

Frank Merriwell at Fardale

By **Gilbert Patten**
The Original
BURT L. STANDISH

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WNU Service

SYNOPSIS

When Bart Hodge, a vain youth of sixteen, alights from a train at Fardale, he stumbles over a half-blind dog and in a rage kicks the animal. The dog's owner, Tad Jones, a small, shabby boy who supports his widowed mother, denounces him. This settles Bart and he slaps Tad. Frank Merriwell, an orphan of Hodge's age, prevents him from further molesting Tad. Although the two do not come to blows, Hodge sneeringly says they will have to settle their differences later. He and Merriwell had come to Fardale to attend Fardale academy. While Hodge consults Joe Bemis, truck driver for John Snodd, about his baggage, Merriwell, accompanied by Tad and his dog, Shag, start walking to Snodd's place. Presently the Snodd truck, with Hodge driving, rumbles down the road and kills Tad's dog.

CHAPTER I—Continued

"Why," said Frank, after he had paid the taxi driver, "how did you get that impression, Mr. Snodd? If you are Mr. Snodd."

"I am," said the farmer. "My man, Joe Bemis, said you told him you'd rather walk than ride with him."

Merry smiled. "But that was because I wanted to stretch my legs after a tiresome train trip. It wasn't because I objected to the truck, sir."

"And that other feller—Bert Hodge—he said you made a squawk at the deopce because he stepped on Tad Jones' old dog by accident."

"Oh, I see," Frank's smile grew broader. "Well, did he tell you, also, that he kicked the dog and slapped Tad for objecting to that?"

The man's eyebrows lifted and came down again. "Huh? Why, no, he didn't say anything about that, but he did say Tad got sassy."

"Maybe, Mr. Snodd," said Tony Acerro, "he no tell-a you he run over that dog-a up on the hill when Joe let-a him drive-a the truck?"

"Hey? What's that, Tony?" Snodd's eyes had widened in surprise. "Run over Tad's dog? No, he never mentioned that. Did it hurt the dog much?"

"Only just kill-a him," said Tony. "This-a boy come get-a me to fetch-a Tad and his dead-a dog home. Now maybe you have-a to pay for that dog-a, Mr. Snodd." With which consoling remark, he let in the car's clutch and drove away.

"Why now, shucks!" said John Snodd, pulling at his chin whiskers. "That old dog was half blind, and he wasn't licensed anyhow. He wasn't worth two cents."

"He was worth a great deal to that little boy, sir," said Frank. "Tad's all broken up over it. His mother, too."

Snodd shook his head soberly. "Now that's too bad. I'm sorry it happened. Bemis had no business to let that Hodge feller drive. But I don't believe either of them knew the dog was run over."

"Maybe they didn't," allowed Merriwell, "but Tad had to jump for the ditch to get out of the way himself, and he just made it. I didn't admire the way Hodge grinned over that. It didn't seem like a joke, to me."

"You're right," agreed the farmer. "I'll give Bemis a dressing down for letting that boy drive the truck." He beckoned to Frank. "Well, come on in, young feller. I've had your trunk took up to your room. I'll show you where it is."

It was a comfortably furnished and pleasant room. Neatness made up for style and taste. That was the first thing Merry noticed. Then he discovered there was running water, which Snodd had piped from a spring on higher ground. And there were electric lights, with power drawn from the line that supplied the academy. From the windows the academy buildings could be seen amid the trees, less than a fourth of a mile away.

Stripped to the waist, he was getting rid of the dust and grime of the train journey when somebody knocked on the door. "Just a moment," he called, grabbing a towel and using it vigorously.

When he opened the door a little and peered round the edge of it he was surprised to find that the one who had knocked was a strange boy with a whimsical, smiling face.

"Hello!" said Frank.

"Hello," said the other. "My name's Barney Mulloy and my room's the next one to this. Like yourself, I'm here to break into Fardale academy. I've been hearing you wear a high hat, and I thought I'd like to look at it—if you don't mind at all."

"Come in, Mulloy," said Merry, opening the door wide. "But the hat's in my trunk and I haven't unpacked it yet."

