



BUNTER OUT OF BOUNDS

By
FRANK RICHARDS

Illustrated by
C.H. CHAPMAN

CASSELL AND COMPANY LTD
LONDON



BUNTER OUT OF
BOUNDS

By

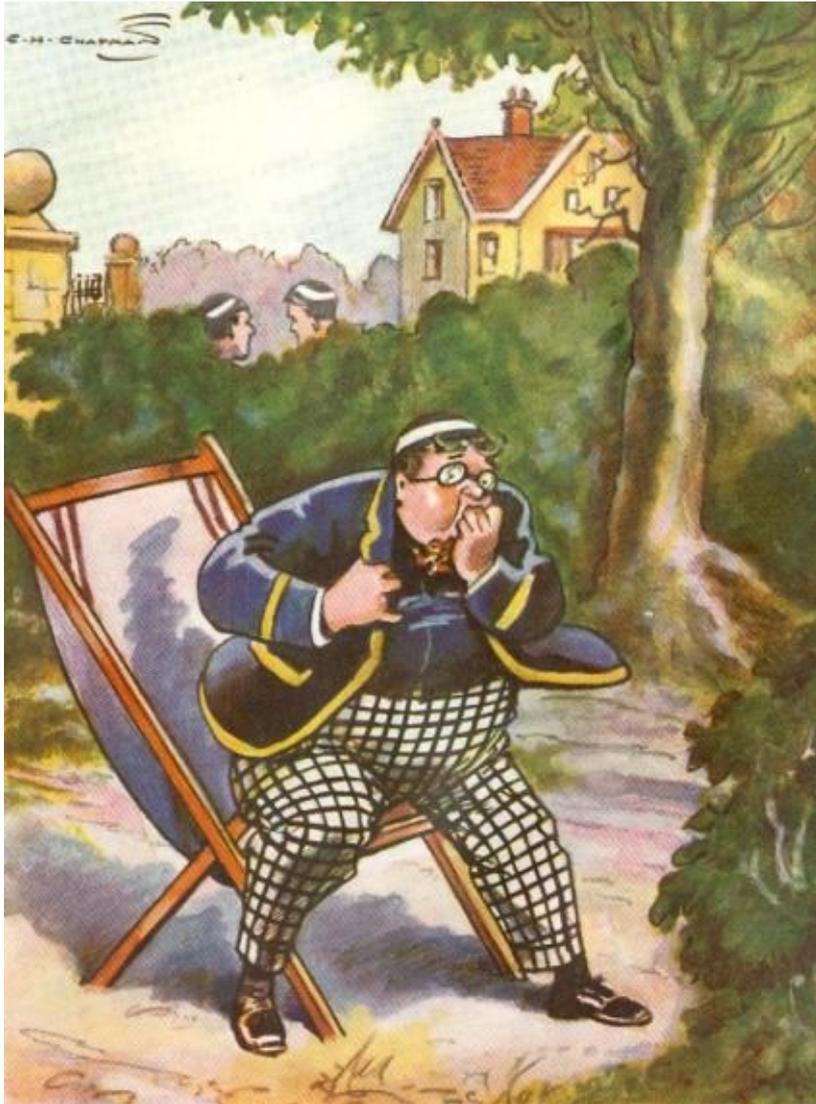
FRANK RICHARDS

Illustrated by

C.H. CHAPMAN

CASSELL AND COMPANY LTD

LONDON



BILLY BUNTER ALMOST JUMPED OUT OF THE DECK-CHAIR

CHAPTER 1

AWFUL!

BILLY BUNTER slipped a grubby hand into a sticky pocket.

In that pocket, his fat fingers closed on a chunk of toffee. But he hesitated.

His eyes, and his spectacles, were fixed on Mr. Quelch.

The Greyfriars Remove were in form.

Geography was the order of the day. A large map was outspread on the blackboard. Quelch,

pointer in hand, was indicating spots of interest — or otherwise — to his form. The Remove

were imbibing knowledge of some of the latest fashions in European frontiers.

