

Frank Merriwell at Fardale

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

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WNU Service

CHAPTER VI—Continued

"There's a little grudge to be settled," said the Chief Executioner, "and we don't let chickens of that sort go to roost around this neck of the woods. Here are your mittens, Merriwell. Hold out your dainty hands and let them be slipped on."

"Wait a moment, me lad," interposed Mulloy, who had felt a swift thrill of joy when he sensed what was going to take place. "How do we know the other pair's not loaded with railroad iron?"

He was permitted to inspect both pairs, which he did carefully. "Um-m," he said, "they appear okay, but they're four-ouncers, and that makes it no boxing match."

"Who said anything about a boxing match?" laughed the Chief Executioner hoarsely. "It's going to be a fight to a finish."

"And I appoint myself referee," said Justice.

"The heck you do!" shot back the Chief Executioner. "I'm running this show. Back up and get out from underfoot."

But Justice stepped close to him and whispered something into his ear that brought about a surprising change in his attitude. "Oh, well," he said, "now that's different. But we haven't time to burn, and it's got to be one round to a decision."

"Do you agree to that, Merriwell?" asked Justice.

"I'll let Hodge settle the point," answered Frank.

"Aw, come on and let's go through with it," said Bart impatiently. "It's none of my doing, but I prefer it short and snappy."

"The innocent little lamb!" said Barney. "Wasn't it a shame to drag him out of his nice warm bed, all unsuspecting and unprepared! Me tender heart bleeds for him."

Hodge barked: "Your nose'll bleed some day if you keep shooting your mouth off, Irish."

"Now he's boiling," Mulloy whispered to Frank, "and that'll make him an easy set-up. Sail into him and knock him bow-legged."

The gloves had been fastened securely on Merriwell's hands, and Hodge was ready also.

The referee had a few words to say before letting them go to it. He warned them against foul blows and stated that he would make them break whenever either one got to holding on to save himself. And he warned the masked spectators to keep back and be careful not to interfere in any way.

"This is going to be absolutely on the level," he declared. "If either of these lads makes a squeal afterwards he'll show his color. Are you ready?"

They were, and he gave them the word to mix it.

Hodge came sailing in with a rush that Frank sidestepped, but Bart followed up as if bent on making it a short job.

Both showed form. Neither was green at this sort of thing. They had been there before, more than once. But the eagerness of Hodge increased as Merry continued to

almost a sleepmaker, but Hodge, reeling drunkenly, managed to keep his feet under him. He was dazed for the moment, but to the surprise of everybody Frank made no attempt to follow up. He waited, his hands dropped at his sides, for the bewildered fellow to recover.

"Get in there, Hodge!" barked the Chief Executioner. "Get in there and bat him balmy!"

Bart pulled himself out of it. He saw red now. Like a tiger, he charged again.

And now Merriwell met him, crouching a little. He parried and blocked a storm of blows. Then, with Hodge off balance, he let go the one-two for a double count.

Hodge fell into a clinch and held on.

"Break!" cried the referee, jumping to separate them.

Just as they were pulled apart, Bart struck low with savage fury. Frank sank to the floor, his face twisted with pain.

"He's down!" cried the Chief Executioner. "Count him out, referee!"

But Justice thrust Hodge back. "You struck low in the break-away," he said. "It's all over and you lose."

"Wait! It's not all over!" His face still twisted in a grimace of pain, Merriwell had lifted himself on to one knee. He was getting up. "This was to go to a finish and I'm not finished."

Indignation had choked Barney Mulloy dumb, but now he could speak again. "Atta old kid, Frank!" he cried. "He done you wrong, now pass him the cookies. Quit being soft. Go after that dirty bird and lay him in the shamrocks."

Frank's failure to follow up his first staggering blow had given his enemy time to recover. As soon as he could shake the bees out of his hair Hodge had realized that the fellow he hated could lay one on with the driving force of a mule's hind leg. Realizing also that Merriwell's aversion to brawls and fighting was no proof that he was either afraid or unable to take care of himself in a scrap, Bart had felt a surge of mingled fear and fury. He had gone berserk.

Slowly Frank straightened up. A strange expression came into his face and chased away the grimace of pain. He was laughing! But it was not the false laugh of a fellow trying to bluff or hide lack of confidence. Behind it there was the icy coolness of something well in hand and very dangerous.

"Turn him loose, Justice," he said. "Let's get through with this rotten business."

"It's okay with me if that's the way you feel about it," said the referee. "Let's go."

Hodge did not try to rush Merriwell now. On guard, he met him with a caution born of a dream-dispelling experience. He knew, now, that Frank was no such a push-over as he had imagined. He kept his head and waited for the breaks, and now Bart was bent on doing so himself.

