's huge body looming above them. Then an enormous beak fastened on the colonel's collar and he was swept high in the air. A moment later Montague was charging across the field beyond with the yelling colonel dangling from his beak.

"Oh, crumbs! We'd better follow!" gasped Willie. "Supposing Montague fancied the colonel for his Christmas dinner!"

Puffing and panting, Professor Wizzard and Willie plunged on as fast as they could across the thick snow. The vast shape of Montague had now vanished in the gathering gloom, but as they reached the far side of the field they heard faint spluttering cries for help.

It was Colonel Blotter, up to his waist in a snowdrift where Montague had dropped him.

"Help! Grooh! Get me out!" he cried feebly. Between them, Willie and his father managed to drag the colonel out.

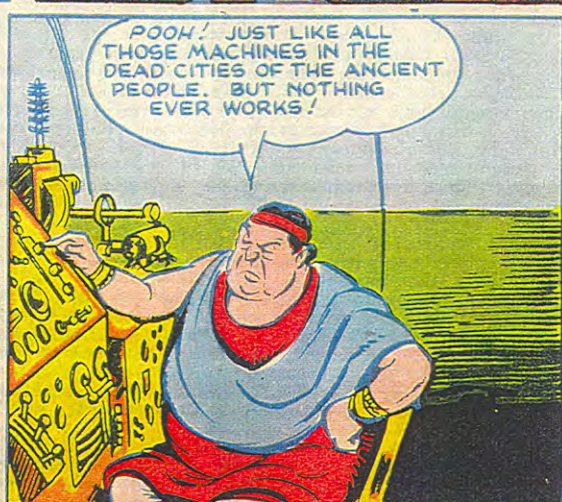
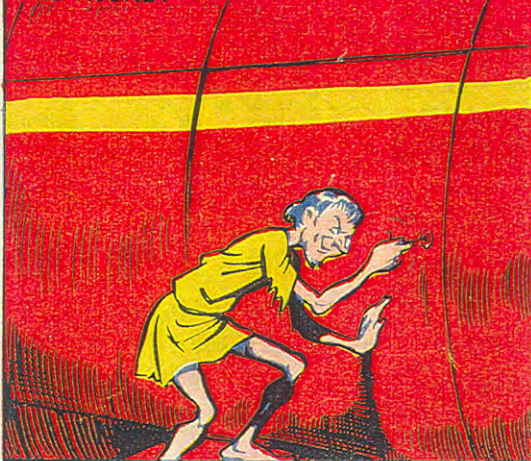
"It's a good job Montague got tired of carrying you, Colonel!" Willie said thankfully. "And at least he chose a soft spot to drop you! Well... it's too dark to do any more big game hunting tonight! No doubt Montague will find somewhere in the woods to settle down—but we'll have to be after him first thing tomorrow morning!"

Next week: Willie's Wonder Turkey joins a circus! Don't miss the fun!

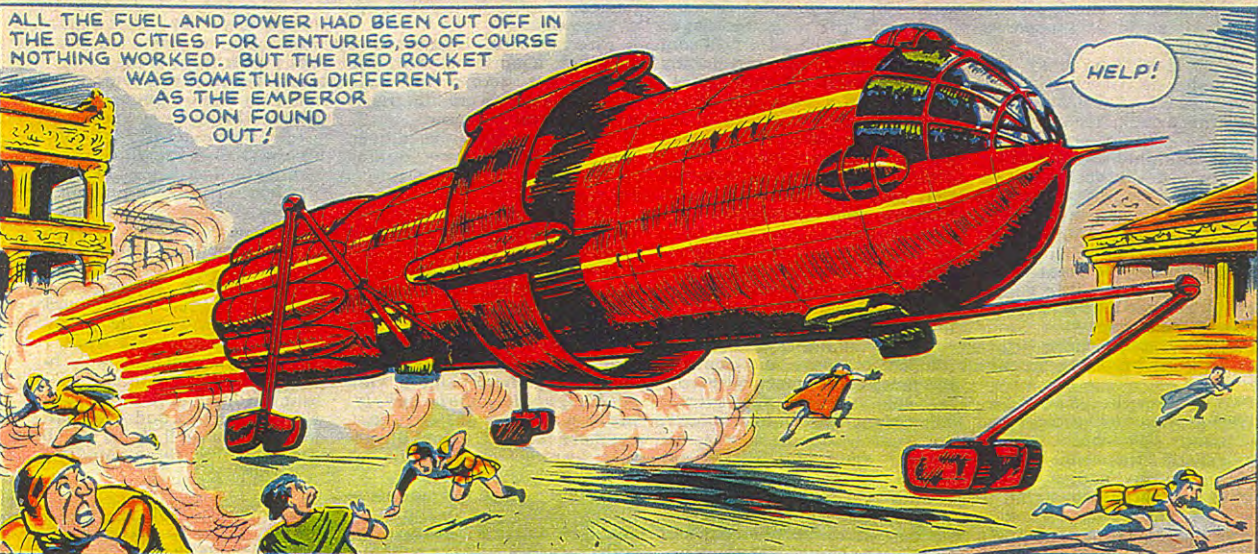
THE EMPEROR'S ATTEMPTS TO OPEN THE RED ROCKET FAIL MISERABLY, UNTIL ---



SO SLITHIUS WAS UNCHAINED, AND PUT TO WORK ON THE DOOR OF THE RED ROCKET ---

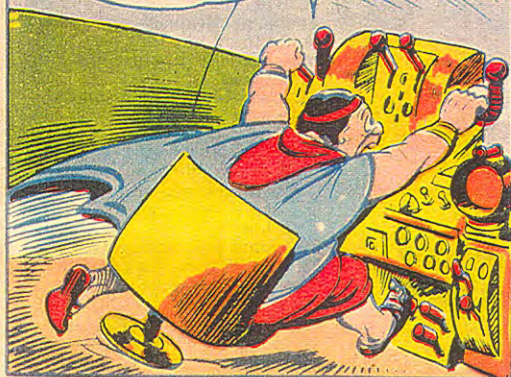


ALL THE FUEL AND POWER HAD BEEN CUT OFF IN THE DEAD CITIES FOR CENTURIES, SO OF COURSE NOTHING WORKED. BUT THE RED ROCKET WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT, AS THE EMPEROR SOON FOUND OUT!