Some of them were giving earnest attention. Some were not. William George Bunter was

numbered among the latter.

Bunter was uninterested. Whether Silesia was Polish, or whether Poland was Silesian, Bunter

couldn't have cared less.

A much more urgent matter was on Bunter's fat mind. Bunter was, as usual, hungry. Not as

usual, there was tuck available, in the shape of a large chunk of toffee in a sticky pocket — if a

fellow could only depend on Quelch keeping his back turned while he made the venture!

Normally, a chunk of toffee in Bunter's possession would not have been in his pocket. It would

have been in the most extensive mouth in the Remove, on the downward path. Unluckily,

Bunter had found that toffee in Bob Cherry's study only just as the bell for class was ringing.

He had had time for only one bite before he had to bolt for the form-room.

Since then it had haunted his fat thoughts. Again and again he had been tempted to make the

venture, when Quelch's attention was elsewhere. But he dreaded the glint of a gimlet-eye

turning upon him. Foodstuffs in the form-room were, of course, strictly prohibited. Billy

Bunter wanted that toffee: but he did not want lines, he did not want a detention, still less did

he want Quelch's cane.

The amount of geography Bunter learned during that lesson was absolutely nil.

At last — at long last — he ventured to slip his hand into his pocket, where sticky fingers

contacted sticky toffee.

Quelch was not looking in his direction. Harry Wharton had asked a question, and Quelch was

answering it, at the same time indicating with the pointer. Really, it seemed a propitious

moment for a hungry fat Owl to transfer a chunk of toffee from a sticky pocket to a yearning

mouth.

He hesitated.

But it was said of old that he who hesitates is lost! With the toffee actually in his fat fingers,

Billy Bunter could resist no longer.

With eyes and spectacles glued on Quelch, watchful for a turn of his head, the fat junior

extracted the toffee, and in a split second more, it was jammed into his mouth.

It was a rather large chunk. But Bunter had no time to disintegrate it. Capacious as Billy

Bunter's mouth was, that chunk seemed to fill it to capacity. His plump cheek bulged. Several

fellows near him glanced at him, and grinned. Fisher T. Fish winked at Skinner, who chuckled.

Bunter chewed almost frantically: anxious to reduce that bulge before a gimlet-eye strayed in

his direction. But he was fated to lose the battle of the bulge!

'Bunter!'

Only a second ago, Quelch had seemed utterly immersed in geography. But you never knew,

with Quelch. Often, in class, he seemed to have as many eyes as Argus, and a few over.

'Bunter!'

Quelch's voice was not loud, but it was deep.

Billy Bunter did not answer. He couldn't. There was an impediment in his speech! That chunk

of toffee was in the way.

'Bunter!'

'Urrrggh!'

'Bunter! Stand up.'

Bunter, unwillingly, stood up. All eyes turned on him.

Whatever interest the Remove might have had, hitherto, in geography, was now wholly

transferred to Billy Bunter. His aspect was indeed a little remarkable: his fat face was crimson,

his little round eyes bulged behind his big round spectacles, and his plump jaws worked wildly

in the effort to get rid of that impediment in his speech.

Many of the juniors grinned. They seemed to find Bunter's remarkable aspect amusing.

But there was not the ghost of a smile on Quelch's grim face. Like the dear old Queen, he was

not amused!

'Bunter! You are eating in class, Bunter.'

'Wurrrggh!'

That gasping gurgle was all that Bunter could manage in the way of reply. Willingly he would

have answered 'No, sir!'

It was not regard for the truth that stopped him. It was the toffee. He could only gurgle.

'Upon my word!' exclaimed Mr. Quelch.

'Bunter!

You are an incorrigibly greedy boy! You are actually consuming sweetmeats in class! You have

something in your mouth at this moment, Bunter.'

'Gurrrggh!'