But a great change had come over Merry. Now he was the one who pressed. With that deadly gleam of laughter lurking in his eyes, he followed up swiftly and persistently, giving his enemy no time to rest. As if reading Bart's mind, he seemed to know just what he would do. There was no getting away from him. There was no drawing him off balance. Try as he might, Hodge found himself always facing a foe who was set and ready for action. It was just a bit uncanny.

It became too much for Bart. Something warned him that his wind wouldn't last, that he would be worn down in time by a fellow who was waiting for just that very thing to happen. Besides that, he could hear voices calling to him to stand up and take it. And then they began to boo him. And he had boasted to one of them of what he would do to Merriwell if he ever got a chance like this.

Then he faltered for a single instant—and a snapping blow in the face stung him like the crack of a whip. After that he was like a lashed tiger, snarling as it leaped and clawed.

There was a flash of light like a million exploding stars. . . .

Somebody was talking to him. Somebody was saying, "Are you all right, Hodge?"

He heard it as he came up out of a black pit and a bright, gleaming flower opened as he rose. The gleaming flower was the light that flooded the interior of the boathouse.

He was stretched on the floor. The fellow who had asked him if he was all right was kneeling at his side and bending over him. Dark forms in the background looked like creatures from the black pit he had just been lifted out of.

"What—what's the matter?" he asked thickly, huskily.

"I'm sorry," said another voice, "but I had to do it."

That was Merriwell! Still naked to the waist, he stood looking down at Bart. There was no mark on

his face, and the gloves were gone from his hands.

"He—I—let me up," said Hodge. "Let me get at him!"

"But it's all over," said the kneeling referee. "He handed it to you and I counted you out."

"You—you counted me out? But I'm not out! I'm all right! Get out of my way and I'll—"

"You were listening to the birds for more than two minutes."

Hodge had raised himself to a sitting position. "He never touched me! I—I slipped and fell."

"Just the same as if you'd met a get-ton truck in a head-on collision. Get it through your nut that you were knocked out."

"Well—well, who are you? You butted into this. Nobody asked you."

With a sweeping movement he batted off the mask worn by the fellow who had called himself Jus-

"I'll do my own worrying," said Walter. "You do yours."

Hodge was on his feet now, but his legs were still weak under him and his head was giddy. Realizing at last that it would have been impossible for him to stand up to Merriwell again if he had been given the chance, he let them remove the gloves from his hands. He felt utterly broken.

"Where are my clothes?" he asked. "I've got to get out of here. I need air."

Again Merriwell was touched by that strange sympathy for the fellow which he had felt in Snodd's grove when Bart came back after running away from Tad Jones' dog. It was something Frank did not understand himself. He opened his lips to speak, though he didn't know what he could say.

But Bascomb took Hodge by the arm and led him away.

CHAPTER VII

The days began to slide by like roller coasters.

They were full days for Frank and Barney, who, heeding the advice of Dean Graves and Walter Burrage, had slipped easily into the routine of the school. They were methodical in devoting the allotted hours to classes and studies, and this regularity and concentration set them free, without worry, for other things.

It was easier for Frank to get past the dull spots in the curriculum, for he had learned the trick of making things seem easy by facing them without shrinking or delay. "Quicker done sooner mended" was a maxim his Uncle Asher had planted well in his mind. It was one of the old saws that wise guys laughed at; wise guys who were not half as wise as they thought they were.

Frank was brimming over with the joy of life, which is the natural heritage of healthy youth. The way he had figured it out, a sour fellow was sick, physically or mentally. That, perhaps, was the secret of his odd moments of sympathy for Hodge.

Bart was an up-and-downer, either riding high or floundering in the ditch. There didn't seem to be any level spots for him. Exciting going, perhaps, but pretty bumpy.

Rooming with Merriwell and Mulloy was just about the toughest thing he had bumped into, too. Especially so after Walter Burrage had gummed the works which had been so well oiled by Hugh Bascomb. The set-up had been Bascomb's, not Hodge's; but Bart had fallen into line full of confidence that he could do a neat job with Frank without having to pull anything shady. His foul blow had not been premeditated. It had been let loose by unthinking rage, the most treacherous of masters.

Grim and sullen, Hodge came and went. He spoke to Frank or Barney only when he had to, which was seldom. Not for long could he nest with those birds. He would find a way to fly, and he'd hop to it at the first chance.

