

Frank Merriwell at Fardale

By GILBERT PATTEN

The Original BURT L. STANDISH

© Gilbert Patten

WNU Service

CHAPTER I

A brakeman opened the forward door of the smoking car and cried: "Fardale! Fardale!"

Bart Hodge yawned and snapped his half-smoked cigarette to the floor. Letting his feet down from the leather-covered seat before him, he straightened up and gazed distastefully through the car window at the frame houses of the small town the train was pulling into. Then he lifted his hand to attract the brakeman's attention.

"Hey, you!" he called. "Come here and take my bag."

It wasn't a request; it was an imperative command. But maybe the man was deaf. At any rate, he turned away and disappeared on the car platform.

Flushing with annoyance, Hodge picked up his handsome leather traveling bag and carried it himself as he followed two or three other passengers who were moving toward the door.

"Bum service on this dirty old train," he muttered. "No Pullman, no porters, nothing but dirt and discomfort. And look at this jerk-water town I'm being dumped into! What a place!"

Descending to the station platform he nearly fell over a small, shaggy mongrel dog that ran awkwardly against his ankles. Quick as a flash, he gave the dog a kick that bowled it over, yelping with pain. Scrambling up, the animal took refuge behind a small, shabby boy who was offering peanuts and popped corn for sale.

"Hi, there!" cried the boy. "That's my dog! What'd you kick him for?" He stepped forward and faced Hodge indignantly.

"Keep your many old pooch out from under people's feet, runt," advised Bart. "He almost tripped me up."

"But he's blind in one eye 'nd didn't see yer. He wouldn't hurt nobody, Shag wouldn't. I think you're a big bum."

"Oh, is that so?"

A back-handed slap sent the owner of the dog reeling. Bags of peanuts and popped corn, flying from his basket, were scattered over the platform.

A hand gripped Hodge by the shoulder and swung him round face to face with another boy about his own age. Neither appeared to be more than sixteen.

"Now that was a nice thing to do, wasn't it?" said the one who had jerked Bart round.

His voice was scornful, his eyes contemptuous. He had just descended to the platform from the steps of a car next to the smoker, and his traveling bag lay at his feet, where he had dropped it. He was a good-looking lad in a manly, wholesome way. Not quite as heavy as Bart Hodge, but fully as tall, he was poised lightly on his feet as if ready for anything. And he was not withered in the least by Bart's glare of wrath.

For a moment Hodge was speechless. His teeth had snapped together behind the slightly parted lips of his petulant, willful mouth—the mouth of a fellow of unreasonable impulses and quick to take offense; a fellow who could carry a grudge and seek to get even for slights or injuries. A vain fellow who wore a signet ring, a handsome wrist-watch, and clothes extravagant of pattern and extreme in cut.

"You'd better keep your hands off me," said Bart after a tense pause. "And you'd better keep your hands off that boy you just slapped," was the calm but grim reply. "I don't like to see dogs kicked or small boys knocked around."

"Oh, you must belong to the S. P. C. A.," sneered Hodge. "What's your name, anyhow?"

"What difference does it make? But I don't mind telling you. It's Frank Merriwell."

"I'll just jot that down mentally—for future reference. I noticed you on the train, and I've a notion you're on your way to Fardale academy."

"It's a good guess."

"Well, I am too, and I'll be seeing you later, Mr. Merriwell. I'll be seeing you!"

An odd smile flickered across Frank Merriwell's face. "Is that a promise?" he said.

"You can take it any way you want to," replied Hodge hotly. "I don't forget people who meddle with my business."

"Then I'll make you a promise," Frank retorted. "If it's your business to kick dogs and cuff small boys I'll be a meddler every time I catch you at it."

For a moment it seemed that Bart Hodge was going to drop his bag and pitch into Merriwell then and there. But, never letting his gaze waver for an instant before Bart's wrathful glare, Merriwell remained lightly poised, ready and steady. The tension broke suddenly.

Hodge snapped his fingers. "It's a good act, big boy," he said, with a forced grin. "Look at the yaps who've stopped to watch it. I hate

to spoil their fun, but I'm in a hurry right now. We'll get together again, Merriwell. It won't be long."

"That's up to you," said Frank. "but just so I won't forget you, you might tell me your name."

"I'm Bartley Hodge, and I'll see that you don't forget me. Don't let that worry you."

With a sweeping, scornful glance at several persons who had paused to watch the outcome of the encounter, Hodge walked swiftly away toward the station baggage-room.

Merriwell felt a timid pull at his elbow. "By golly," said the owner of the dog, grinning up at Frank in an admiring way, "you made that big bluff pull in his horns. We're much obliged to you, me 'nd Shag are. Ain't he, Shag?"

Shag wagged his tail, and barked. Then he sat up straight with his



"I Thought That Feller Hodge Was Going to Take a Swing at You."

forward paws drooping, cocked his head to one side and seemed to take Frank's measure with his one good eye. His comical appearance brought a quick laugh to Merriwell's lips.