'Eject it at once!' thundered the Remove master.

As a rule, commands in the Remove form-room were obeyed on the instant. Quelch spoke as

one having authority, saying 'Do this!' and he doeth it! But Billy Bunter did not obey that

command: for two good reasons. Firstly, ejecting that chunk of toffee meant that it had to be

written off as a dead loss: secondly, it would be visible and irrefragable proof that he had been

eating in class! For those two good reasons, Billy Bunter, instead of ejecting the chunk, made a

frantic effort and swallowed it.

'Ooooooh!'

'Bunter—!'

'Gooogh! Gug-gug-gug!' gurgled Bunter.

The unhappy Owl's last state was worse than his first.

That chunk was gone — but it was not quite gone! It was sticking somewhere, and the fat

junior choked and gasped and gurgled frantically.

'Wurrrgh! Urrrgh! Gug-gug-gooogh—ooooooooch!'

'Bless my soul!' exclaimed Mr. Quelch. 'The foolish boy is choking — Fish, pat him on the back

at once.'

'Sure, sir!'

Fisher T. Fish, who sat next to Bunter, was prompt to obey. The boniest fist in the Remove

crashed into the plumpest back in that form. There was a fiendish yell from Bunter. That

thump in the back seemed to have shifted the toffee, which no doubt was a relief to Bunter,

and he had found his voice: nevertheless, bony knuckles in a fellow's back were neither

grateful nor comforting.

'Ow! wow! Yaroooh! Stoppit, you beast! Wharrer you hitting me for?' yelled Bunter. 'Oh, crikey!

Ow!'

'Ha, ha, ha!'

'Silence! Bunter—!'

'Oh! Yes, sir! No, sir! Oh, sir! Oh, crikey! Ow! '

'Bunter! You are a greedy boy! You are the greediest boy I have ever known in my long

experience as a school-master. You have actually been consuming comestibles in class, under

my very eyes—'

'I—I didn't—I—I mean I wasn't—I—I—I wouldn't—'

'That will do, Bunter. You will remain in the form-room for two hours after the class is dismissed—'

'Oh, crikey!'

'You will write out the names of all the principal cities and rivers of Europe—'

'Oh, jiminy!'

'And that, I trust, will be a warning to you!' said Mr. Quelch, grimly.

Billy Bunter blinked at him in horror. 'But, sir—!' he gasped.

'You may be silent, Bunter.'

'B—b—b—but, sir—if—if I stay in two hours, I shall miss tea—!' gasped Bunter.

'Precisely!' said Mr. Quelch. 'Your tea will be very late, Bunter.'

'B—b—bib—bob—but—' stuttered Bunter.

'If you say another word, Bunter, I shall cane you.' Billy Bunter did not say another word. But

his fat face was eloquent. Evidently, Quelch's idea was to make the punishment fit the crime!

Bunter was going to miss a meal as a penalty for stuffing in class! He was going to sit in the

form-room for two unending hours, with nothing but that chunk of toffee to relieve the aching

void in his extensive inside! It was appalling! It was awful!

Other faces were smiling. But Billy Bunter's fat lugubrious visage resembled that of the ancient

monarch who never smiled again!

CHAPTER 2

HOOK IT!

'I SAY, you fellows!'

'Eh?'

'What?'

Five fellows stared round, in surprise.

Harry Wharton and Co. were sauntering in the quad after class. It was tea-time: but tea in a

junior study was a movable feast, so to speak: a fellow would 'tea' when he liked: and the

Famous Five were not quite so keen in such matters as their fattest form-fellow. They were

talking football, the St. Jim's match being at hand, and that topic for the moment banished tea

from their minds: though there was, actually, a parcel of considerable dimensions in Bob

Cherry's study, not as yet unpacked.

Football 'jaw', however, was interrupted by a fat voice that proceeded, apparently, out of

space.