"It disagrees with the rumor that you had it on when you arrived in town," chuckled Mulloy, accepting the invitation to enter. "But then, I don't believe all I hear." His quick eyes surveyed Frank's fine torso, clean, strong arms and genial face. "And it's not much of a sissy you look like, either," he added.

"If that's one of the rumors you've heard," laughed Merry, as he shut the door again, "I'm going to brand it as pure hodge-podge."

Barney Mulloy clapped his hand over his mouth to smother a whoop of appreciation. "Hodge-podge is right," he agreed. "My window was open when you arrived. What I heard led me to believe Mr. Hodge had misrepresented you, Merriwell. That's why I butted in on ye so soon."

"You're as welcome," said Frank, "as a certified check. Take a chair and be comfortable while I'm dressing."

He liked this lad on whose tongue lay a slight touch of Irish brogue. "Now how's it happen you're one of the late-comers, like myself?" Barney wondered, as he sat down.

Merry explained: "My uncle—he's my guardian—was sick. Otherwise I'd been here when the school opened."

"Oh, it's a guardian you have?"

"Yes. You see my father and mother are both dead."

"Hm-m, then it's a bit worse off than I am you are, my lad. My good mother, saints rest her, is gone, but I've got a father living



"Now That Was Different, Barney."

that's as fine a policeman as ever walked a beat. And it's his plan that I'll have a better education than he picked up in old Limerick." Barney said it proudly, and Frank liked him better still. A spark had been struck; they had clicked.

"But there's a bit of trouble," Mulloy went on. "Maybe I'll not get into this school now."

"Why, how's that?"

"Oh, I neglected to send them notice I'd be coming a little late. Now the dormitories are full and I've been scratched off the list."

Merry whistled. "Well, Barney, something will have to be done about that."

"I'm afraid it can't be. It's not much encouragement I got from the dean when I saw him today."

"Now look here," said Frank. "My Uncle Asher has an old friend in the academy here. His name is Horace Scotch and he's a professor. I've had your trunk took up to your room. I'll show you where it is."

It was so unexpected, so friendly and generous, that Mulloy's quick tongue was silenced for a moment. An odd look, half smile and half frown, sprang into his Celtic face. He stood up again on his sturdy legs.

"It's a sweet mess of lies Bart Hodge told about ye, Merriwell," he said, "but maybe you won't want to dirty up your hands on a snake. If that's the way you feel, just leave him to me."

With true Irish spirit, Barney Mulloy was ready and eager to fight for a friend, and he had picked Frank Merriwell for a friend in short order. But Frank promptly declined Barney's offer to silence Bart Hodge in the manner he had proposed.

"That," he said, laughing, "certainly would make me look like the sissy Hodge said I was. I've been brought up to fight my own battles when fighting is necessary, but I never go hunting for trouble."

"Oh, yes?" said Mulloy, his eyes twinkling. "Then what made ye jump in quick as a wink when you saw Mr. Hodge kick a dog and slap the boy that owned him?"

"Now that was different, Barney. Nobody but a poor fish could have stood still and let him get away with that."

Barney nodded his head. "Now I've got your number," he said. "So I'll sit on the side-lines and do the cheering. It's a notion I've got that the show will be good when it comes off."

Somebody was playing the piano in the big front room when they came down to supper. Through the open door Merriwell got a glimpse of the back of a slim, fair-haired girl whose hands were fluttering like

white butterflies over the keys. Only a glimpse as he walked past the door, but not many young girls could play like that in these days of canned music and the radio, and he was interested.

"Who's that, Barney?" he asked. "A pip," said Mulloy, grinning. "Name's Inza Burrage. She's got a brother in the school."

"Is she staying here at Snodd's?"

"Oh, no. But Snodd's got a saddle horse; she rides like a cowgirl, and she's chummy with Belinda, who's throwing a kitten party this evening—no gents allowed. She arrived early."

"Who's Belinda?"

"Snodd's daughter. A good kid, but a bit of a bouncer. She'll pass us our rations."

Belinda was serving Bart Hodge, who had arrived ahead of them, when they entered the dining room. She was, as Barney had stated, "a bit of a bouncer," but she had a pleasant, intelligent face. Hodge apparently was jollying her, but he dropped it at once and put on an air of dignity when they came in.

