

Rockin' Oliver!



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ROCKIN' OLIVER! - A SYNOPSIS OF THE STORY

Rockin' Oliver! is a sequel to Lionel Bart's masterpiece *Oliver!* which is about *Oliver Twist's* great-great grandson, *Oliver Philip Brownlow*, who lives in South London a century later.

Oliver Twist has just asked for more gruel in the workhouse and all of the boys at his table are punished for taking part in drawing straws to ask for more. They have their gruel ration cut in half and their work day extended. *Oliver's* best friends, *Dick* and *John*, who sat at his table, soon die from hunger. They come back as ghosts in the 1950's and go to find whatever became of *Oliver*. *Oliver Twist* had run off to London and had been adopted by the wealthy *Brownlow* family. *Oliver Twist's* great-great grandson, also known as *Oliver*, was born to the *Brownlow* family in 1945, is a child musical prodigy with a younger brother, *Wesley*, who is in to football (soccer).

In 1956, at the age of 11, *Oliver* has joined the *Clarrington House School* choir and has become proficient on an electric rhythm and blues guitar that his parents have bought for him. He gets into trouble with the conservative headmaster for playing rock 'n roll at school. *Wesley*, aged 9, is on a school football team. *Oliver* heads off to the east end of London, and stumbles across a coffee bar called "The '2 i's'" where rock 'n roll is being played. *Oliver* gets up on stage and plays a rocking number, where he is a big hit. He is discovered by the *Artful Bopper*, also a singer and the great-great grandson of the *Artful Dodger*, and *Bill Fagin*, President of *Fagin Records*, who wants to record *Oliver*. Unknown to *Oliver*, *Bill Fagin* is a corrupt and crooked record dealer who bribes radio stations to play *Oliver's* records, a practice then known as 'payola'. When *Oliver* becomes successful, *Bill* keeps two sets of accounting books and steals most of *Oliver's* royalties and lives a lavish lifestyle. *Seth Sykes*, also a crooked teddy boy associate of *Bill's*, is in on the secret of the second set of accounting books. Another boy, *David Freedman*, who plays drums, backs up *Oliver* and becomes his best friend. *Oliver* becomes an overnight success. In 1957, he takes on his professional name of *Rockin' Oliver* and forms a band called the *Twisters*, named in honour of *Oliver Twist*. He has the number one record on the pop charts, with a gold record and a huge sum of money coming in, *Oliver's* father begins to notice his son's royalty cheques shrinking even though his record sales are going higher. He questions *Bill Fagin* and gets vague answers. He is told that *Bill* has set up a trust fund for *Oliver*.

In the summer of 1958, *Oliver* performs at the *Summer Fete* in the *Midlands town*, site of the workhouse, now a ruin. He and *David* stroll through the ruins of the workhouse and meet up with the spirits of *Dick* and *John* who befriend him with an hilarious encounter. *Oliver* performs rock 'n roll afterwards which shocks the little spirits who are exasperated at the money that he has made. *Oliver* has their graves blessed so that they can get to heaven. In 1959, *Dick* and *John* are appointed to watch over *Oliver* and *Wesley*, after the deaths of *Buddy Holly*, the *Big Bopper* and *Ritchie Valens*. However, they are given insight into the future and are foretold of the fall of *Rockin' Oliver's* career and the rise of *Wesley* as a great footballer. *Sebastian* is appointed to watch over the *Artful Bopper*, who has joined *Rockin' Oliver's* group.

Meanwhile, *Oliver's* father, *Philip*, demands to see the accounting books. There are two sets of accounting books and a set of false receipts kept hidden. *Bill* and *Seth* are afraid of it getting found out, so when *Mary*, proprietor of "The '2 i's" coffee bar, warns them about it, he threatens to kill both *Oliver* and *Philip*, if *Philip* goes too far with his enquiries about the situation. *Mary* eventually tells the *Brownlows* about what is going on and *Philip Brownlow* goes to the police. An investigation leads to the arrest of both *Bill* and *Seth* after it is discovered that a trust fund had not existed and that the money had been embezzled. *Oliver* is given what is left of his royalties, which is still a tidy sum, and decides to form his own record company with his father as manager and print his own labels. The *Artful Bopper* becomes the new record producer. The workhouse spirits know that *Rockin' Oliver* would not be able to compete with the new sound of the coming sixties and with the rise of the *Beatles*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| Chapter | Page No. |
|---|----------|
| Chapter 1, The Workhouse, Winter, Mid 1800's | 5 |
| Chapter 2, A Prodigy Is Born, Christmas 1947 | 10 |
| Chapter 3, The Dawn Of The New Elizabethan Age, Coronation Day, June 1953 | 13 |
| Chapter 4, The New Music, November 1956 | 21 |
| Chapter 5, Rock 'n Roll In London, November 1956 | 23 |
| Chapter 6, A First Hit Record, November 1956 | 27 |
| Chapter 7, Top Of The Charts, September 1957 | 30 |
| Chapter 8, Midlands Town Summer Fete, August 1958 | 42 |
| Chapter 9, The End Of An Era, February 1959 | 58 |
| Chapter 10, The Twist, Summer 1960 | 72 |

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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| Axe | Cool term for a Guitar |
| Be-Bop | Early term for rock 'n roll music |
| Cockney | A central London working class accent |
| Dig | Cool term for liking something |
| Geezer | A Cockney term for a stupid person |
| HepCat | A cool with-it person |
| Jam | To perform |
| Jive | A '50's dance, usually done to fast music |
| Mike | Microphone |
| Riff | Guitar solo |
| Rockabilly | A raw, very fast simple rocking music, popular in the 1950's, a type of rock 'n roll |
| Skins | Cool term for a set of Drums |
| Square | Not cool, old-fashioned |
| Tea Leaf | Cockney rhyming slang for thief |
| Teddy Boy | Cool, with-it person, a greaser in a leather jacket |
| Tizer | A British soft drink |
| Toff | A wealthy well-to-do gentleman |
| Toggs | Cockney slang for clothes |
| Torch | Battery-powered flashlight |
| Wireless | Radio |

Chapter 1, Midlands Town Workhouse, Winter, Mid 1800's

It was a cold and snowy evening and the workhouse looked even more gloomy and miserable than usual. In the large stone hall, were seven tables with benches on either side. Three tables were located end to end on either side of the hall and one table was across the back. A large tub of hot gruel was simmering up at the front over a small wood fire. The boys (about seventy of them in total), barefooted and dressed in rags, had just finished their supper of one bowl of gruel. Oliver Twist, Dick, John and Sebastian drew straws to see who will ask for more, Oliver drew the short one, so he got up and walked to the front from the back table and asked for more.

Mr. Bumble, the fat and domineering beadle of the workhouse, immediately dragged poor Oliver off to see the governors, who in turn demanded that Oliver leave the workhouse. Oliver was then locked up in a small room until Mr. Bumble would later take him off to be apprenticed. The other boys remained at their seats, keeping quiet. The governors were absolutely furious that Oliver had asked for more and were determined to squash any possibility of it ever happening again. The boys waited patiently and nervously, not knowing what to expect.

They kept very quiet because they were scared of any consequences. After a short while, Mr. Bumble returned and entered the hall. He walked slowly up between the tables, noticing the frightened look on all of the boys. When he reached the back table, where Oliver had sat, he became very angry. Lying on the table were the straws that had been drawn to determine who would go up to ask for more. Immediately in front was the empty space at the table where Oliver had sat before. On either side were his best friends. On the left was a small dark-haired boy named Dick, who had known Oliver all of his life. On the right was another small boy with bright blond hair who had come to the workhouse recently after his parents had died. His name was John and he looked the most frightened of them all.

Mr. Bumble noticed the straws, took a deep breath, and said "Straws!!! You drew straws!!! You were all in on it, weren't you?!!" He picked up the straws and threw them down on the ground in a rage. Dick turned to Mr. Bumble and said in a quiet voice, "yes sir".

Meanwhile, John started to cry quietly. Mr. Bumble shouted at the boys, "Why?"