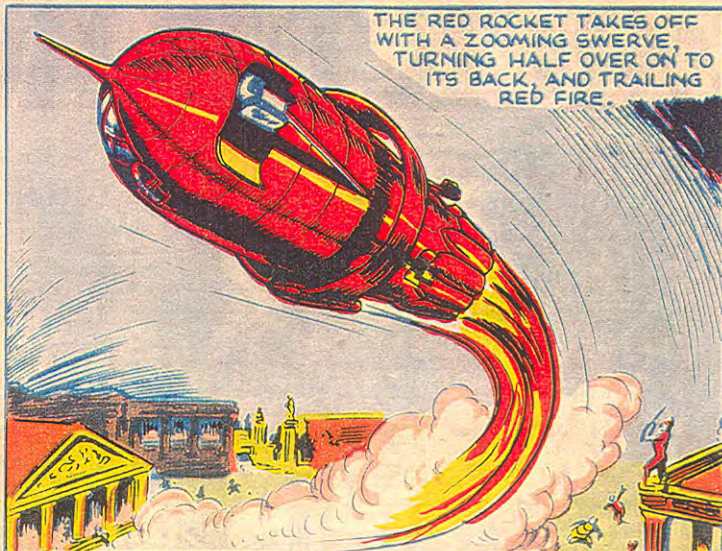


TERRIFIED, THE EMPEROR GRABS FRANTICALLY AT THE LEVERS AND KNOBS TO TRY AND STOP THE RED ROCKET ----

STOP IT! DO SOMETHING SOMEBODY! ARREST SOMEBODY! THERE MUST BE A LAW AGAINST THINGS LIKE THIS! HELP!

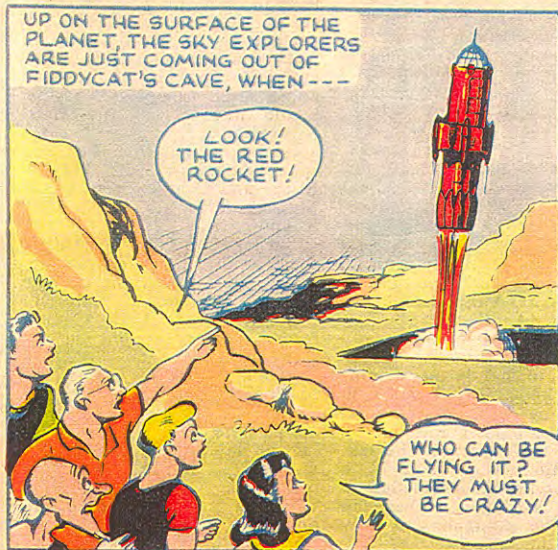


THE RED ROCKET TAKES OFF WITH A ZOOMING SWERVE, TURNING HALF OVER ON TO ITS BACK, AND TRAILING RED FIRE.



UP ON THE SURFACE OF THE PLANET, THE SKY EXPLORERS ARE JUST COMING OUT OF FIDDYCAT'S CAVE, WHEN ----

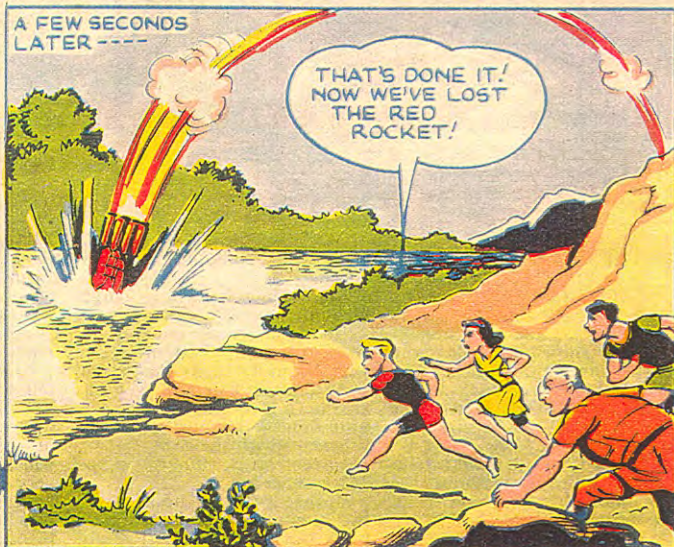
LOOK! THE RED ROCKET!



WHO CAN BE FLYING IT? THEY MUST BE CRAZY!

A FEW SECONDS LATER ----

THAT'S DONE IT! NOW WE'VE LOST THE RED ROCKET!