"Too bad about that old dog, Merriwell," he said. "Neither Bemis nor I knew the truck hit him. Mr. Snodd says that even you don't think I ran over him intentionally."

"I wouldn't like to think that you—or anybody else—would deliberately kill a small boy's pet dog, no matter how worthless the creature might be, Hodge."

"Thanks," acknowledged Bart. He smiled as he said it, but it seemed to Merry that there was a sneer hidden behind the smile.

After that Hodge took no part in the conversation. He ate hurriedly and left the table before Frank and Barney were much more than half through the meal. With a show of careless generosity, he dropped a bill beside his plate as a tip for Belinda.

"I'm glad that baby's gone," growled Mulloy. "It's good food Mrs. Snodd cooks, but the sight of him soured it for me."

"Oh, forget him," advised Frank. The sound of the piano, which had continued at intervals, ceased entirely a few moments after Hodge left the room. But it was a surprise for Merriwell and Mulloy, re-passing the door of the living room a little later, to see Bart standing beside the stool on which the fair-haired girl was sitting. She had turned from the instrument and was listening as he talked to her with the self-assurance of a fellow who had no doubt of himself. Frank got a good look at her now.

"A pip is right, Barney," he said. "The nerve of that guy!" muttered the Irish boy.

Merry pulled at his elbow. "Let's go for a walk," he proposed. Far away in the east, the round moon spilled silver over the still bosom of the ocean. Golden lights glowed warmly in the windows of the school dormitories. The night was as mild as a night in June, but its pleasant odors were those of September. Crickets were fiddling in the roadside grass. Somewhere from within the academy grounds came a chorus of boyish voices singing a school song as Frank and Barney walked slowly past the open gate.

"Sounds pretty," said Mulloy. "Sweet," said Frank.

They didn't talk much until they had followed a well-trodden path down to the shore, on which the gentle rollers of a rising tide were breaking white. Then their tongues were loosened. For more than an hour they sat there and chatted of many things that interested them both. They joked and laughed a great deal. And before they started back for John Snodd's place they felt as if they had known each other all their lives.

On the road at the foot of the hill Frank halted and stared at two

approaching figures. A small boy was being pulled along by the leash of a huge dog to which he was clinging.

"Is that you, Tad Jones?" Frank called wonderingly.

"Sure it's me, Frank," was the reply, as the boy was dragged toward them by the dog. "I've come over to show yer my new dog. But don't you touch him, for he ain't feelin' well 'nd he might bite yer."

The hair on the animal's back was bristling. It growled sullenly with its nose thrust out toward Merry and Barney. White foam dripped from its mouth. Mulloy looked hurriedly around.

"Hold him, me lad," he said, "till I climb a tree."

"Oh, he won't touch yer 'less I tell him so," said Tad Jones, "but I'd just like to see that feller Hodge kick this dog. Tige would chaw a leg right off from him if he did. Wouldn't you, Tige?"

The creature growled still more alarmingly.

"Where'd you get that beast, Tad?" asked Frank.

"Oh, Silas Gleason gave him to me when he heard my Shag had been run over 'nd killed."

"But there's something the matter with him."

"Silas Gleason said he was sick a little but that he'd be all right in a day or two. He just can't seem to stay still, that's all."

"Now look here, Tad," said Merriwell. "I don't like the way that dog is acting. You better take him right back to Gleason and tell him you don't want him. If you don't you'll have trouble with him."

"Oh, no, Frank!" protested the boy. "Oh, no! I do want him. I gotter have a dog, 'nd this one'll look out for himself 'nd me, too, when any big bum like Bart Hodge gets fresh. I'm goin' to keep him."

To the relief of Mulloy, the dog switched round suddenly and began to pull in the opposite direction.

"He wants to go back home now," said Tad, "nd he's so strong I gotter let him have his own way. Good-night, Frank."

Merry watched the huge animal dragging Tad away by the leash. "Now what do you think of that, Barney?" he asked. "Isn't that a fine dog to give a small boy to play with?"