"We were hungry, sir" replied Dick.

"That's a poor excuse for greed!" exclaimed Mr. Bumble. "The dietary allows you one bowl and that is that!! I am going to make an example of the boys at this table. From now on until further notice, you will be allowed only half a bowl of gruel and will work an extra two hours per day". He then turned around and addressed the others. "I hope you are all listening, if anyone dares to do something like that again, your ration will be cut in half too".

The boys just stared at Mr. Bumble in amazement and partial disbelief. John turned to Dick and exclaimed "half a bowl and more work! We'll starve to death!" John sobbed and Dick just lowered his head and stared at the table quietly.

Mr. Bumble then returned to the front of the hall and dismissed the boys by banging his mace on the floor. They lined up and marched up the stairs to bed without making a sound. There were mixed feelings of fear and anger over the punishment dealt to the back table. The boys who sat at the other six tables were just relieved that they could still have a full bowl. Dick and John and the other boys at their table were repeatedly caned before they went to bed that night. Dick stared at Oliver's empty bed and began to think that Oliver was the lucky one because he had got out.

The next day was more miserable than usual. Dick and John and the others from their table were made to work the big grain wheel which they stood above and moved with their feet. It ground up the grain to make the gruel. This was the hardest and most tiring job of all. It was made far worse when the work day was extended by two hours and your ration of gruel was cut in half. Dick, who was only a very small boy, became very weak. He begged for water twice, but was at first refused. Secondly, Mr. Bumble obliged him by throwing the contents of the fire bucket at him. Eventually, the lack of food became overwhelming. Dick screamed as he slipped, then lost consciousness and fell from the wheel. His head hit the floor and he died instantly.

The remaining boys on the wheel stopped working immediately after hearing Dick's screams. Someone jumped down and went to get Mr. Bumble. He said, "Mr. Bumble, sir, there has been a terrible accident!"

"What happened?" asked Bumble.

"Dick Swubble has fallen from the grain wheel, sir" replied the boy, trembling with shock.

"Well, get him up again" said Bumble emphatically.

"I can't. He's dead, sir" replied the boy in a low voice.

"Well, Sebastian Arkwright, take Dick out and bury him" stormed Bumble.

Meanwhile, John jumped down from the wheel and upon seeing Dick's lifeless body, he started to cry loudly. John turned to another boy and said "Mr. Bumble did this! He killed Dick! He would be alive if we had not have been put on half rations!! I have now lost both my best friends. Oliver is gone and Dick is dead, and it's Mr. Bumble's fault!!"

John grabbed some shoes and ran out the door. He was so thin, that he managed to fit through the iron bars of the front gate. He walked into town in search of food. He came to the market and found a stall with a lady selling bread and buns. John had no money, but he was starving.

John asked the lady, "excuse me, miss, can I sweep up or mind the stall for a few of them buns, please?"

The lady noticed his rags for clothes and recognised him as a workhouse orphan. She immediately turned on him, saying "you're from the workhouse, aint you? I'll have no workhouse brats hanging around my stall! Now be off with you!" She chased John away with a broomstick, hitting him with it.

John crept quietly back towards the stall. He stared at the baked goods with his mouth watering, and waited for the lady to turn away. He turned his head toward heaven and said in a very quiet voice, "forgive me, Lord, but I'm desperate". He then stole as many buns as he could, stuffing them under his shirt. He managed to get about six of them underneath, then he ran back to the workhouse, before the lady turned around again. He did not get caught. He knew that what he did was wrong, but his hunger was too overwhelming. He stopped and ate one of the buns, scoffing it as quickly as he could, he then squeezed through the workhouse gate and ran through the door. Removing his shoes, he shared the rest of the buns with the other boys from his table, who treated John as a hero.

"Where did you get these?" asked another boy from John's table. His name was Sebastian Arkwright.

"I slipped away into town and got them" replied John proudly.

"I never knew you had any money" exclaimed Sebastian.

"I don't" replied John.

"You mean, you stole them?" asked Sebastian with a worried look on his face.

"Yes" replied John, "so we'd better eat them up quickly before anyone notices". The boys then scoffed the buns as quickly as they could.

However, the boys' little party was very short, Mr. Bumble came in and caught them. He saw John take a bun from under his shirt and give it to another boy. Mr. Bumble pushed his way in and grabbed the bun away from the boy. He then turned on John.

"What are you doing with these?" screamed Bumble furiously.

John would not answer but just looked down at his feet and began to tremble with fear.

"You've been stealing food, haven't you?" demanded Mr. Bumble.

John then replied in a squeaky voice, with tears flowing down his face, "yes sir! I was starving sir".

"What's your name, boy?" asked Mr. Bumble in a voice that could shatter glass.

"Johnny, sir, John Unwin" replied the boy, fearing death.

Mr. Bumble lost his temper and started caning John over and over again. As the boys were removing Dick's body and taking it outside for a burial, Mr. Bumble threw John out the door into the snow to cool off from his hysterical crying. John was thrown barefooted wearing only a thin shirt and trousers into the snow.

"I'll return for you when you calm down! You'll hang for this, boy!" shouted Mr. Bumble, who then turned and locked the door on John.

"Sir! Let me in! I'll freeze out here! I have no shoes or coat! I'll freeze! Let me in!! Please! Please!" His shouts were to no avail. Mr. Bumble had said that he would return for John when the boy had calmed down, but Bumble forgot about him.

The next morning, John's frozen and lifeless body was found on the doorstep by a boy who opened the door to fetch wood in to build a fire to heat up the gruel.

Both Dick and John were buried the following day in paupers' graves in the back of the workhouse, by the rubbish dump. Mr. Sowerberry, the undertaker, built them the cheapest of coffins and very simple prayers were said for them. Their graves only had crosses with no names on them. Even though Dick and John were both dead, they were at last at peace. Miserable workhouse life was at least over for them. During their cheap funerals, Sebastian was asked to say prayers.

"For what we are about to receive, may the Lord make us truly thankful" was all that Sebastian could come up with.

"No that's for supper!" replied Mr. Bumble.

Sebastian tried again, "for health and strength and food to eat, we give thee thanks, Amen".

"No that's for dinner, you stupid boy!" stormed Mr. Bumble. He then removed his cocked hat and said a brief and not very complimentary prayer for the two departed boys. "Lord, forgive these two ungrateful and naughty orphans!" .

Dick's and John's bodies, in cheap crates for coffins, were then thrown into the graves, which were covered over. Dick Swubble and John Unwin were now at rest. Sebastian Arkwright was later apprenticed to Mr. Gamfield, the chimney sweep.

Dick and John's spirits slept for many years, until John's spirit finally woke up a century later. His spirit rose and sat on his grave. He was still wearing the thin shirt and trousers, still barefooted, but he now had chains crossing his chest. Looking around, he could see that there were no longer only two graves, but were now over seventy. All of them were of children who had starved to death in the workhouse after Dick and John's deaths. John's ghost decided to take a walk around and haunt the workhouse, which was now an abandoned ruin. Dick's spirit was still sleeping. Later on, Dick's spirit rose and walked up towards John. He too, had chains crossing his chest. However, both spirits had another chain hanging off their waists which each held a bowl and spoon. Dick's spirit saw John and ran towards him.

"Johnny! Johnny!" yelled the little ghost of Dick

"Oh hallo, Dick! Have you just woken up?" replied the ghost of John.

"Yes, I have had a nice long rest since I died". Dick looked around and then asked, "John, how long have we been asleep?"

"A long, long time" replied John.

"Do you have any idea what year it is?" asked Dick.

"No" replied John. Suddenly, Johnny noticed a newspaper lying on the ground. He went over and picked it up.

"Can you read?" asked Dick, " I can't".

"Yes, I can a little. I know some numbers" replied John.

"Look at the date" said Dick.

"Er, er, it's the fifth of November, why, it's Guy Fawkes Day!" exclaimed John. It was actually November 6th. Bonfire night had been the night before. John had picked up yesterday's newspaper that someone had thrown away, but he didn't know that.