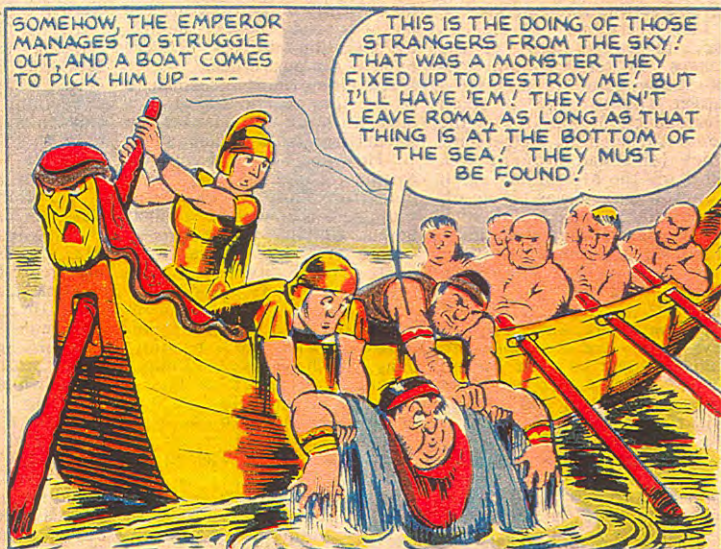


DOWN INTO THE DEPTHS IT PLUNGES ----



SOMEHOW, THE EMPEROR MANAGES TO STRUGGLE OUT, AND A BOAT COMES TO PICK HIM UP ----

THIS IS THE DOING OF THOSE STRANGERS FROM THE SKY! THAT WAS A MONSTER THEY FIXED UP TO DESTROY ME! BUT I'LL HAVE 'EM! THEY CAN'T LEAVE ROMA, AS LONG AS THAT THING IS AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA! THEY MUST BE FOUND!



# MICK THE MOON BOY



"Hah, so there you are, you wicked old rascal!" cried the snowman. "I want to have a word with you!"

"GEE, Mick, this is a sure enough old-fashioned Christmas!" cried twelve-year-old Hank Luckner. "Leastways, the weather is. It's been snowing all day and it's still coming down."

"And jolly good luck to it," chuckled his pal, Mick the Moon Boy. "I like snow at Christmas time."

"So do I," said Hank. "But I guess we're just about the only motorists on the road who are liking it."

"Well, the drifts aren't worrying us," chuckled Mick. "We're getting through 'em."

They certainly were. For fixed to the radiator of the rickety old second-hand car that they had hired was a gadget shaped like a small silver pencil. It was one of the wonderful scientific instruments which Mick had brought with him from the Moon and, small though it was, it was giving off an invisible heat-ray of such terrific power that the snow-drifts piling up in front of them were melting away in a flash.

It was late afternoon of Christmas Eve, and the two boys, who were on holiday in England, were on their way to a place called Pelton Mowfield where there was an old historic inn at which they intended to stay over Christmas.

"Hey, see that?" exclaimed Hank suddenly, as he peered through the windscreen. "There's a little red van stuck in a drift just ahead of us."

"We'll soon get him out of

that, whoever he is," chuckled Mick.

With his heat-ray gadget cleaving a way through the drifts which were blocking the road, he pulled up alongside the little red van. It was a mail van, and a postman-driver was sitting in it looking very miserable indeed, his nose as red as a beacon with the cold.

"Been stuck long?" asked Mick cheerily.

"More than an hour," said the postman. "I just dunno what I'm going to do. I've got a whole lot of Christmas mail here for the outlying farms and cottages and there's sackfuls more piling up for delivery back at the post office."

A sudden thought seemed to strike him, for he stared very hard at Mick and Hank from his driving seat and demanded:

"How the heck are you two getting through, anyway? You pulled up alongside me just as though there wasn't a drift here at all."

"We've got a special anti-drift gadget fitted," grinned Mick, who wasn't going to say that he had brought it with him from the Moon. "You follow us and you'll be quite okay. We'll get you through. Where'd you want to go first?"

The postman told him and before very long all the mail had been delivered except for one letter which was for a Mrs. Goodson, who lived in a lonely little cottage standing all by itself.

"There's not much for her, poor thing," said the postman.

as he got out of his van in front of her gate. "And nothing at all for her kids. She's had a hard time of it."

"How's that happened?" demanded Mick.

"Her husband died some months ago and left her with five young children to bring up," said the postman. "On top of that, she's been ill herself. I'm afraid it's going to be a very poor Christmas for them," he said, shaking his head in pity as he ploughed his way through the snow.

Before he could reach the door it opened.

In the doorway stood a nice-looking woman, though her face was thin and lined with care. Grouped around her were five young children, clean and tidy in spite of their shabby clothes. They were looking eagerly at the postman and they cried excitedly:

"Anything for us, Mister Postman? Anything for us?"

"No, just a letter for your Ma, I'm afraid," said the postman regretfully.

Mick and Hank, watching from their car, saw how the children's faces fell and saw how disappointed they looked. Their mother had opened the letter which the postman had given her. As she looked at it she gave a gasp, her face went white and she leaned weakly against the doorpost.

"Is it bad news, ma'am?" asked the postman anxiously.

"It's a notice to quit—to get out of the cottage," said Mrs. Goodson in a trembling voice.

"It's from Jaspar Scrubb, the landlord."

"The villain!" burst out the postman furiously. "To send you a thing like that on Christmas Eve. But it's just like him, the wicked old miser."

Poor Mrs. Goodson was trembling and her eyes had filled with tears.

"I—I don't know what I'll do with the children," she said. "We've nowhere to go."

Mick thrust open his driving seat door.

"Come on!" he muttered to Hank. "We're going to take a hand in this. I want to know more about this Mr. Scrubb."

The way he went about it was to ask Mrs. Goodson if he and Mick could come indoors to warm themselves. The good woman said of course they could, although she was afraid she had a very poor fire.

The postman went off in his van, following the way they had come, saying furiously what he would like to do to Miser Scrubbs.

In the sparsely-furnished but spotlessly clean little kitchen Mick and Hank drew from Mrs. Goodson all they wanted to know.

She was too good-hearted to speak really ill of the man in spite of the cruel thing he was doing to her and her children. But Mick and Hank weren't fools. They could fill in the missing bits for themselves and they soon had a very clear picture of Jaspar Scrubbs.

He hated children, he hated animals, he hated Christmas. In fact he hated everything except money and himself. And the reason he was kicking Mrs. Goodson and her children out of the cottage was because somebody had offered him more rent for it than she was able to pay.

"He smashed our snow-man to pieces with his walking stick when he was passing here yesterday," said ten-year-old Betty.

"Did he, indeed?" said Mick, his eyes glinting. "He just did it out of nastiness, I suppose." Then changing the subject, he said: "Are you and your brothers and sisters hanging your stockings tonight, Betty?"