"Oh, he used to do lots of tricks like jumpin' rope 'nd walkin' on his hind legs before he got so old," declared the freckle-faced youngster proudly. "He's a good dog, Shag is, 'nd it made me mad when that big stiff kicked him."

"I don't blame you," said Frank. "It made me a trifle hot, myself."

"I thought that feller Hodge was goin' to take a swing at you," said the boy, "but I guess he didn't dash to with you lookin' at him the way you done."

"Here's your peanuts and popped corn, Tad Jones," said a man who had been gathering up the scattered bags. "Only two of the bags broke and spilled the stuff around. This dime'll pay for them."

"Oh, thank you, Mr. Brown," said Tad as the bags were restored to his basket. "Business has been bad today, 'nd that Hodge feller didn't make it no better."

"Look here, Tad," said Merriwell, "you must know where John Snodd's place is."

"Sure I do. It's near the 'cademy, 'bout a mile over the hill. If you're goin' there you better see Joe Bemis about takin' your baggage along. He drives Snodd's truck, 'nd you can ride with him, too. That's him Hodge is talkin' to over there now."

"A mile will be just a good stretch for my legs after that train ride. I think I'll walk it if you'll show me the way, Tad. There'll be fifty cents in it for you."

"Fifty cents! Gee, but that'll make up for the bad business. You bet I'll show you the way, Frank Merriwell."

riwell. But if you've got a trunk you want Joe Bemis to take you better 'tend to it now."

"Wait right here," said Frank. "Here's your fifty cents in advance. I'll be back in a couple of minutes."

He left a silver half-dollar in the freckle-faced youngster's hand before hurrying away to interview Joe Bemis, and boy and dog were waiting on the spot when he returned. He had delivered his traveling bag to Bemis and turned over the check to his trunk.

"I been watchin' you," said Tad, wagging his head. "Didn't know but that Hodge guy'd get dirty 'nd start somethin' with you."

Frank laughed. "He seemed to have forgotten all about me, Tad."

"But he ain't, Frank. He's waitin' for a better time. He said he'd be seein' you. I heard him. You better look out for that bird."

"Okay, I'll be watching. Where's your basket, Tad?"

"Oh, I didn't want to lug that, so I left it with Jim Davis, who runs the gasoline pump over 'cross the street. I'll get it when I come back. Ready to start, Frank?"

"Yes, let's go."

The old dog trotted ahead of them as they were climbing the hill. Behind them the train was pulling out of Fardale village. Beyond the hill lay the exclusive school for boys, the autumn term of which had opened a week ago. Circumstances over which he had no control had delayed Frank's arrival. Now he must pass special examinations to obtain admittance.

Chatting with his guide on the way up the hill, Merriwell learned that the little fellow's father was dead, that his mother was poor, and that Tad was doing what he could to keep the wolf away from the door. Something like a magical sympathy and understanding was established between them.

When they came to the crest of the long rise Frank found himself looking down on the academy buildings, half a mile away. He paused to take the scene in. Besides the academy itself, there were dormitories, a mess hall, gymnasium and chapel. The walks were bordered by rows of handsome trees, and the tennis courts and athletic field were not far distant. Students were moving to and fro, singly and in small groups.

Beyond lay the open ocean, with the sunshine of late afternoon warm on its bosom. A building on the shore of a sheltered cove appeared to be the academy boathouse.

Living 140 Years, or Longer, Seems to Be Possible, According to Records

Thomas Parr, England's most famous old man, was one hundred fifty-two when he died in 1635. The countess of Desmond lived to one hundred forty.

More striking was the mysterious Eighteenth century figure who called himself the count of St. Germain, writes a Paris correspondent.

Who he was, where he was born and died, if he ever died, is not known. Mme. de Gergy, wife of the French ambassador to Venice, tells of meeting him in Venice in 1710. She speaks of a man of about fifty.

During the next 20 years St. Germain wandered through the capitals of Europe. The only claim he made for himself was that he understood alchemy.

In 1735 he turned up at The Hague, making a profound impression on Count Morin, first secretary of the Danish legation, who referred to St. Germain as a man who looked about fifty and talked easily of events 300 years old.

His friendship for Mme. de Pompadour in 1750 has been recorded.

Thrilled, Frank took off his cap. "So this," he said, "is Fardale academy. Some school! Maybe I'll like it."

"Maybe!" barked Tad Jones. "If you don't there's somethin' screwy with you. The fellers that can get inter that school are dead lucky. That's John Snodd's place down at the foot of the hill, them white buildin's."

"Righto," said Frank. "And now I won't need you to pilot me any further. But I hope we'll be seeing each other often, pal." He held out his hand.

"Well, I hope we shall, too—pal!" Stammering and flushed to the roots of his hair, Tad shook hands. "I think you're a swell guy, Frank!" he blurted. Then, calling his dog, he hurried away, going back along the middle of the road.

Merriwell stood there a moment or two, watching the departing boy and his dog. Suddenly, without sound of a warning horn, a light truck came swiftly up over the brow of the hill and rumbled down upon them. It was John Snodd's truck, but Bart Hodge was driving and Joe Bemis, Snodd's man, was sitting beside him.