"What year?" asked Dick.

Johnny looked at the paper again "nineteen hundred and fifty-six!" he exclaimed.

"1956!!! Don't you mean 1856?" asked Dick.

"Nope, that's definitely a nine, it's 1956" replied John,

"It's been over a hundred years!!!" exclaimed Dick.

"I have been awake for several years and you should see the strange things I've seen" said John.

"Like what?" asked Dick.

John then stood up and said "Well, carriages without horses and big birds that smash houses with their droppings!" Dick started to laugh really hard.

John pointed up to the sky at an aeroplane and exclaimed, "look! There's one of them big birds, now!"

Dick looked up and became scared "you're right" he exclaimed. He then turned and looked at the ruin of the workhouse. "Look at the workhouse, it's broken apart!" he yelled with delight.

John then said, "yes, it must have closed down a long time ago 'cause there's nobody in there".

The workhouse had been closed and abandoned years before and the building was falling down. It looked like a broken down old ruin; a real eyesore. The two little spirits then sat down on the ground, shook hands and renewed their friendship.

"Just think" said Dick, "we're free! We can go wherever we want and do whatever we want for eternity!"

"Yeah!" replied John, "let's look around and see some more of them strange new-fangled things they've got.

Hey Dick, aint it nice not feeling hungry no more?"

Dick became very pensive and said "yeah right! John, I wonder whatever became of Oliver".

"He was apprenticed to Mr. Sowerberry, the undertaker. I saw him leading a funeral past the workhouse gate. I heard that he ran away from the Sowerberrys" replied John, "but I don't know what became of him after that".

Dick then said "Oliver must be dead by now, so we can find him in the spirit world somewhere. We've got all eternity. I want to find him because I want to speak to him".

"Alright" replied John. The two spirits shook hands again with a big smile and walked off to look for any sign of Oliver and his spirit.

Chapter 2, A Prodigy Is Born, Christmas Day, 1945

Oliver Twist had run off to London and was eventually adopted by the wealthy Brownlow family, who lived in a beautiful Georgian mansion in Bloomsbury in west London. Philip Brownlow was Oliver Twist's great-grandson. Philip served in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War, being stationed at RAF Base Biggin Hill in Kent. He got married in late 1944, and decided not to return to central London, opting to stay in Kent instead. After returning from the war, Philip and his wife Jean, moved to a three storey Victorian house in Foxwood, Kent, a beautiful south-east London suburb in 1945. He now worked in the Government civil service in Whitehall. 1945 was a year of strict food rationing as Britain was coming out of the Second World War. Much of London lay in ruins with bomb sites everywhere. Electricity often went off and people were often cold. Everyone in Britain, rich and poor, got the same rations, so at least everyone had something. However, the country's economy had been hit so hard by the war, that rations were smaller after the war than during. However, the Brownlow family, who were quite wealthy, managed as best they could. They had a beautiful home, which had a painting of Oliver Twist, holding up his bowl asking for more gruel, hanging over the mantelpiece in the lounge. The Brownlows' first child, a boy, had been born on 15 August 1945 at South London General Hospital, so he was now four months old. The baby had been named Oliver Philip Brownlow, after Oliver Twist, his great-great grandfather. Baby Oliver would be a very special child with great things lying ahead for him.

Little did baby Oliver's parents know that as they cuddled and nursed him through infancy, they were in fact holding one of the most famous names amongst the world's singers. They had as much idea as did the parents of Elvis Presley or Buddy Holly, that one day their son would shake his country in his own particular field of interest. Even though this was not to come for another eleven years, the signs of it were beginning in infancy. With tight rationing, Philip and Jean denied themselves so that they could provide baby Oliver with everything he needed. However, Philip managed to buy a chicken on the black market for their Christmas dinner. He paid over a pound for it from a farmer in the country. On Christmas morning, the Brownlow family was sitting in the lounge listening to the wireless. Philip was catching the news. Jean was in the kitchen preparing the black market roast chicken for their dinner to be served promptly at one o'clock. Rose, the housekeeper, was looking after baby Oliver, who was lying in his cot in the lounge. The family would have a drink and listen to King George VI's Christmas message on the wireless. After the news was over, some big band music began to play over the wireless, it was Glenn Miller's *In the Mood*. Jean, who was in the kitchen, shouted to Philip, who was in the lounge, "Phil, turn that down, you'll disturb the baby".

"I don't hear him complaining" replied Philip. "He seems so quiet, maybe he's enjoying it".

"Well, not too loud, I want to put him down for his nap after dinner" said Jean emphatically.

Baby Oliver did not cry or make any noise when Philip had the wireless on, while music was playing. In fact, he enjoyed it. When *In the Mood* was finished, Jean asked Philip to join her in the kitchen. Philip turned off the wireless and headed for the kitchen to prepare the vegetables and open the bottle of wine. All was very quiet in the rest of the house.

"Come and help me in the kitchen, and let the baby rest. I want him to remain quiet while I am preparing the dinner" said Jean.

"Rose will look after him" replied Philip.

"Let's enjoy this peace and quiet for now" exclaimed Jean.

After Philip has turned off the wireless and headed into the kitchen, baby Oliver began to cry very loudly. Rose came over to cuddle him, but he cried on and on.

Jean came out of the kitchen to hold the baby, but he would not stop crying. "He can't be hungry, I've just fed him" she said.

"He's not sick and he doesn't feel hot" said Rose.

Jean rocked the baby in her arms and began to sing to him. Then, he quietened down. After he was quiet, she put him back in his cot and went away. Oliver just started to cry again.

"Something must be wrong with him" exclaimed Philip, "he keeps crying".

"Everybody should keep quiet" said Jean, who began to sing to the baby again. This made him quiet.

Philip then said, "he goes quiet whenever you sing to him, it must be your voice".

"I can't stay out here and sing, I have to get the dinner ready" replied Jean. "Rose, will you look after Oliver?"

"Yes, Mrs. Brownlow" replied Rose.

Jean returned to the kitchen and Rose picked up the baby and began to cuddle him, but he cried on.

"I am going upstairs" exclaimed Philip. He left the room and went up to his study and put the wireless on. Some more big band swing music played. Immediately, baby Oliver stopped crying and Rose put him down in his cot.

All was fine for a while. Philip, thinking that Oliver was now going to remain quiet, turned off the wireless in order to come down to help in the kitchen. Oliver just started to cry again.

"What is the matter with that baby?" demanded Philip, who was getting annoyed.

Rose, thinking heavily, then intervened and said "wait a minute. Have you noticed something?"

"What?" asked Philip.

"It's music." Said Rose.

"What do you mean?" asked Philip again.

"Well, sir, whenever you play music or sing, Oliver remains quiet, but when things are quiet, he cries" explained Rose. "He must have a musical ear".

"I think you're right" said Philip. "By George, I would never have thought of that".

Meanwhile, baby Oliver was crying louder and louder.

"Go and put the wireless on" said Philip.

Rose walked over to the radio and switched it on. Some more swing music came on, and sure enough, Oliver stopped crying and began to smile and giggle, as babies do. Baby Oliver always slept well at night, but was as happy as anything when music was playing.

"It's very strange, sir, but it works" said Rose.

"By Jove" exclaimed Philip happily, "I think we might have a great musician in our family. Look at him, he is smiling and enjoying it. Just think, our baby, Oliver Philip Brownlow, is named after my great grandfather, Oliver Twist. He could end up as famous as Oliver Twist became!"

Jean came out into the lounge, overheard the conversation, "what an odd situation. Well, keep the music on if it keeps him happy, but don't put it on too loudly".

"I have an idea" said Philip. He turned off the wireless and pulled out a phonograph record. Oliver began to cry again. However, when Philip put on a big band music record, Oliver quietened down again and began to smile.

Rose took a look in the cot and said "look at him, he loves it!" Oliver was moving his little arms as though he was swinging to the music. Philip decided to just keep playing records all day for the family's enjoyment as well as to keep baby Oliver quiet. Eventually, Oliver would tire out and go to sleep. The music kept playing all through dinner. After the meal, Philip, turned the record down low and put on the wireless for the King's Christmas message. King George VI spoke slowly with a stutter. Afterwards, the family stood to hear "God Save the King". Philip had to turn the record off for this. By now, it was time for baby Oliver's nap, but he was asleep anyway.