"Yes, but we don't know whether Santa Claus is coming here or not," said Betty doubtfully.

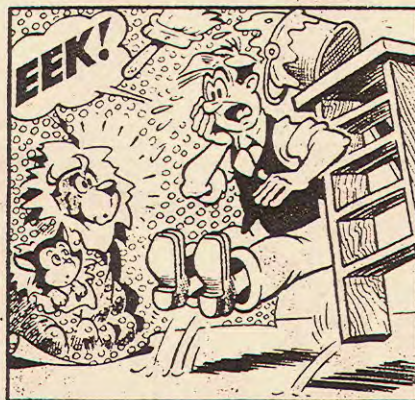
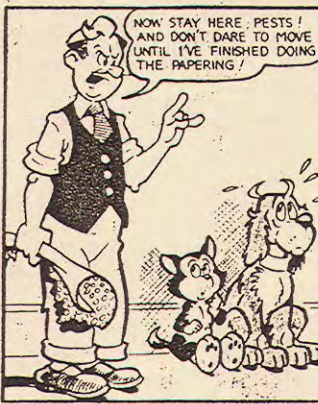
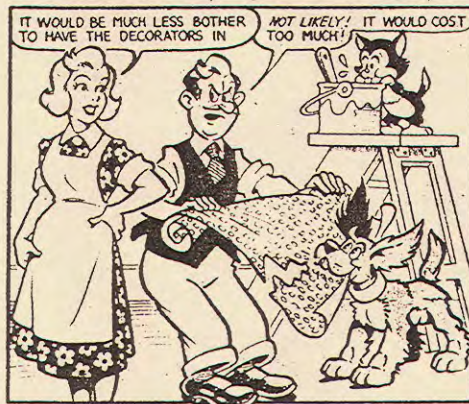
"He's coming!" declared Mick. "I know that for an absolute fact. So you hang your stockings up, all of you!"

When he and Hank left the cottage they drove rapidly along the snow-bound roads to the nearest village. They returned with a big turkey, a plump goose and an enormous Christmas hamper, which they handed to the dumbfounded Mrs. Goodson. She tried to find

(Continued opposite)



# SCAMP OUR HAPPY HOUND



## MICK THE MOON BOY (Contd. from previous page)

words to thank them, but Mick put in politely:

"That's all right, ma'am. It's just a little present from Hank and me. But there's another thing. Don't worry about the letter you got from Jaspar Scrubb. You won't be leaving your cottage. I'm going to see him about it now and I know for a fact that I can persuade him to let you stay on. I've got a wonderful way of persuading people," said he with a grin.

A few minutes later he and Hank were driving rapidly towards the lonely, tumbledown house in which the rascally Jaspar lived all by himself. The miser's house looked very sinister and gloomy as Mick pulled up a little way from it.

"Come on!" he chuckled to Hank. "This is going to be a Christmas Eve which Jaspar Scrubb will never forget."

**JASPAR SCRUBB**, the miser, was sitting in the kitchen of his big, lonely house.

He was huddled in his overcoat to keep himself warm because, although he was very rich indeed, he was far too mean to light a fire or even to buy himself an oil-stove.

His sole illumination was a solitary candle stuck in a bottle. He was sitting at the kitchen

table counting his money. He had it all in money-bags and when he had counted the contents of one bag he would return it to the bag and then start on another.

He was a tall, skinny man with a thin, sunken face. The reason he was that way was because he even begrudged himself the food he ate.

"He! He! He!" he tittered, as he counted his money with long, bony fingers.

"Now that I'm kicking that Mrs. Goodson and her brats out of their cottage I'll have more money than ever. That Mr. Jenkins who's taking it is paying me an extra half-crown a week

Abruptly he broke off as there came a sudden terrific knocking on the door.

"Who can—who can that be?" he gasped. "Robbers?"

That, of course, was his first thought. He was always terrified that somebody would try to rob him. With trembling hands, he scooped up the money and stuffed it into its bag. Then grabbing the other bags, he jumped to his feet and started to hide them in a secret little cupboard in the wall.

While he was doing this the knocking on the door was repeated, only louder this time.

"Goodness me, whoever can it be?" cried the terrified miser to himself.

He hastened to the door and with trembling hands fumbled with the chain and drew back the bolts.

"Coming, coming!" cried he, as the furious knocking continued. "But I'm a poor man and I haven't a ha'penny. Cross my throat and may I die, if what I'm saying is a lie!"

Having undone the fastenings, he pulled open the door. As he did so he got such a shock that he caught his breath and his eyes nearly shot clean out of his head.

For standing there on the step was not a robber, or a human being of any sort, but a snow-man—the sort of snow-man that children build!

"Hah, so there you are, you wicked old rascal!" cried the snow-man sharply. "I want to have a word with you!"

If the snow-man wanted to have a word with Jaspar Scrubb, that terrified individual certainly didn't want to talk. He slammed the door in the snow-man's face.

"Open this door!" yelled his frightful visitor. "Great Snow-flakes! Just wait till I get hold of you. I'll knock you to pieces, you wicked old rascal!"

The horrified Jaspar Scrubbs waited to hear no more. He sped on trembling shanks back to the kitchen and slammed that door behind him.

Next week: Jaspar learns a lesson!

## THIS IS KIT CARSON SPEAKING

Hullo there, folks.