"Look out, Tad!" Frank shouted. Leaping toward the side of the road, the boy tripped and fell. Like an acrobat, he flipped his body over and rolled into the ditch. He was hidden from Merriwell's view by the dust raised by the wheels of the truck.

Hodge grinned mockingly at Frank, standing on the shoulder of the road, as the truck rolled past with unabated speed. The dust caused Merry to shut his eyes for a moment. As the truck rumbled onward he heard Tad's voice calling wildly:

"Frank! Frank! Come here, Frank! He ran over my dog! He's killed my poor little dog!"

More than an hour later, Tony Acerro drove his brand-new "taxi" up to John Snodd's front door and Frank Merriwell hopped lightly out of the car.

Snodd was waiting on the steps. "Well," he said, taking his pipe out of his mouth and looking Frank over with a pair of keen blue eyes. "I see you arrived in style, young feller. Sorry my truck wasn't good enough for you to ride in."

His speech was sharp and brisk. Like his neat white buildings and everything around the place, he looked prosperous. His iron-gray chin whiskers gave him a distinctly rustic appearance.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

A Trio of Triumphs



THE way to day-in, day-out chic for the woman who sews is shown in today's attractive new three-way plan. It goes deeper than the surface, you see, in the presentation of a sleek new slip. Ah, and it gives great thought to the surface, as you can't help but note in the two wing-side models.

New Pattern Book. Send 15 cents for the Barbara Bell Fall and Winter Pattern Book. Make yourself attractive, practical and becoming clothes, selecting designs from the Barbara Bell well-planned, easy-to-make patterns.

Spicy New Model. As shipshape as a Parisian streamline fashion and, in its own role, as important—that's the little number at the left above. It does wonders to give one that up and doing feeling that's handy to have around the house in the morning. Make this frock in gay cotton: shantung, print, gingham, or crash.

A Congenial Slip. Beneath a well-groomed surface hangs a perfect fitting slip! That's an old and honest notion and one Sew-Your-Own abides by religiously. Today's five piece version is as easy to put together as it is congenial to your comfort and outward superbness. Make two while you're about it: one with a plain top for everyday, the other with a bit of frou-frou for dress-up occasions.

Deft Design. The "girl in the little green hat" wears a dress with many tucks in this her latest picture. It is the dress for you, Milady, to star in at familiar Fall festivities. Deftly but definitely it gives you emphasis where you want it; soft pedals worry-areas. Wool is smart material and it fits this frock's personality to a T. Let's sew and be seen places this Fall. Okay?

The Patterns. Pattern 1389 is designed for sizes 36 to 52. Size 38 requires 4½ yards of 35-inch material, or 4½ yards, with long sleeves. Pattern 1988 is designed in sizes 34 to 46. Size 36 requires 3½ yards of 39-inch material, plus 1 yard of ribbon for shoulder straps, and 1½ yards of edging for finishing upper edge. Pattern 1392 is designed for sizes 14 to 20 (32 to 42 bust). Size 16 requires 2¼ yards of 54-inch fabric.

Send your order to The Sewing

Circle Pattern Dept., 247 W. Forty-third street, New York, N. Y. Price of patterns, 15 cents (in coins) each.

Home Heating Hints By John Barclay Heating Expert

Simple Way to Avoid Dust When Shaking Grates and Taking Ashes From Pit

THERE is an easy way to keep dust from sifting through the cracks of the ashpit door when shaking furnace grates. Quite a few readers have asked me how it can be done, and I'm sure many more of you will be interested. Here's how:

Have a spray made of small pipe, connected with the cold water system installed in the ashpit

of the furnace. Only a short length of pipe will be needed. In it have small holes drilled and cap the free end.

Just before shaking the grates, turn on the spray. It will throw a fine mist over the whole ashpit, wetting down the ashes as they drop through the grate openings and settling the dust immediately. Then remove the ashes from the ashpit. They will be sufficiently wet to prevent the dust from rising and settling in the cellar.

The cost and installation of such a spray will be but little, and it certainly will save you considerable work in dusting off things on which the dust would otherwise settle.

MAGIC CARPET

It doesn't matter what you're thinking of buying—a bar-pin or a baby grand, a new suit for junior or a set of dining-room furniture—the best place to start your shopping tour is in an easy-chair, with an open newspaper.

The turn of a page will carry you as swiftly as the magic carpet of the Arabian Nights, from one end of the shopping district to the other. You can rely on modern advertising as a guide to good values, you can compare prices and styles, fabrics and finishes, just as though you were standing in a store. Make a habit of reading the advertisements in this paper every week. They can save you time, energy and money.

FRANK MERRIWELL AT FARDALE

by Gilbert Patten

Starts today... a thrilling new story about fiction's greatest hero, Frank Merriwell! This new tale is written by Gilbert Patten, the original "Burt Standish" who created Merriwell. If you're an old-timer, it will bring back pleasant memories... if you're a youngster, you'll find a new thrill in this story of an unusual college student. Be sure you read "Frank Merriwell at Fardale."