Jean turned to Philip and said "we must keep quiet now, Oliver is asleep. Rose take him upstairs and put him down in his bedroom. Philip, no more records this afternoon until he wakes up".

"Yes dear" replied Philip.

Rose took baby Oliver upstairs and laid him in his crib in his bedroom. He was fast asleep, tired out from his musical enjoyment.

Philip said, "Jean, I wonder what it will be like in a few years when he starts school. Perhaps he will join a choir or play in an orchestra".

"I don't know, we shall have to see" replied Jean.

"Whatever our son is good at, he will have the best that we can give him. I want to send him to Clarington House, that splendid prep school for boys on Oakmount Avenue" exclaimed Philip. Rose remained upstairs with the baby and Mr. and Mrs. Brownlow decided to spend Christmas day relaxing in the lounge. Philip started to read a book and Jean took to her knitting. Philip turned the wireless on again quietly, in case baby Oliver would wake up again soon.

"Jean?" asked Philip, "how about Spain for our next holiday. Since everyone is not allowed to take more than twenty five pounds out of the country, we can use the funds from our account in Gibraltar. We did the south of France last time, and I hear the Costa Brava in Spain is marvellous".

"Oh yes" replied Jean. "We should have enough in the Gibraltar account within a couple of years. A trip to Spain with all that gorgeous sunshine and beautiful beaches would be lovely".

"Spain, it is then!" exclaimed Philip in a content and happy voice.

Chapter 3, The Dawn of The New Elizabethan Age, Coronation Day, June 2, 1953

King George VI had died and the day of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II was a wet one. People were hailing the beginning of a new Elizabethan age. The 1950's were going to be a period of great change for the British people. The Empire was now the Commonwealth, prosperity was returning and misery and poverty were being wiped out. Food rationing was coming to an end and London and other British cities were being rebuilt. The nation was in the mood for a party. The Brownlow family was gathered around the television watching the Coronation. Their street, Foxwood Road, in South London, was beautifully decorated with flags and banners. However, planned street parties had to go inside because of the rain. Little Oliver Brownlow was now seven years old and was only two months away from turning eight. He now had a little brother named Wesley George Brownlow, who was five. Oliver had started school at Clarington House Boys' Preparatory School where he had developed a keen interest in music. Oliver was a very smart-looking boy with bright blond hair and a very happy personality. He loved being around people and was not in the least bit shy. The family had gone on holiday to Spain in 1947, nine months before Wesley was born. Oliver became fascinated in a classical guitar that Philip had bought in Barcelona. Philip could not play it, but it was so beautiful, being hand-made and decorated and shining with a varnish, that he could not resist buying it for a souvenir. The guitar stood in one corner of the lounge in an ornamental fashion as a symbol of their holiday, until the day little Oliver was determined to pick it up and strum it. On Coronation Day in 1953, Oliver did just that. While his parents were entirely concentrating on watching the Coronation on television, and his little brother was playing in a corner, Oliver picked up the guitar, and promptly started to strum the strings. He loved it! He kept on trying to play, but his parents didn't even notice, because the television drowned out the guitar. The Brownlows remained glued to the television as the Archbishop of Canterbury said the Coronation oath:

"Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the Peoples of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the Union of South Africa, Pakistan and Ceylon and of your Possessions and the other Territories to any of them belonging or pertaining, according to their respective laws and customs?"

The Queen responded "I solemnly promise so to do".

Then came the climax when the Crown was placed on the new Queen's head and the new Elizabethan age of fast cars, rock 'n roll music, machines to do everything, television and lots of leisure time had really begun.

Jean Brownlow was so moved that she began to cry.

"What are you crying for?" asked Philip.

"The Coronation is so moving" replied Jean.

"Let's toast our new Queen" said Philip. "Gather round everyone".

Philip opened a bottle of champagne and Jean, Philip and Rose drank the health of the new Queen. Meanwhile Oliver was still trying to play the guitar and Wesley was still playing in the corner. Nobody could hear Oliver because the television was louder than his strumming.

Everyone stood to hear "God save the Queen" as it was played over the television at the Coronation service. When it was over, Philip said "my, I am so glad I got our first television set in time to see the Coronation. Isn't this a wonderful invention? I remember hearing the late King's Coronation on the wireless, but now we get to see everything as well, even though it's in black and white".

"I'm sure they will invent colour televisions some day" said Jean.

"When the children are grown, I'm sure they will" replied Philip.

The parade after the crowning was now showing on the television. Military bands from all over the British Commonwealth were marching past to military music. Philip was enjoying watching it. "I'm going to make us a nice cup of tea" said Jean, who got up and went into the kitchen. Meanwhile, Oliver stopped his strumming on the guitar and started to pick a tune. He heard "God save the Queen" on the television, so he began to pick it on the guitar. It came out perfectly, note for note. Philip turned around and shouted "Oh Oliver! stop making that noise, I'm trying to watch television". He stopped and noticed little Oliver playing the guitar and gazed at him with his mouth wide open, he was lost for words. "Hey! That's very good, Oliver" said Philip.

"Thank you, Daddy" replied Oliver.

"I didn't know you were interested in that guitar" said Philip.

"I like it" exclaimed Oliver. "It's fun!"

"Play that again for your mother" said Philip. "Jean, come out here!" he shouted towards the kitchen.

Jean came out of the kitchen and Oliver picked the national anthem again on the guitar.

"Why that's incredible. Clever boy, Oliver!" exclaimed Jean.

Oliver just smiled and started to strum the guitar again, trying to figure out where to put his little fingers.

Jean suddenly had a bright idea and asked "Oliver? Would you like to have proper guitar lessons?"

"Oh yes please, Mummy" replied Oliver with a huge smile on his face.
Philip then said, "we'll ask your teacher at school if you can have lessons".

"Thank you, Daddy. I'd like that" replied Oliver.

Philip put on the radio and Oliver started to strum the guitar along with the music.

"I think we have a budding musician here" said Philip proudly. "Perhaps he can learn to play like they do in Spain. I never thought someone would actually play that guitar which I only bought as an ornament. Oliver, you can have that guitar and learn to play it properly".

"That's great, Daddy" replied Oliver with an excited look on his face. He was as happy as if it was Christmas. His Dad's guitar was now his. When Oliver returned to Clarington House Prep School, his parents went with him to ask his teacher about music lessons. They went in early and sat down with the Form A teacher as Oliver went outside to meet some of his friends. Two workmen were taking down the portrait of King George VI that hung in the school auditorium and were replacing it with a brand new portrait of Queen Elizabeth II. The King had actually died a year before, but it took the school one full year to finally get a portrait of the new sovereign, which was now being hung.

"Mr. and Mrs. Brownlow, what a delightful surprise. What can I do for you?" asked the teacher.

"My son is becoming interested in music. Where can we get him some lessons?" said Philip.

The teacher perked up and replied, "I'm glad you mentioned that. I was going to call you. We have noticed that young Oliver is very intelligent. He loves music and singing. He does well in his other subjects, but he has a beautiful voice and enjoys music the most. He far excels the other boys in that subject".

Philip then said, "he played the national anthem on a guitar I have, just by hearing it. Imagine that, and he is not even eight years old!"

The teacher then said "It's what I suspected. Mr. and Mrs. Brownlow, I think you have a child prodigy. I will speak to Mr. Church, the music master, about lessons. It was guitar, wasn't it?"

"That's right. We would be so grateful if you could do that. Thank you" replied Philip. The teacher and Oliver's parents shook hands and it was agreed. Oliver was to have guitar lessons after school starting that very day from a special gentleman who worked with gifted children and taught guitar.

Oliver entered the classroom looking smart in his bright red school uniform with white piping, complete with red cap, grey shorts and grey knee socks with red tops. The shield-shaped top pocket crest and the cap crest depicted Saint George and the Dragon. His black shoes shone like mirrors. The Form A teacher then summoned him to her.