They were passing the form-room windows. Nobody else was on the path. So it was quite

startling for what seemed like a disembodied voice to impinge suddenly upon their ears.

Like Moses of old, they looked this way and that way.

Like Moses again, they saw no man.

'I say, you fellows!' came again, impatiently. Then they looked up.

Sad to relate, they had quite forgotten Billy Bunter and his woes. Now they were

reminded of

him. From the high window of the Remove form-room, a fat face and a big pair of spectacles

looked down.

'That ass Bunter—!' grunted Johnny Bull.

'The esteemed and idiotic Bunter!' remarked Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

'I say, you fellows—'

'Hallo, hallo, hallo!' called out Bob Cherry, cheerily. 'Getting on all right with those principal

cities and rivers, Bunter?'

'Poor old Bunter!' grinned Frank Nugent. 'Getting hungry?'

'Only another hour, Bunter,' said Harry Wharton, laughing.

'Only!' gasped Bunter. 'I say, you fellows, I'm famished.'

'Come on, you chaps,' said Johnny Bull. 'It's lines for speaking to a fellow in detention. Good-

bye, Bunter.'

'Beast! I—I mean, hold on a minute, dear old chap! There's nobody about— Do stop a minute.'

The Famous Five paused.

They were not unsympathetic. They could feel for a hapless fat Owl, immured in a deserted

form-room, with only the principal cities and rivers of Europe to keep him company: and

yearning for tea. But the rule on the subject was strict, and they did not want a detention for

themselves. There was, as Bunter said, nobody about: but at any moment somebody might

come round the corner of the building—and it might be Quelch!

However, the coast was clear, at the moment, and sympathy supervened. So they

stopped

under the form-room window.

'Well, what?' asked Harry Wharton. 'Buck up—we shall have to bolt if a pre. or a beak blows

along.'

'I'm hungry—!' wailed Bunter.

'Is that all?'

'Beast! I mean, got anything to eat about you?' asked Bunter. 'Chuck it in, if you have. I say,

you fellows, I've been watching you mooning about, and I thought you'd never come this way.

I say, if you've got any toffee—'

'I've got some in my study,' said Bob. 'But—'

Oh! Never mind that,' interrupted Bunter, hastily.

Bunter had the best of reasons to know that Bob's toffee was no longer in Bob's study! 'Got

anything else — butterscotch, or an apple or anything — even a bull's-eye—?'

'Nix!' said Bob.

'Better push on,' said Johnny Bull. 'If Quelch catches us here—'

'Oh, blow Quelch!' hooted Bunter. 'I say, Bob, old chap, cut up to your study and get something out of that parcel. Never mind the toffee — something from the parcel—'

'How do you know there's a parcel in my study?' demanded Bob Cherry. 'Oh! I—I—I—I—'

'You've been up to my study?'

'Oh! No! Haven't been up to the studies to-day!' gasped Bunter. 'And I only went up for my

books, too. I never even looked into your study, old chap.'

'You saw the parcel there without looking in?' inquired Bob.

'Yes—I mean no—I—I never looked in, i mean I shouldn't have, only there was nothing in

Smithy's study — I mean—'

'You fat, frabjous, footling, foozling fraud, if you've been at my parcel—!'

'I—I haven't,' gasped Bunter. 'There wasn't time — the bell was ringing — I—I mean, I

wouldn't! I hope I'm not the chap to bag another chap's parcel, Bob Cherry. I never touched it,

or the toffee either.'

'The toffee?' repeated Bob. 'You've bagged my toffee! Is that what you were guzzling in form?'

'No! ' howled Bunter. 'There wasn't a packet of toffee on the table. If there was, I never saw it.

Besides, I never touched it. I left it there just as it was.'

'Oh, my hat! '

'Ha, ha, ha!'

'Blessed if I see anything to cackle at, when a fellow's practically perishing of hunger!' howled

Bunter.

'You fat perisher—'

'Oh, really, Cherry—'

'Lean down from the window, Bunter,' said Bob. stepping under the high sill.