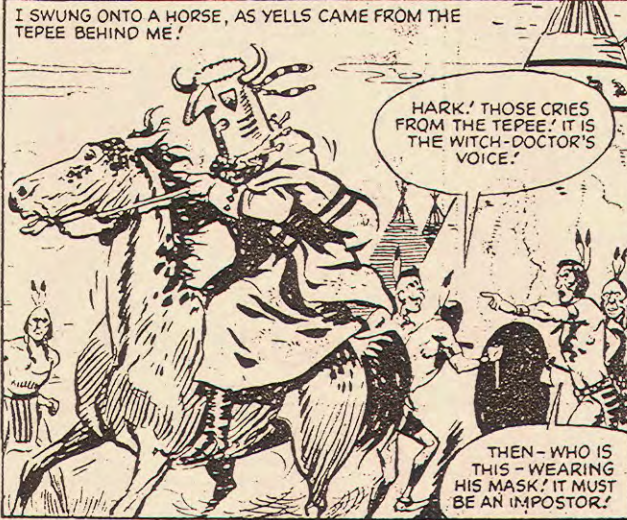
Over the page you'll find some exciting pictures telling my story of the "White Redman's Secret," and just in case you've missed what's happened up until now, I'll tell you about it.

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 tried to get Dan accused of murder. But Dan escaped from the fort where he was being held prisoner. I followed him and we were both captured by Deerfoot's tribe. Deerfoot tried to save us but couldn't. So he made Dan his blood brother. But he could do nothing about me, I had to escape. So when the Witch Doctor, Snake Fang, came to take me to the torture stake I managed to overpower him. Dressing myself in his clothes, I stepped out into the open. Would I be recognised?

# THE SECRET OF THE WHITE REDMAN

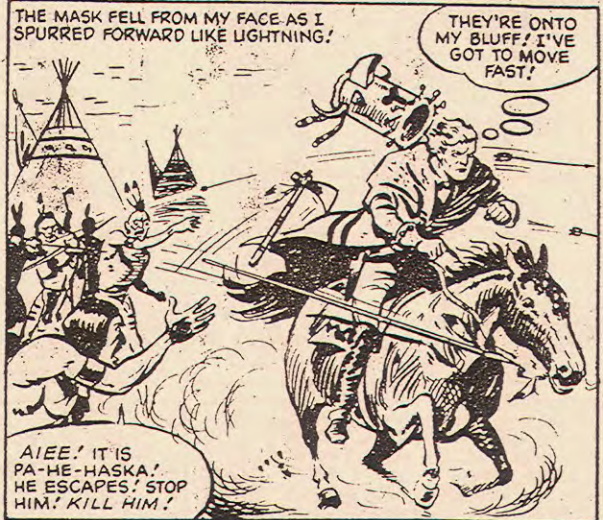
I SWUNG ONTO A HORSE, AS YELLS CAME FROM THE TEPEE BEHIND ME!



HARK! THOSE CRIES FROM THE TEPEE! IT IS THE WITCH-DOCTOR'S VOICE!

THEN - WHO IS THIS - WEARING HIS MASK! IT MUST BE AN IMPOSTOR!

THE MASK FELL FROM MY FACE AS I SPURRED FORWARD LIKE LIGHTNING!



THEY'RE ONTO MY BLUFF! I'VE GOT TO MOVE FAST!

AIEE! IT IS PA-HE-HASKA! HE ESCAPES! STOP HIM! KILL HIM!

SOON I WAS RACING OUT INTO THE BLACK HILLS, LEAVING THE SIOUX CAMP FAR BEHIND.



I GUESS YOUNG DAN WILL BE OKAY OR I'D NEVER HAVE LEFT HIM BEHIND! DEERFOOT WILL LOOK AFTER HIM - HE'S DAN'S FRIEND.

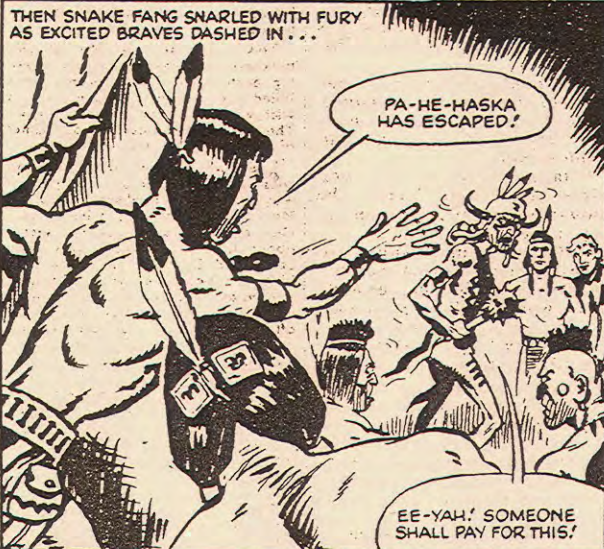
MEANWHILE, BACK IN CAMP, DEERFOOT SPOKE TO THE SULLEN COUNCIL MEETING...



THE PALEFACE YOUTH IS NOW MY BLOOD-BROTHER! NO RED MAN SHALL HARM HIM! IT IS THE LAW.

THEN PA-HE-HASKA SHALL PAY FOR BOTH! HE SHALL DIE BY TORTURE AT THE STAKE!

THEN SNAKE FANG SNARLED WITH FURY AS EXCITED BRAVES DASHED IN...



PA-HE-HASKA HAS ESCAPED!

EE-YAH! SOMEONE SHALL PAY FOR THIS!



COME, WHITE BROTHER! THE TRIBE ARE IN ANGRY MOOD! TO MY LODGE, YOU MUST REST THERE TILL DAWN, THEN SET OUT FOR THE LODGES OF THE PALEFACES...

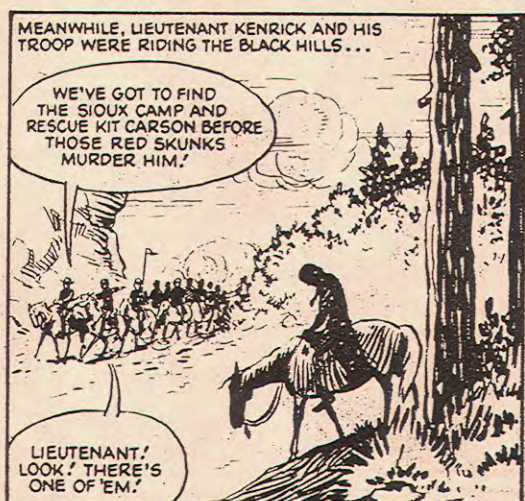
I GUESS I OWE YOU MY LIFE, DEERFOOT!