"Brownlow, your parents and I have decided to arrange for you to have guitar lessons" the teacher said. "Oh thank you, miss. I like guitar very much" replied Oliver very happily.

"Perhaps, he can try out for the choir in a year or two, also" said the teacher.

"Yes, he's got quite a deep and loud voice" said Jean. "I'm sure he can sing quite well. You should hear him yell from the top of the stairs!"

Philip interjected "he loves listening to the wireless and my records. He enjoys swing and popular music".

Oliver was enjoying all of this attention and praise being heaped on him.

The teacher then said "Oliver has mentioned that he has a younger brother".

"Yes that's right" replied Jean. "That will be Wesley, but he is only five. We don't know what talents he might have yet".

The teacher then turned to Oliver and said, "well, just think, soon you'll be Brownlow I and your brother will be Brownlow II when he comes here. Which house are you in, Brownlow?"

"Raleigh House, miss" said Oliver.

"Well now, Brownlow, you will see Mr. Church after school and he will set you up with some lessons in the study room" said the teacher. She turned to Philip and Jean and said, "I must get ready for class now, Mr. and Mrs. Brownlow, it was a pleasure to meet you". The Big was the school auditorium, complete with a stage.

"Likewise" said Philip. Oliver's parents shook hands with the teacher again and left the school. Oliver took his place at his desk as the bell rang and the other children were coming in. He was all happy and greatly looking forward to his first guitar lesson. Mr. and Mrs. Brownlow just waved goodbye to Oliver as they left, deciding not to kiss him so as not to embarrass him in front of the other boys, who were rushing in. That day, little Oliver Brownlow was put on the path to his future career as a famous musician.

Chapter 4, The New Music, November 1956

Oliver was now eleven years old and his brother Wesley was now nine. The two boys arrived at Clarington House School together, both dressed in their smart bright red uniforms. Oliver (Brownlow I {One} at school) had grown tall and had quite a deep voice. He had become very proficient with his guitar playing since he had been loyally taking lessons for three years. He had also joined the school choir and would sing the solo parts at Christmas. Wesley (Brownlow II {Two} at school) was not as bright as Oliver and had not developed any great talents as his brother had. However, Wesley was very interested in playing football. Both boys had bright blond hair and were tall for their ages. Oliver came to school carrying his guitar over his left shoulder. He had received a second hand electric guitar from his parents for his ninth birthday, the previous August. It was a beautiful red Fender guitar that had a great sound, which he loved. He carried it everywhere he went. 1956 was a year of great changes in music. The big band jazz swing sound of the 1940's had died, and a new and simpler sound, known for the time being as be-bop, was becoming popular. Oliver loved fast rollicking music and was fascinated in the new be-bop sound, which some people were starting to call rock 'n roll. The electric guitar was king with this new music and Oliver Brownlow was obsessed with it. The boys entered the school, Oliver with his guitar over his shoulder, and went to their separate classrooms and took their seats.

Oliver entered his Form 4 classroom and took his seat along with the other boys and put his guitar down next to his desk. His teacher, this year a man, came in and said "Good Morning, boys. Now for another day for Form 4 at Clarington House School."

"Good Morning, sir" replied the boys.

"I hope you have all completed your history essays on famous people from British history" said the teacher.

"Yes sir" replied the boys collectively.

The teacher pointed to a boy in the front row and asked, "Henley, who did you do your essay on?"

"Winston Churchill, sir" replied Henley.

"Oh that must have been easy, he retired only last year" said the teacher. He pointed to another boy,

"Cottrington, who did you do yours on?"

"William the Conqueror, sir" replied Cottrington.

"Excellent" said the teacher. He then signalled to an Indian boy in the class, "Rajeet, who did you do yours on?"

"Robert Clive, sir, the man my school house is named after" replied Rajeet, whose family had recently moved to England from Bombay, India.

"Very good" said the teacher. He then pointed at Oliver. "Brownlow I, how about you?"

Oliver rose up out of his seat and said, "Sir Oliver Twist, sir".

The other boys started laughing after Oliver had said that. Henley turned around and faced Oliver and said "Please sir, I want some more!" in a mocking tone.

The teacher then banged his desk and shouted "Boys! Boys! That will do. Stop laughing! Brownlow I has made an excellent choice. Oliver Twist was a great man".

"But sir?" intervened Cottrington, "What did he do? He didn't lead the country or win any wars for us. All he did was ask for more food in a workhouse. What's so important about that?"

The teacher then said, "Oliver Twist grew up to become a great social reformer. He went into parliament and passed many laws helping the poor, particularly children. He understood what they were going through because he had experienced it himself. He made many changes in British society and started moving things towards the way they are today. He was a social revolutionary in his time. He was eventually knighted. I think that will make an interesting paper. Brownlow I, you and your brother are descended from Oliver Twist, aren't you?"

"Yes sir, he was my great-great grandfather, and I was named after him" replied Oliver.

"Well, I shall look forward to reading your paper, then" said the teacher. He then went over to the world map on the wall and pointed to several countries from east to west with his pointer. "New Zealand, Australia, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, South Africa, Canada and us" He ended by pointing at the British Isles. "These countries are all shown in pink. What does that mean?" He then singled out Oliver, knowing that he was very bright. "Brownlow I?" he then asked.

Oliver stood up and answered, "That's the Empire, sir. I have cousins in both Canada and Australia, sir."

"It's now called the Commonwealth" exclaimed the teacher, "we don't rule these countries any more. Look at how we have just given up the Suez Canal last month". The teacher pointed to the Suez, in Egypt, on the map. "Rajeet comes from India, a Commonwealth country. You boys live in a changing world that will be very different from the one that I knew as a boy. The poverty that I remember in this country is now gone. For history, we are going to discuss generals such as Wellington. Can anyone tell me something about Wellington?"

"He invented Wellies, Wellington boots, didn't he sir?" replied Henley jokingly. The boys began to laugh.

"Don't be funny, Henley. I was referring to the Duke of Wellington and the battle of Waterloo against the French under Napoleon!" exclaimed the teacher angrily. "Now hand in your essays and we will discuss Wellington".

The boys gave in their papers and settled down to their history lesson. At dinner time, the boys marched into the dining hall and received their lunch. Each boy was given a plate of stew with boiled potatoes and a dumpling.

Most of the boys did not like the school stew and grumbled when they got it. They took their seats at the tables in the dining hall. Each place had a red rubber mat, a knife, a fork, a spoon and a glass of water.

The headmaster, Captain Breen, who was a retired navy officer, and the other masters were all seated at the head table and the headmaster rose and gave the grace in Latin, "Benedictus, Benedicat. You may now begin your dinner, boys".

"Amen" replied the boys, who then ate their lunch.

Oliver was one of the few boys who actually liked the stew. After he had finished his plate, he rose and walked up to the cook, who was seated off to the side of the head table with the big pot of stew. "Please

cook, I'd like some more" said Oliver. Suddenly, the dining hall went quiet and all eyes were upon Oliver. After hearing that, some of the boys began to laugh. Others went "yuk!" in disgust.

"Please cook, I'd like some more" repeated Oliver.

The teachers at the head table started to laugh. Here was the great-great grandson of Oliver Twist repeating history. The headmaster, Captain Breen, turned to Oliver and said "Brownlow I, I know you are descended from Oliver Twist, but you don't have to perform it! You know you are allowed a second helping when I announce it".

"Sorry sir" replied Oliver. "I forgot, but I really do like this delicious casserole". The boys laughed even harder

when they heard that. Others repeated "yuk!"

"He actually likes it!" exclaimed Henley out loud.

"Go on, then. Cook, give it to him if he appreciates it" said Captain Breen.

The cook then filled up Oliver's plate again and he happily returned to his seat. Henley was sitting beside him and he turned to Oliver and said "Brownlow I, you actually like this stuff?"

"Oh yes" replied Oliver, "I like the chunks of meat and the thick gravy".