"He acts hungry," said Barney. "If I had him, it's arsenic I'd feed him on."

CHAPTER II

When Frank and Barney came back from their moonlight stroll the lower rooms of John Snodd's big white farmhouse were all aglow with lights. From the open windows of the living room flowed a flood of girlish chatter and gay laughter. Three automobiles were parked in the yard at the side of the house.

"Well now," said the Irish boy, "all the signs indicate Miss Snodd's party is off to a good start. Too bad we can't crash in on it, Frankie, but I heard Belinda tell Hodge that no dogs—I mean no gents—would be allowed."

"Wait, Barney," Frank's hand was on Mulloy's elbow. "Listen." A gayer burst of laughter came from the house. As it subsided they heard several of the girls urging somebody to "tell another."

"Oh, do, Mr. Hodge!" cried one of them. "That one was just screamingly funny."

"Maybe gentlemen are barred, Barney," said Frank, "but it seems that a 'gent' has crashed the gate."

"Now on my soul," said Mulloy in amazement, "the big bang is right in the middle of it. Can you beat that?"

"I wouldn't if I could," said Merriwell.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Doctor Says "Robot Nose" Will Reveal Intoxication by Sniffing the Breath

Substitution of a mechanical sniffer for the policeman's nose will soon be the order of the day in automobile accidents involving suspicion of intoxication, according to Dr. R. N. Harger, professor of biochemistry and toxicology at the Indiana university school of medicine, relates a writer in the Public Safety Magazine.

Declaring that the use of breath has offered a practical possibility of determining the state of intoxication, Dr. Harger said that his laboratory has developed a new reagent for alcohol which will absorb alcohol from the air or breath.

This mechanical nose, conveniently enclosed within a small box, measures and records the driver's alcoholic content for use in court, according to the Indiana scientist.

"If the subject will not or cannot blow his breath into a suitable container, the breath may be sucked through the apparatus by means of a pump so that it is possible to carry out this test without even touching the subject," he said. "We

feel that this has considerable advantages from a legal standpoint, since the procedure simply substitutes a mechanical sniffer for the policeman's nose."

He emphasized the point that the policeman's nose or any layman's nose, for that matter, provides most unsatisfactory testimony to support an intoxicating charge.

He felt, however, that since courts generally accepted such testimony as permissible evidence, there should be little difficulty in allowing the more accurate evidence recorded by the robot nose to be introduced.

The Foot of the Fly

According to the United States Bureau of Entomology the foot of the fly contains two curved lateral claws, between which is a pair of membranous pads. These pads are covered below with innumerable closely set hairs which secrete a small amount of viscid liquid. This liquid enables the fly to walk upside down on a smooth surface.

A Lift Toward Spring



GOOD frocks and true are these currently exhibited by your favorite designers, Sew-Your-Own. There's an ultra-polished model for informal evenings (dancing and that sort of thing), called the "Good-night frock." Then there's the more home-loving "Good-morning" number, and, to complete the trio, a swell little afternoon frock for tea-time goings-on. Why not spend happy days ahead in these very frocks? All you need do, you know, is to Sew, Sew, Sew-Your-Own!

Spring Frock.

The girl who has a flare for streamlining will see at once that the frock at the left is meant for her—just for her. She will make it of satin if she's thinking ahead to Spring; of wool if her mind is on the present or near future. She will puff the sleeves gently, give the girdle tie a fair but firm snug-ging-up, adjust the chic cowl neck—and she'll be something lovely to look at. Yes, Milady, this is the "Good-night frock" and if it's the last thing you do, you must add it in your new wardrobe.

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When you greet the little family with that bright and cheery "Good morning," be sure your frock reflects an equally sweet note. Sew-Your-Own's most assuring number to this end is pictured above center. With a copy or two in gay gingham or seersucker you'll breeze through your day's work like nobody's business. The shirt-waist styling offers style and comfort that make this your best bet for early season's wear.

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Pattern 1211 is designed for sizes 12 to 20 (30 to 40 bust). Size 14 requires 3 1/2 yards of 35-inch material, plus 3/4 yard contrasting for collar and cuffs.

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