BUT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, A STEALTHY MOVEMENT AT THE TENT-FLAP WAKENED DAN...

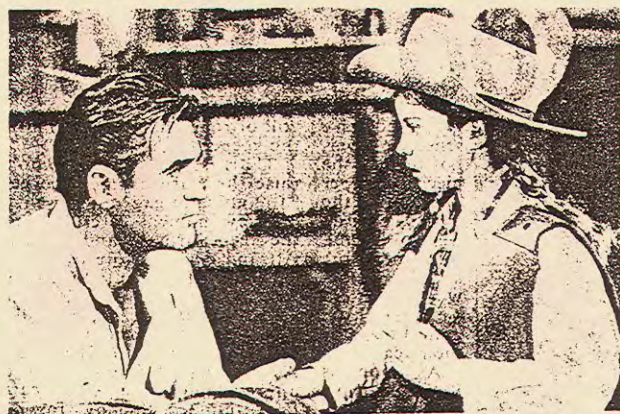


THEN, LIKE A PANTHER, DAN SPRANG!





Next week: Face to face with three grizzly bears!



"If you're going I'm going too," said Jenny.

Back at the ranch some days later, Dave Tracy, the late owner of Wildfire appeared.

He had heard gossip in the towns nearby about the magnificent brown-black stallion, lately arrived at Diamond L. with a man who was a stranger in the district and had come to see for himself whether this horse was Wildfire.

Walking round the ranch with Cass Bagley under the excuse of wanting to buy horses, he caught sight of Wildfire.

He recognised the horse and went over to him. Wildfire remembered Tracy and began to look dangerous.

"Look out," said Cass "He's a one-man horse!"

"I'll say he is," said Tracy, backing away. "Is he for sale?"

Cass Bagley said that money couldn't buy him and explained that he belonged to Ben.

Tracy persisted with his questioning and at length Cass agreed to take him to see Ben.

Ben was busy shaving when the bunk house door opened and he saw the face of Tracy reflected in the mirror before him.

"Found yourself a nice little spot, didn't you? People talk about a horse like that. All I had to do was follow the talk," said Tracy with a leer.

Cass looked from Tracy to Ben, who stood silent.

"What does he mean, Ben?" he asked.

"I mean that that one-man stallion out there is my property," said Tracy, his eyes glinting.

Ben explained the whole affair to Cass. How Tracy had ill-used Wildfire and how Ben had left him the six hundred dollars to pay for the horse before he turned him loose.

Cass, although he could see that Tracy had a good case, was on Ben's side from the first, and argued that the horse was paid for. Tracy, with satisfaction, said that this could not be proved as Ben had no receipt.

"Don't think that six hundred dollars is going to keep you out of jail. I'll pick the horse up tomorrow when I bring the sheriff with a warrant for your arrest. Horse stealing is still a pretty serious offence you know," jeered Tracy as he left.

Things were looking black for Ben now, and he wandered in the dark around the ranch, wondering what he should do.

Unexpectedly he came upon the carcass of a dead horse and upon examining it found that it had been badly mauled by a lion.

"Holy Smoke!" gasped Riggs as he came up, and saw the work of the lion. "Maybe the boss'll be ready to let us hunt him down now!"

The knowledge that the man-eating lion was at large nearby did not keep Dave Tracy away.

Too impatient to wait for morning and the sheriff, he decided to sneak into the stable that night and steal Wildfire.

When all was quiet he approached, lariat in hand, and opened the stable door.

Wildfire was stabled quietly

enough, but when Tracy dropped the rope over his head and opened the small gate, he rounded on the man.

"Oh, so you wanna play rough?" snarled Tracy, grasping a halter which he carried. "All right, I'll give you all the fight you—"

Tracy gasped as he dealt Wildfire blow after blow with the buckled halter.

Wildfire, knowing his liberty to be at stake, and hating this man with all the hate of which his wild nature was capable, reared high, his nostrils widening and his teeth bared.

"Come down here, you —" shrieked Tracy, wielding the halter.

The stallion for a few fierce moments returned to his wild state, and fought for self preservation. Rearing again, he towered over the man, a mass of black muscle.

Then down came his hooves and Tracy was under them.

Tracy screamed and then lay silent, while the enraged animal trampled on him again and again.

After a while, Wildfire quietened down, and he was found with the dead Tracy by Ben and Cass Bagley.

Ben was dismayed when he realised that his Wildfire had killed a man, but when he examined the halter and saw blood on the metal buckle he realised that once more Tracy had been ill-treating the stallion.

"Look at that!" he said to Cass as he showed him the hal-

ter. "That's not Tracy's blood. He got what he deserved."

"I know," said Bagley who was making arrangements for the removal of the dead man. "But the law in this state says that when a horse kills a man, no matter what the reason, he has to be done away with. Well, that's a job for the sheriff."

He looked at Ben in sympathy.

"Take him away from here. Keep going until you cross the state line. And good luck."

Ben, grateful to Cass Bagley for the chance to get the stallion away, made preparations for an early departure.

He was busy packing his belongings when the bunk house door opened, and a solemn little Jenny came up to him with her Stetson on her head and prepared for riding.

"Jenny, what are you doing up this time of night?" asked Ben, amazed.

"I'm going with you!" said Jenny.

"No, no, you can't do that!" Ben said, and explained that he didn't know where he was going or how long he would be away.

Doing her best to blink back the tears, she held out the food she had prepared for both of them.

"Be a good boy," she said soberly, and was gone.

Ben and Wildfire left the ranch secretly during the night and were well on their way by the morning.

Next week: Wildfire fights the lion!