"But the meat's fatty and the gravy's lumpy!" said Henley. "My dog eats better than this. I guess, you won't be joining us at the fish and chip shop on the London Road after choir practice tonight, eh Brownlow I?"

"Yes, I'll still come for fish 'n chips" said Oliver, who concentrated on finishing his second helping of lunch.

The headmaster announced that second helpings were now allowed. However, only the masters asked for some.

Wesley came up to Oliver and said "Oliver, I'm playing football after school, so you'll have to wait for me if you are going to take me home". Wesley spoke with a heavy lisp, so 's' came out as 'th'.

Henley turned to Wesley and said "Brownlow II, your brother has choir tonight, so you can meet him afterwards".

"Thanks!" said Wesley who went back to his place to wait for his pudding.

Henley then turned to Oliver and said "Hurry up and finish, Brownlow I, we want our pudding".

Shortly afterwards, the headmaster announced that pudding was now being served, and unlike the serving of the stew, the boys enthusiastically ran to line up before Cook to get a serving of the spotted dick pudding and custard. After school, Oliver went to choir practice in the gymnasium and sang the solo.

The choir was practising for the upcoming Christmas concert. Oliver was performing the solo singing *Greensleaves* and played an acoustic guitar while the teacher played the piano. Wesley was waiting outside the gymnasium after his football game. Mr. Church, the choirmaster, was pleased with Oliver's performance.

"Very good, very nice rehearsal" said Mr. Church. "Brownlow I, your solo was magnificent".

"Thank you sir" replied Oliver.

"You know, you might think about a career as a professional singer some day, perhaps in a great choir" said Mr. Church.

"Why not popular music?" asked Oliver.

"You mean jazz or swing?" asked Mr. Church.

"Sir, this is 1956 and the be-bop sound is in" exclaimed Oliver.

"Have you heard the rhythms the public is buying today?" asked Mr. Church.

"I can sing this new rock 'n roll, sir" replied Oliver.

"Well, let's hope it's just a fad that will be well and truly gone when you're a man" said Mr. Church.

"We'll see, sir" said Oliver, getting annoyed. Oliver was always full of high energy and had a big appetite.

Mr. Church left the gym and the choir was getting ready to leave. Oliver picked up his electric guitar and plugged it into his amplifier. The boys gathered around and started shouting, "swing it, Oliver!" The boys then went into a large room next to the gym called 'the Big' which had a stage. Oliver then got up on stage with his guitar and amplifier.

Cottrington said, "Mr. Church has left, and that rotten Mr. 'Ubi Where', the Latin master, has left too. So Go for it, Brownlow I" .

Oliver then said sarcastically " Huh! Ubi Where, Ubi, Ooby Dooby!". He then thought for a moment and said "That gives me an idea for a song to do".

Oliver then stepped up to the microphone, which he turned on and sang, while rocking his guitar. Another boy noticed the drums kept for the school orchestra, so he began to play them, keeping the beat for Oliver. Oliver then sang, while playing guitar:

*Hey, baby, jump over here,
When you do the Ooby Dooby , I just got to be near.
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,
Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.
Well, you wiggle to the left, you wiggle to the right.
You do the Ooby Dooby with all of your might.
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,
Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well, you wiggle and you shake, like a big rattlesnake,
You do the Ooby Dooby till you make your heart break.*

*Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,
Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well you've been struttin' so now you know,
How to do the Ooby Dooby, so baby let's go!
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby
Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby, Ooby Dooby,
Dooby do wah, do wah, do wah.*

The boys cheered wildly when Oliver was finished. The headmaster, who was outside, stormed into the room and shouted "Brownlow I, my study, now!!"

"Yes, sir!" replied Oliver. He put down his guitar and went into the headmaster's office. Captain Breen hated modern music and was extremely angry with Oliver. The other boys left to go to the fish and chip shop, but Oliver could not join them.

"I won't have that be-bop rubbish played in my school, is that understood, Brownlow I?" Captain Breen yelled.

"Yes sir" said Oliver in a frightened voice.

"You have a beautiful voice, don't waste it on that jungle music" exclaimed Captain Breen.

"But, sir. I was just having some fun" said Oliver.

"Not in my school!!" yelled the headmaster. "Don't let me catch you doing that again. Next time, you will be forbidden from bringing that instrument to school. I am not having that raucous east end working class noise played in my prep school. Ever! Is this what we fought a war for? Do I make myself clear, Brownlow I?"

"Yes sir" said Oliver with his head down.

"Brownlow I, you are making a mockery of your house, Raleigh House, with your loud music. Why don't you stick to cricket? You are one of our best cricketers. At least your brother shows Wolfe House proudly with his football. I don't think Clive or Drake Houses would appreciate what you are doing either. Now, it's time you went home, Brownlow IT is waiting for you" said Captain Breen, finally in a calm voice.

Oliver left the headmaster's study in tears and Wesley was waiting outside.

"What's the matter, Oliver, why are you crying? Was Captain Breen mean to you?" asked Wesley.

Oliver was a bit shaken and was sobbing. He said "he's just a miserable old goat and a silly old square, who doesn't appreciate music". Oliver then collected his guitar and walked out the door with his little brother.

"I've missed fish 'n chips with the others, so I hope Rose will lay on a good tea for us. One day after school, I'm going to find some coffee bar where rock 'n roll is played all day" said Oliver, as the two boys walked home together to have their tea.

Chapter 5, Rock 'n Roll In London, November 1956

The following Saturday, Oliver and Wesley were finished school by mid-day and their father, Philip, came over to pick the boys up from school. He took Wesley over to Foxwood Park for his football practice. Jean Brownlow was going up into London to visit her sister, the boys' aunt. Oliver decided to go with his mother, preferring to see the sights of central London instead of watching Wesley play football or even to go visit his friends. Philip needed the car for the afternoon, so Jean and Oliver headed for Foxwood Junction station, which was only a short walk from their house at 19 Foxwood Road, and caught the train to Victoria station in central London.

Oliver boarded the train still in his bright red Clarington House school uniform, with his guitar over his shoulder, as he carried it everywhere he went. Soon after they arrived at his aunt's house, who still lived in Bloomsbury, in west London, where the Brownlows had originally lived and where Oliver Twist had come to stay, Oliver asked if he could go out for a while.

"Where do you want to go, Oliver?" said Jean.

"I'm going where my kind of music is played and enjoyed" explained Oliver.

"Well, don't go too far and be back before tea time" said Jean.

"Alright, Mum" replied Oliver, happily.

Oliver then got on a bus headed for the east end of town with his guitar over his shoulder. He went across the city and ended up in a working class district in Aldgate. He entered a coffee bar called "The '2 i's'" where loud rock 'n roll was playing and people were dancing. The place was full of cool tough-looking "teddy boys" in leather jackets. Oliver went inside and a band was playing an Elvis number.

*Well get out of that bed, wash your face and hands
Get out of that bed, wash your face and hands
Well get in that kitchen
Make some noise with the pots and pans
I believe it to my soul you're the devil in nylon hose
I believe it to my soul you're the devil in nylon hose
For the harder [work the faster my money goes
Well [said shake, rattle and roll
I said shake rattle and roll, I said shake, rattle and roll, I said shake rattle and roll
Well you won't do right
To save your doggone soul
Shake rattle and roll*

SAXOPHONE INSTRUMENTAL

*I'm like the one-eyed cat peeping in a seafood store
I'm like the one-eyed cat peeping in a seafood store
Well I can look at you tell you aint no child no more
I believe you're doing me wrong and now I know
I believe you're doing me wrong and now I know
'Cause the harder I work the faster my money goes
Well I said shake, rattle and roll
I said shake rattle and roll, I said shake, rattle and roll, I said shake rattle and roll*

*Well you won't do right
To save your doggone soul
I went over the hill, way down underneath
I went over the hill, way down underneath
You make me roll my eyes
And then you make me grit my teeth
Well I said shake, rattle and roll
I said shake rattle and roll, I said shake, rattle and roll, I said shake rattle and roll
Well you won't do right
To save your doggone soul*

Oliver loved it! He started strumming his guitar in time to the music, though it was not plugged in. After the song was over, everyone cheered and the band took a break. The band leader, a young teenager, said in a thick Cockney accent "We're gonna tyke a little bryke now, so nobody go nowhere". The jukebox was then turned on. A young woman who was serving teas saw Oliver and came up to him, "Allo, what's your name, young fellow?"

