



WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG!

By HARRY WHARTON

What were some of the "beaks" at Greyfriars like when they were school-boys? Strict disciplinarians as they now are, it seems hard to believe that Mr. Prout was once expelled, that Mr. Twigg often broke bounds, and that Mr. Quelch was the leader of a rebel movement against fagging!

OUR "beaks" at Greyfriars are "stickers," and the average junior thinks they're immovable—as unresponsive to the changes of time as the four walls of the school itself! The mere suggestion that Greyfriars masters were ever school-boys themselves gives most chaps quite a shock!

But the fact remains that even the strictest and sternest of them were at some remote period in the past just boys like we are to-day. And some recent discoveries of mine make it pretty clear that in those days they got up to the same tricks and enjoyed life in just the same sort of way as other youngsters!

For instance, Mr. Prout, the portly and pompous master of the Fifth, whose passion for explosives evidently goes back a long way, distinguished himself at the age of twelve by

manufacturing a bomb and depositing it in the cycle-shed belonging to his school just to see if it would work. And it did! What's more (keep this under your hats, boys!) Prout was bunked for it! Shocking, eh?

Mr. Capper of the Upper Fourth is another gentleman with a surprisingly murky past. At the age of fourteen he was the ringleader of a secret society of river "pirates" who raided picnicking parties on "halfers"; and on one occasion they wore masks and actually raided tuck from a party which included one of the masters! Unfortunately for them, the boat capsized as they were making off with the booty, and they had the mortification of being rescued by their own "victims!" Mr. Capper was luckier than Mr. Prout. He was let off with a whacking—and incidentally abandoned piracy from that day on.

One of our beaks at least is no stranger to breaking bounds. If you get Mr. Twigg of the Third in a confidential mood, he may tell you that he seriously estimates the number of times he broke bounds during his



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schooldays at no less than two hundred! In justice to Mr. Twigg, I should mention that the explanation is a comparatively innocent one. He had an early passion for the stage, and made a habit of attending a local theatre regularly once a week.

You can hardly imagine Mr. Hacker of the Shell running off with bathers' clobber at the seaside, can you? Yet he actually did that on one occasion, and as a result the three bathers affected had to run across country a distance of more than a mile before they were able to find sanctuary. And the three bathers, if you'll believe it, were his headmaster, his House-master and his Form-master! Hacker must have been a rare "go-er" in his youth, if this incident is in any way typical.

But I've reserved the best of the lot for the finish.

The heroes are Doctor Locke and Mr. Quelch. You'd never guess the nature of the two exploits that are

recorded against their respective names, even if you had a month of Sundays in which to do it.

Mr. Quelch (whisper it!) was actually at one time the leader in the Form to which he belonged of a rebel movement against fagging. And at the climax of his campaign he startled the school by climbing a tall flagstaff and nailing up side by side with the Union Jack an outsize pennant which bore the rebel device "No Fagging for the Fourth"! Can you credit that?

But our revered Head caps the lot. At the age of thirteen he ran away from school altogether, with the fixed intention of spending the rest of his life as a sailorman!

As Bob Cherry would say—that beats Barney. It quite takes my breath away to think that but for the fact that he was found and returned to school in time, my headmaster might now have been patrolling the bridge of some great liner or swabbing the deck of some old tramp steamer!

Still, there's no harm in reminding ourselves occasionally that the beaks are only human after all. For they are, really, you know—even though their most human qualities belong to the days When They Were Young!



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Taken from the sketch book of the "Holiday Annual" artist, here are some of the outstanding incidents in the match between those old rivals of the cricket field—Greyfriars and St. Jim's. The excellent quality of the cricket was only equalled by the keen sporting spirit with which it was played out—Greyfriars winning a memorable match by two wickets!