## Watch out!

### AFRICAN ADVENTURE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

This is just one of the many treats in store for Cadbury C-Cubs next year. C-Cubs have their own magazines delivered free, a secret code, a handsome badge and lots of other exciting things. Want to join in the fun? Fill in this coupon now!



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Please enrol me as a C-Cub

MY FULL NAME IS \_\_\_\_\_ (PLEASE WRITE IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

MY AGE IS \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS \_\_\_\_\_ MONTHS

I LIVE AT \_\_\_\_\_

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I enclose 3d. in stamps and a Cadbury label. Please send me my Membership Book and Badge.

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## ENGINE-SPOTTERS CLUB

MERRY Christmas, Spotters! This week there is a special Bonus and any of you with Album numbers among the 1,500 listed below may send up for a gift—free!

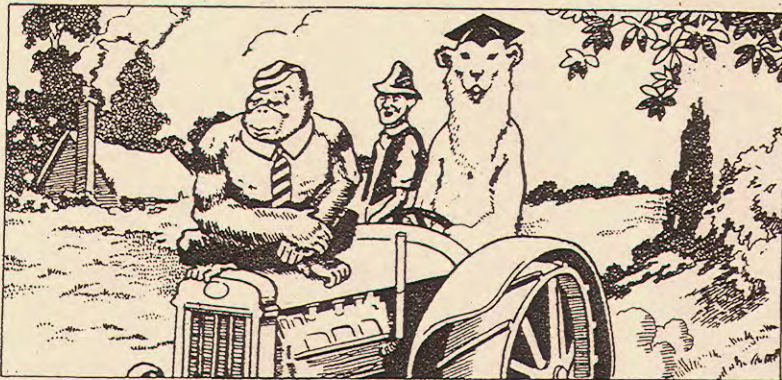
Spotters with numbers between 18,000 and 19,000 inclusive, and between 24,000 and 24,500 inclusive may claim.

If yours is included in either of these two groups of numbers, just choose which present you'd like from these: Cowboy Belt and Holster, Box Game, Charm Bracelet, Wrist Compass, Jack-knife, Autograph Album Ball-point Pen, or a Water Pistol. Write the name of your choice in the space in your Album marked "For Official Use"—making sure at the same time that your name and address are filled in on the Membership page. Next, on a postcard or piece of plain paper write the name of the character or story you like most in COMET—and in a few words say why. Pop both Album and postcard in a 24d. stamped envelope addressed to:

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

to arrive by Wednesday, December 31, the closing date. Presents are despatched about one week after this date and the Albums returned at the same time. More numbers next week.

# DR GRUNTER'S ZOO SCHOOL



Dr. Grunter drove fast and furiously. He was so excited to be free again!

## THE RETURN OF DR. GRUNTER

**D**R. GRUNTER, the polar bear, was in a fine old rage. And he had reason to be, as well. For he was shut up in a horrid cage with great iron bars down the front. What was more, outside the cage was a big notice which read:

**THE WORLD'S MOST WONDERFUL POLAR BEAR! THIS BEAR CAN DO SUMS!**

It was quite true that Dr. Grunter could do sums, for he hadn't always been a polar bear. Not so long ago he had been the schoolmaster in charge of a party of boys who had come to Meadowsweet Farm to help Farmer Whipstraw with the harvest.

One morning the whole bunch of them 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 got the bottles mixed up, and instead of giving Dr. Grunter and the boys a dose of medicine, he gave them all 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 in your life. And birds and animals they would remain until Dr. Dozey could find a liquid that would change them all back again to their proper selves.

Dr. Grunter had been changed into a savage-looking polar bear. He was a bad tempered gentleman at the best of times, but to be changed into a polar bear had made him worse-tempered than ever. And now that he was locked up in a horrid cage he was absolutely gnashing his teeth with fury.

It was really his own fault that he was locked up in a cage. He had insisted in helping at a local garden fete by doing sums on a blackboard. People had paid

to watch Dr. Grunter doing the sums, because they never dreamt for a moment that he was a schoolmaster. They thought that he was just a clever polar bear.

Anyway, some circus men had seen him doing sums, and they had kidnapped him and carried him off to act in their own circus. And that is how Dr. Grunter came to be locked up in a cage.

He had had the sense, however, not to let the circus men know he could talk in a human voice. For he knew jolly well that if they knew that, his life would be far more miserable than it was now, because they would poke him with sticks or do something like that to make him talk.

So Dr. Grunter kept mum. He had tried, also, refusing to do any sums. But that hadn't worked, because the circus men had starved him until he did do sums.

One afternoon, however, when he was doing his sums, Dr. Grunter gave a violent start. For standing right in the forefront of the spectators he saw someone that he knew. It was Alf, one of the men from Meadowsweet Farm.

Alf was grinning and winking at him, so Dr. Grunter knew jolly well that something was afoot. Then suddenly Alf threw a little crumpled ball of paper into the cage.

"Stop teasing the bear!" shouted the nasty, black-whiskered circus man who was in charge of Dr. Grunter.

"I'm not teasing him!" retorted Alf.

"Yes, you are," cried the circus man. "I saw you throw something at him."

"Oh, that?" said Alf. "That was just a little bit of paper. I thought it might please him."

"You be off!" shouted the circus man. "Go on, get away from here!"

With another grin and a wink at Dr. Grunter, Alf went off. But Dr. Grunter knew jolly well that Alf wouldn't throw a little ball of paper at him for nothing.

trembling with excitement, he read Alf's pencilled scrawl:

Dear Sir,

We have found you because we saw an advertisement about the circus and you in the local newspaper and we knew the polar bear that could do sums must be you. Have no fear. We will get you out tonight.

Yours respectfully,  
Alf.

Late that night, when the circus was over and most of the circus folks and animals were fast asleep, the black-whiskered keeper who looked after Dr. Grunter, got the fright of his life.