"Oliver Brownlow, miss" replied Oliver, tipping his cap to her politely.

One man noticed Oliver's smart school uniform and started laughing at him, "Oh look at the little schoolboy, hasn't he got lovely knees!" he shouted.

"Don't you take no notice of them, Oliver, just 'cause you got manners and they aint" said the lady, comforting Oliver. "My name's Mary, I run this here establishment. Would you like a lemonade or a Tizer?"

"Oh yes, please, I'd like a Tizer" replied Oliver.

Mary went and got Oliver a soft drink, which he gulped down because he was thirsty. He paid her a shilling for the drink. She noticed his guitar and asked him "can you play that thing?"

Oliver then turned to her and said "Yes. I can play be-bop music quite well. May I go up to the microphone and play a song, please? I like the rockabilly style".

"Ooh I dunno" replied Mary, "I don't think this lot will go for a little boy's music".
"Please? I can do it" begged Oliver.

"Well, alright, since the band is on break" replied Mary reluctantly.

"Thanks!" said Oliver with a smile.

Mary came up to the microphone and announced "Can I have everybody's attention please. This little fellow's name is Oliver Brownlow and he'd like to sing for us". Everybody started laughing, but Oliver plugged in his guitar and got ready. Mary lowered the microphone for Oliver to the level of his mouth.

The man who teased Oliver earlier shouted "what he can he play? "Baa-baa black sheep" or "Mary had a little lamb"?!" Everybody continued to laugh.
Another man shouted, "get that kid outa here, put the juke box back on!"

Oliver then said, "my favourite guitarist and singer is Chuck Berry, but I'm still learning to do his songs. So, here's A Johnny Burnette number that's easy for me to play". A boy who was just a bit older than Oliver, jumped on the drums and backed Oliver up with a beat.

Oliver stepped up to the microphone and belted out the song, playing his guitar:

*[Chorus] Well it's a rock-rock rockabilly boogie
A rock-rock rockabilly boogie
A rock-rock rockabilly boogie
A rock-rock rockabilly boogie
A rock-rock rockabilly boogie tonight*

*Well I know a little spot on the edge of town
Where you can really dig 'em up and set 'em down
It's a little place called 'The Hide-away
You do the rockabilly 'till the break of day*

[Chorus]

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well they kick off their shoes, gettin' ready to bop
They're gonna rockabilly wearin' their socks
You wiggle your hip, feel the thrill
So come on little baby do the rockabilly-bill*

[Chorus]

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well there's little ol' Suzie, turnin' seventeen
Well everybody knows her as a rockabilly queen
And there's ol' Slim, as quiet as a mouse
He grabs ol' Suzie, they'll tear up the house*

Oliver included some really heavy fancy guitar riffs during the song that shook the place. Band members with a piano, a rhythm guitar and a bass fiddle all joined in. People started to dance and jive and clap along as Oliver performed. When he was finished, the whole place broke into an enormous cheer for Oliver. Scepticism about his music was over, people were impressed. He had played the rockabilly number perfectly. His deep singing voice made him sound older. It was hard for people to believe that he was only nine years old. Oliver looked at his watch and turned to the microphone and said "I've got to go soon".

As Oliver unplugged his guitar and stepped down off the stage, he was greeted with cheers and hugs. The boy on the drums ran down to meet him. "You were fantastic! absolutely amazing! You're a real hep cat, even in a square uniform. Where d'you learn to play like that? the boy asked in a thick Cockney accent.

"Oh, I just picked it up" replied Oliver modestly.

"You were great!" said the drummer boy. "My name's David Freedman, and I play the skins. If you ever form a band some day, I'd like to keep the beat for you, like I just did".

"Thanks! I'll keep that in mind" said Oliver.

"Ere, do you go to a prep school?" asked David.

"Yes, Clarington House School in Foxwood, Kent" replied Oliver.

"I go to a local comprehensive school. Liverpool Road Secondary" said David who was also in school uniform, which was grey with long trousers and a red and yellow striped tie. It did not look as sharp as Oliver's bright red uniform with its pocket crest, grey shorts and grey socks with red tops.

"Perhaps we can get together on Saturday and jam? I'll be finished school by mid-day" asked Oliver.

"Sunday would be better for me. I am at the synagogue on Saturday afternoons" replied David.

Oliver then said "Oh Shalom! Sunday afternoons then, after church for me".

David was delighted that Oliver had offered him the Jewish greeting and replied, "thanks. Shalom to you too, Sunday afternoons would be perfect".

A boy aged about fifteen then came up to Oliver and said "Cor, you were great! What's your name?"

"My name's Oliver. Oliver Brownlow" he replied.

"I'm John Dawkins. Better known by me professional name, the Artful Bopper" exclaimed the teenager.

"Pleased to meet you, do you play a rock 'n roll instrument?" asked Oliver.

"Ofcourse! A Gibson guitar! I want you to meet someone" replied the Artful Bopper.

"I haven't got time. I must go. I'll come back another day" said Oliver who then left quickly.

The teenage Artful Bopper then went over to a gentleman sitting in the corner. The man asked him "who was that? Who was that amazing little boy who can play the guitar? He is fantastic!"

"His name is Oliver Brownlow, but I don't know where he lives" replied the Bopper.

The man turned to David, the drummer and said "David, follow him and find out where he lives, I want to talk to that boy. Whatever you do, don't lose him!" David ran off and followed Oliver, who was now waiting on the westbound platform of Aldgate Underground Station. David ran and just managed to catch up to Oliver on the platform.

"Hey, Oliver, where do you live?" asked David.

"19 Foxwood Road, in Foxwood, Kent, south-east of London, past where Crystal Palace once stood. It's a one hour train ride from Victoria Station in central London to Foxwood Junction." Oliver then got on the train and headed back to his aunt's house in Bloomsbury, just in time for afternoon tea.

Mary came up to the man in the '2 i's' and asked, "Hey Bill, what do you want to talk to that Brownlow boy for?"

The man was Bill Fagin, President of Fagin Records, he replied "because I want to record him, that kid is going to go somewhere. He can become a star".

Later on, David came running back into the coffee bar with exciting news.

"Bill, Bill, I found out where that Brownlow kid lives" exclaimed David.

"Where?" asked Bill.

"19 Foxwood Road, in Foxwood, Kent, south-east of London" replied David.

"Right, I'm going to pay him a little visit" said Bill.

The next evening, Bill showed up at the Brownlow home in South London and knocked on the door. Rose, the housekeeper, answered it. Bill drove a 1954 Ford Anglia.

"I'd like to speak to Mr. or Mrs. Brownlow please" said Bill.

"Whom shall I say is calling?" asked Rose.

"Bill Fagin, President of Fagin Records in the City" replied Bill.

"Please come in" said Rose who let Bill in.

Philip Brownlow came to the door and greeted Bill who was standing in the front hall of the house. "What can I do for you?" asked Philip.

"I've come about your son, Oliver. Could you get him for a moment, please?" asked Bill.

"Oliver! There's a man who wants to talk to you" shouted Philip.

Meanwhile, Oliver and Wesley were up in their bedroom, listening to the radio and the station was playing Chuck Berry's *Roll Over Beethoven*. Oliver was following Chuck Berry's big 1956 hit song with his guitar very enthusiastically.

Philip later shouted again, much louder "Oliver! Come downstairs. There's a man who wants to talk to you".

Oliver came running down the stairs and greeted Bill, he remembered seeing him at the coffee bar.

"Well" said Bill, removing his hat. "I'm Bill Fagin, President of Fagin Records on Whitechapel Road in Aldgate". He gave Philip one of his business cards. "Look Oliver, I really dig your music and I'd like to record it".