The fat Owl blinked down at him.

'Eh! What for?' he asked.

'So that I can pull your nose.'

'Beast!'

Bunter did not lean down from the window!

'Oh, come on,' said Johnny Bull. 'Look here, if Quelch takes his usual trot after tea, he

will be

oozing along any minute—'

'Lines if he catches us talking to Bunter,' said Nugent.

'Come on!'

'I say, you fellows!' yelled Bunter. 'Hold on! I say, Bob, old chap, do cut up to your study and

fetch—'

'The toffee?' asked Bob, grinning.

'Oh! No! Not the toffee. Never mind the toffee. I say, very likely there's a cake in your parcel

— think there is?'

'Very likely,' agreed Bob.

'Well, cut a slice—a big slice, mind—and wrap it up in a newspaper or something, and chuck it in

here—' pleaded Bunter. 'I'm simply famished! I just can't wait another hour! Be a sport, old

chap! I'll keep the window open and wait for you—'

Bunter was suddenly interrupted. 'Ware beaks!' breathed Nugent.

'Oh, holy smoke! '

'Hook it!'

At a little distance a mortar-board appeared in view.

Under it was the severe countenance of Henry Samuel Quelch, master of the Remove.

But the Famous Five did not pause to ascertain whose face was under that mortar-board. A

glimpse of the mortar-board itself was enough for them. As if moved by the same spring, five

fellows bounded into motion. They cut along the path to the nearest corner at a speed that

would have done them credit on the cinder-path. Seldom had five fellows covered the ground

with such celerity. They whizzed.

Mr. Quelch, coming towards the form-room window, had a split second's view of five vanishing backs disappearing round the corner.

He also had a view of a fat junior, leaning from the window, waving a fat grubby hand, and

yelling: 'I say, you fellows! Stop! I say!'

'Bless my soul!' murmured Mr. Quelch, staring as he approached. Bunter, blinking in the

direction in which the Famous Five had fled, was unaware of Quelch. He yelled on:

'I say, come back! Wharrer you cutting off for? I say Quelch isn't about — the old donkey's in

his study! I say, Bob — I say, Harry, old chap — I say, do bring a fellow something to eat—'

'Bunter!' came a deep, deep voice.

'Oh, crikey!'

Billy Bunter's fat head spun round, and he blinked down at his form-master through his big

spectacles. Then it dawned on his fat brain why Harry Wharton and Co. had vanished so

suddenly.

'Bunter! I saw some boys under this window—'

'Did — did — did you, sir?' I—I didn't see anybody!' gasped Bunter. 'I—I wasn't speaking to

anybody, sir! I —I just came to the window for a—a—a breath of fresh air, sir—I—I've been

working rather hard, sir, writing out all the city principles—I—I mean the principal cities—'

'You were speaking to several boys under this window, Bunter. You were asking them to bring

you comestibles in detention!'

'Oh! No! No, sir! I wasn't speaking to Cherry, sir, and — and I only asked him a question about

geology — I mean geography—I—I'd forgotten for a minute, sir, whether Poland is the capital

of Italy, or—or—or France, sir—' babbled Bunter.

'I heard you, Bunter,' thundered Mr. Quelch, 'and I heard you apply an opprobrious epithet to

me, your form-master, Bunter.'

'Oh! Did you, sir? Oh, lor!' I—I—I didn't mean you, sir—'

'What?'

'I—I—I didn't really, sir,' gasped the terrified Owl. 'I—I—I was speaking about another old

donkey, sir—'

'Upon my word! Bunter, if you were not the most obtuse, as well as the greediest, boy in my

form, I should cane you—'

'Oh, really, sir—'

'Shut that window immediately, Bunter, and go back to your task. If I see that window open

again, Bunter, I shall come to the form-room.'