He was lying in bed in his yellow caravan snoring his ugly head off when suddenly he awoke to find a great hairy gorilla standing by the side of his bed, shaking him.

The keeper would have let out a howl of terror, but he didn't get the chance. For the gorilla clapped a great paw across his mouth and growled in a human voice:

"You keep quiet or it will be the worse for you, see?"

When he heard the gorilla speak in a human voice the keeper was quite certain he was having a most terrible nightmare. He never dreamt for an instant that the gorilla was really a boy named George Harris from Meadowsweet Farm.

"Where's the key to the polar bear's cage?" growled George.

"Come on, speak up! Where do you keep it?"

On t-t-that hook there," stammered the keeper, nearly fainting with fright and pointing to a key hanging on a hook.

"Right-ho! Grab it, Alf, while I tie this fellow up!" growled the gorilla.

For the first time the terrified keeper saw that the gorilla was not alone. With him was the young man who had thrown the piece of paper at the polar bear that same afternoon.

As Alf took the key from the hook, George produced a great

coil of rope and started to lash the keeper to the bed.

"This is just so's you won't raise the alarm," said George. "I'm going to gag you as well."

A few moments later, leaving the keeper trussed and gagged, Alf and George stole from the caravan and crept into the circus tent. Dr. Grunter was pacing up and down in his cage, excitedly wondering how and when his rescue was going to take place. As he saw Alf and George approaching his cage, his heart fairly jumped for joy, for he knew that the moment of escape was near at hand.

"Here we are, sir," cried George cheerily, putting the key in the lock of the cage door. "We'll have you out in a jiffy!"

"Clever lad!" cried Dr. Grunter, his voice trembling with happiness. "But how did you get the key?"

"From the keeper," chuckled George. "Alf followed him this afternoon just after the performance and spotted which of the caravans was his. But here you are, sir. Come on!"

He swung open the door of the cage and Dr. Grunter bounded out. A few moments later the three of them were slipping silently away from the tents and caravans of the circus.

"How far are we from Meadowsweet Farm?" demanded Dr. Grunter.

"Oh, a long way, sir," replied George. "But that's all right. I've brought Farmer Whipstraw's tractor along with me."

"Excellent!" boomed Dr. Grunter. "I shall drive it back."

He did as well. And he was so delighted at being free that he drove fast and furiously. In fact he drove so fast that he overturned the tractor while taking a sharp bend in the road.

Neither he, George nor Alf were hurt, but while putting the tractor on its wheels again a policeman came cycling along.

"Hallo, what's going on there?" he demanded suspiciously, getting off his bike. "Who's in charge of this tractor and these here two performing animals?"

"Performing animals yourself, you stupid lout!" roared Dr. Grunter in such a terrible voice that the policeman nearly jumped out of his skin. "Get out before I gobble you up!"

The policeman got out all right. Leaping on to his bike, he pedalled away for dear life, his eyes nearly sticking out of his head. As for Dr. Grunter, George and Alf, they continued their journey and arrived quite safely at Meadowsweet Farm. And was Dr. Grunter pleased? He most certainly was!

"But I'm never going to be a performing animal again," he vowed.

Next week: The three bears go for a tramp!

THE ADVENTURES OF

**CLAUDE**  
AND  
**CUTHBERT**  
THE TWO NEW BOYS

HOORAY! JOLLY  
OLD HOLS! WE'RE  
BREAKING UP!!

YIPPEE!  
I'M GOING  
TO  
PACK UP!

SCHOOL NOTICES  
**Xmas  
Hols.  
School  
Breaks  
up today  
Get your  
luggage  
packed.**

A-BLOGGS  
CAPTAIN.

HOW RIGHT YOU ARE — YOU'RE GOING TO  
PACK UP THAT NOISE FOR A START!  
THEN, PACK UP MY LUGGAGE FOR ME!  
GET CRACKING — I MEAN, GET PACKING!

YOW!

SWISH!

SWISH!

PACK THESE TROUSERS, FAG, AND  
THEN FASTEN THE  
CASES!

HURRY  
UP!

STAND BY FOR ANOTHER  
PAIR OF BAGS,  
CHUM!

THIS CASE WILL  
NEVER CLOSE  
WITH ALL THIS STUFF  
IN IT!

READY? —  
RIGHT! —  
HERE THEY  
ARE!

BAH! WHEN YOU'VE FINISHED  
PACKING, I'LL PAY YOU OUT  
FOR THAT!!

NOW TO TRY  
TO FASTEN IT!  
LEND A HAND  
CLAUDE!

WHOOOPS! YOU CLUMSY CLODS!  
OH YOU'RE FOR IT WHEN  
YOU'VE FINISHED!!

THE LOCK'S  
FASTENED!

YES, BUT THE  
BACK ISN'T!

WE'LL CLOSE THE TRUNK! I'LL TAKE A  
NEXT! WE'D BETTER  
THROW OUR  
FULL WEIGHT  
UPON THE  
WHOLE  
LID THIS  
TIME!

FEW THINGS  
OUT, TO MAKE  
SURE IT WILL  
CLOSE!

YES — MUSTN'T  
ANGER BLOGGS  
AGAIN!

BOTH TOGETHER NOW... CHARGE!

WHOOHTER!  
IT'S CLOSING!

**BUMP!**

VAN'S WAITING TO COLLECT MR. BLOGGS'  
LUGGAGE, YOUNG SIRs! MAY  
I TAKE IT AWAY?

YES, PORTER — WE'LL BE GLAD  
TO SEE THE BACK  
OF IT!

**SNAP!**

**CLICK**

STRANGE BLOGGS DISAPPEARED  
WITHOUT GIVING US THE  
WHACKING, HE  
PROMISED US!

YES — HE'LL  
PROBABLY  
REMEMBER  
WHEN HE GETS  
HOME! TEE HEE!

# COMET

3<sup>0</sup>  
EVERY  
MONDAY

## SHORTY