The school gymnasium was beautifully equipped, and Merriwell spent some time there daily, keeping himself fit. As a rule, he wound up with a sprint on the running track and a plunge into the swimming pool. One day a compact, sturdy, quiet man with quick eyes spoke to him as he came, dripping, out of the pool.

"I'm Tom Kane, the football coach," said the man. "Drop into my office after you're dressed, Merriwell."

Well, it had come! Barney had told him he couldn't dodge it. So he faced the music without hesitation, as usual.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Then he gasped with surprise as he saw he had exposed the face of Walter Burrage.

"Oh!" he breathed. "Why, it's you, is it?"

Perhaps the only other person who was not equally surprised was the Chief Executioner. "I had to let him be the referee, Hodge," he stated hastily. "He'd have blown the works if I hadn't."

Frank laughed. "It's a great disappointment to the Grand Canyon," he said. "You might as well take your mask off too, Bascomb."

"Why, the dirty thimblebriggers!" chuckled Barney Mulloy. "They're both so low they'd have to get on stilts to look a cockroach in the eye."

Bascomb whirled on the Irish boy, but found himself facing Merriwell, who had slipped in between them. "He isn't warmed up," said Frank. "I am."

Burrage pushed them apart. "If there's any more scrapping here tonight I'm going to get into it myself," he declared. "Cut it out and keep your lips buttoned up about it. If Dean Graves ever hears anything—"

"You'll be in the soup yourself," said Bascomb, "and you're Old Gravy's little darling. So take your two freshmen pets and warn them not to get loose lipped, in case they may feel like doing a little bragging."

His desire to hush it up was natural enough. Ridicule was about the only thing that got under his thick skin, and he knew how the story would be relished and passed along if it ever got afloat.

French Americanize Names; Prefer the Chummy Style Used in Real Life

Whatever the explanation may be, French names, many of them old French, and particularly nicknames, are undergoing an Americanization process. This tendency is noticeable on the stage, in recent books, and particularly in real life, says a Paris correspondent in the New York Times. If a French boy's name is Richard, in all probability he will be called Dick by his friends. Robert easily becomes Bob; Charles develops into Charley, and James into Jimmy. Although Richard, Robert and Charles are authentically at home in the French language, the same cannot be said for the English or American diminutives; they are distinctly non-French, yet they are gaining increasing popularity in France.

Some of the youngsters baptized Jean sign their names John. Many a French girl christened Jeanne rejects this name and adopts its English or American translation, Jane, which is supposed to be very fashionable in France. Patrick is now being occasionally substituted for Patrice.

Among the girls, Edith—an im-

portation from the Anglo-Saxon—is gaining in popularity. Therese is also frequent, due to parental admiration, doubtless, for the Saint of Lisieux. Double names remain in demand: Marie-Rose, Marie-Louise, Marie-Jose, Marie-Adelaide, Marie-Aime and Anne-Marie. Further names very much in vogue: Brigitte, Beatrice, Chantal, Denise, Odette, Agnes, Colette, Claude and Helene.

Among other evidences of Americanization one may note that Henri is often transformed into Henry. Guillaume is the French way of writing William, but there are few Guillames in France; that name suggests the ex-Kaiser.

Beautiful Swiss Scene

The Matterhorn, Switzerland, soars above a ring of snow-capped summits like the peak of a tiara. The mountain wears a glittering glacier flung over one shoulder, and, above a tall sloping collar of snow, the actual peak rises to heights where the winds allow little snow to rest for long, but sweep it down from the stark rocky top.

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When Rossini Sneered at Wagner's Opera

Recalling an occasion when Arnold Schonberg, "Impressionistic" composer, came to London to conduct a Schonberg program with "explosive" results, Sir John Squire is reminded of Rossini being taken by friends to hear an opera by the new marvel, Richard Wagner. The dialogue, after the show, ran like this:

Disciples—What did you think of it, Master?

Rossini—I don't think it would be fair to express an opinion without hearing it a second time.

Disciples (eagerly)—And when are you going to hear it a second time, Master?

Rossini (emphatically)—Never!

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"Do You Agree to That, Merriwell?" Asked Justice.

elude him like a fading phantom, without attempting to return a blow for the storm that missed him by inches. The fellow just wouldn't stay put long enough for Bart to land a punch.

Justice had to do some pretty footwork himself to keep from getting tangled up with them.

The masked boys began to laugh again. "Why, it's a sprint," said one of them. "I came to see a scrap."

"Wait a bit," suggested Mulloy. "Frankie's just letting you see how fast the lad can run. It's the best thing Hodge does."

Then there was an abrupt change. Quick as quicksilver, Merriwell came flashing in as his enemy slowed down a little, and looped over a swing to the jaw. It was