'SHUT THAT WINDOW IMMEDIATELY'

Billy Bunter gave his form-master one look. It was a look that might almost have cracked his

spectacles. Then he closed the window, and limped back to his desk. The last hope was gone:

for a whole hour yet there was nothing for Bunter to eat: and a forlorn fat Owl was left to

derive what comfort he could from the principal cities and rivers of Europe.

CHAPTER 3

FIERCE FOR FISHY

CRASH!

Bump!

'Oh! Owl Wake snakes! Yurrooop!'

Fisher T. Fish yelled as he crashed.

It was quite unexpected.

Fishy was standing on a path near a corner of the House. He was not giving attention to his

surroundings. His attention was fixed on a little book he held open in his bony fingers. It was

not a school book. Fisher T. Fish was not particularly keen on school books. It was an account-

book: and its pages were covered with all sorts of figures and dates. Fishy was deep, very

deep, in those accounts. Cash, or anything connected therewith, had an appeal for Fishy, like

that of tuck for Bunter, or football for Bob Cherry. Deep in those accounts, Fishy was taken

wholly by surprise, when five fellows in a breathless bunch came suddenly whizzing round the

corner.

He had no time to see them coming. Neither had they time to see Fishy in the way. They just

crashed into him.

'Oh! What—?'

'Who—?'

'Oh, crumbs!'

Fisher T. Fish went over like a ninepin. The account-book flew from his hand and landed he

knew not where. He sprawled on the earth. Over him sprawled Bob Cherry and Harry

Wharton: over Bob and Harry, sprawled Frank Nugent and Johnny Bull and Hurree Jamset Ram

Singh.

It was quite a mix-up.

'Oh, my hat!'

'Gerroff!'

'What the dickens—'

'Ooooooh!' came a breathless moan from Fisher T. Fish. He was buried under what looked like

a heap of wildly-thrashing arms and legs. He had no breath for another yell. He just moaned.

The Famous Five scrambled up, gasping. But Fisher T. Fish did not follow their example. He

gaped, but he did not scramble up: there was, for the moment, no scramble left in Fishy. He

lay gasping and gurgling.

'That ass Fishy—!' panted Bob Cherry, staring down at the sprawling junior from New York.

'What did you get in the way for, fathead?'

'Moooh!' mumbled Fishy.

Harry Wharton, heedless of Fishy, shot a rapid glance back towards the corner the juniors had

rounded so suddenly. He rather dreaded to see a mortar-board appear round that corner.

But there was no sign of Quelch.

'Not after us,' he said. 'I expect he's stopped to jaw Bunter. Better clear, all the same.'

'Come on!' said Johnny Bull. 'Cut round the gym.'

'Oooh!' moaned Fisher T. Fish. He raised himself on a bony elbow, and then slowly sat up.

'Oooh! You pesky gecks— oooh!'

He gasped and gasped.

'You pesky, pie-faced nitwits! Wooh!'

'Hurt?' asked Bob Cherry, pausing.

Four members of the Co. resumed sprinting, without delay. It really was quite urgent to vanish

round the gym in case Quelch walked as far as the corner and looked round to ascertain the

identity of those boys he had seen under the form-room window. But Bob was all good nature: and Fishy did look a little damaged. So Bob lingered while his comrades sped on.

'Hurt?' repeated Fishy, between gasps, with a glare at Bob. 'You pesky mugwump, you figure

you can spread a guy out, and dump on him, without hurting him a few?'

'Sorry!' grinned Bob.

'Sorry don't mend anything,' snorted Fisher T. Fish. 'Give a guy a hand up, blow you, and you

can pack up your sorry.'

Bob bent, grasped a bony arm, and heaved. Fisher T. Fish tottered to his feet, still spluttering

for breath.

He leaned on the wall, panting and rubbing places that had sustained damage. Those places

seemed almost innumerable. Fishy was a lean youth: in fact, he seemed composed chiefly of

bones: and every one of those bones seemed to have a pain in it. He panted and