"Oh a record company. Wow! Record me?" exclaimed Oliver, all excited.

"Yes that's right" said Bill. "Yes, you are very talented and I think you're as good as Tommy Steele, that new rock 'n roll singer from the east end. I'd like you to come over on the weekend and we'll do some recording.

We'll certainly start 1957 with a new singing career for you. How about next Sunday afternoon?"

"Woweee! Oh please, can I go, Dad? please, please" said Oliver, anxiously.

"Yes, of course. That's wonderful! Here's my card" said Philip, handing Bill one of his business cards.

"Good" replied Bill, "I will arrange some recording time for Oliver and a backup band for him. I'll see you next Sunday, about two o'clock. You do know the way to get there, don't you?" Bill then asked.

"Of course" replied Philip, "Up past Crystal Place, through Dulwich, Camberwell, right at the Elephant and Castle, over Tower Bridge and then turn right" he continued.

"That's right! See you Sunday" said Bill "Goodbye". He shook hands with Philip and Oliver and then left.

Oliver's rock 'n roll stardom was about to begin. Oliver was so excited that he could not contain himself, but he looked forward to recording some songs. He would practice and practice over the next few months.

Chapter 6, A First Hit Record, November 1956

The next Sunday, after lunch, Oliver's father took him up to the east end of London to Fagin Records in the car. Oliver was dressed neatly in his new suit and carried his guitar. When they got there, they noticed that it was downstairs, in the basement. They descended into the studio and Bill Fagin was waiting for them. Several other musicians were also hanging around. It was a big studio with microphones, a big drum set and recording equipment off to one side.

"Hello Mr. Fagin, Is this your recording studio?" asked Oliver.

"That's right" said Bill. "I work out of the basement. The acoustics are great and the mikes are good. What more do you need? Right, Let's do a few riffs and some vocals and then we'll record a little, okay?"

"Alright then. I'd like to record a Chuck Berry number I heard the other day" exclaimed Oliver happily.

Bill turned to the other musicians and said "meet Oliver Brownlow!" They all exchanged greetings with Oliver.

Oliver then plugged in his guitar and practised with the other musicians. He later recorded two songs with the others backing him up. Oliver always kept lots of guitar picks and spare strings in his pocket just in case. Oliver sang a popular Chuck Berry number, one of his favourite rock 'n roll musicians, into the microphone and played his guitar.

HEAVY GUITAR INTRODUCTION

*Well gonna write a little letter, gonna mail it to my local D.J.
It's a rockin' little record, I want my jockey to play
Roll over Beethoven, I gotta hear it again today
You know my temperature's risin'
And the jukebox's blowin' a fuse
My hearts beatin' rhythm, and my soul keeps singing the blues
Roll over Beethoven, and tell Tchaikovsky the news
I got a rockin' pneumonia
I need a shot of rhythm and blues
I think I got it off the writer
Sittin' down by the rhythm review
Roll over Beethoven, we're rockin' in two by two
Well if you feel you like it*

*Well get your lover and reel and rock it
Roll it over and move on up
Just jump around and reel and rock it
Roll it over, Roll over Beethoven
A rockin' in two by two, oh*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well early in the mornin'
I'm a givin' you the warnin'
Don't you step on my blue suede shoes
Hey dittle dittle, gonna play my fiddle*

*Aint got nothing to lost
Roll over Beethoven, and tell Tchaikovsky the news
You know she winks like a glow worm
Dance like a spinnin' top
She got a crazy partner
Oughta see 'em reel an rock
Long as she's got a dime, the music will never stop
Roll over Beethoven, Roll over Beethoven,
Roll over Beethoven, Roll over Beethoven,
Roll over Beethoven
And dig these rhythm and blues*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL TO END

Bill was recording Oliver on to a big roll of tape. "Fantastic. I think you'll be a hit" said Bill when he was finished. *Rockabilly Boogie*, the song that Oliver had played at the coffee bar, was later recorded for the flip side of the record.

"That kid's amazing!" exclaimed Charlie, the piano player.

Oliver and his father went home after the recording session and Oliver was bubbling over with excitement.

About a week later, after coming home from school, Oliver turned on the wireless, and the disc jockey stated that he was about to play a new hit record. Bill Fagin had sent Oliver's recording to Radio Luxembourg, the only station that played rock 'n roll. Oliver could hardly contain himself with excitement when he heard it.

"Here's a brand new singer making his debut today. From South London in Kent, in the good old U.K., here's little rockin' Oliver Brownlow!" exclaimed the disc jockey. Then Oliver's guitar version of *Roll Over Beethoven* was played on the radio. Oliver jumped and screamed with excitement and Rose ran up and gave him a big hug. "It's you, Oliver! you're on the wireless! Well done! The whole of Europe can hear you!"

Wesley got so excited that he spilled his tea on the floor and screamed "Hey Oliver! It's you!"

Oliver and Wesley ran to Clarington House Boys' School the next day, where all the boys were talking about Oliver's new record. They cheered him and patted him on the back as he arrived at school. One week later, a box arrived at the Brownlow home, addressed to Oliver. It was a box of 45 r.p.m. singles of Oliver's first record, *Roll Over Beethoven* and *Rockabilly Boogie*. Oliver opened the box with extreme delight and gave copies to Rose, his parents and to Wesley. He put one on the mantelpiece, under the portrait of Oliver Twist. Oliver and Wesley arrived at school and Oliver had the box tucked under his arm. He gave copies to his friends, who were so excited for him.

He also signed autographs. The boys cheered Oliver as he entered his Form 4 class. Henley turned to Oliver and said, "Brownlow I, you were great! Brilliant! Just like Elvis! Imagine being recorded when you're only eleven years old! Your records a little expensive, though, selling for five shillings and sixpence each."

"I get a threepenny bit from that five bob and a tanner for each and every record sold. This is only the beginning.

I am just an ordinary schoolboy and I want to stay that way with all of my friends, but I think I was meant for something special. Know what it is?" asked Oliver.

"Rock 'n roll!" exclaimed Henley. Oliver responded by cheering, he was now becoming a star. That evening, the telephone rang at the Brownlow home and it was the disc jockey from Radio Luxembourg.

Rose answered it and immediately called Oliver to the phone. The disc jockey had been playing Oliver's record on the air for one week and he was flooded with calls from people all over Britain wanting to know more about this young singer. Oliver was becoming extremely popular and his record was rising through the pop charts. The disc jockey was going to do an interview with Oliver over the phone, which would be on the air for all to hear.

Oliver was to be today's "mystery guest" on the show. Rose and Wesley were listening to the wireless. The disc jockey announced on the air, "today's mystery guest comes from the County Borough of South London, in Kent,

England, is still in school and has a song heading up the pop charts with a bullet. The first to call in and guess who it is correctly will win a free catered party for up to ten people. Say hello, mystery guest".

"Hello" Oliver replied on the phone.

"I'll give you a clue, today's mystery guest has the same Christian name and something in common with a little boy who asked for more" continued the disc jockey. Immediately, his telephone began ringing. "We have Sally from Halifax, Yorkshire, England on the line. Hello, Sally. Do you know who today's mystery guest is?"

"It's rockin' Oliver Brownlow!" replied the thirteen year old girl in a very excited and heavy Yorkshire accent.

"That's correct. You're our winner. Would you like to speak to Oliver? He's on the line. Guess how old he is" exclaimed the disc jockey.

"Oooh aye! he must be about fourteen" replied the excited girl.

"Hello, Sally, this is Oliver Brownlow in South London, near London. I'm only eleven years old!" said Oliver.

The girl screamed and said "Oh, Oliver, you're the most, you're absolutely champion! You're an absolute dream! You have a grand record". She then realised what Oliver had said. "ELEVEN! You sound so much older and you play the guitar right champion-like!" she exclaimed.

"Thank you!" replied Oliver who had to hold the receiver away from his ear when the girl screamed "I have a deep voice, which has helped me with recording".

The disc jockey then intervened "Well, thank you everybody. That is young Oliver Brownlow with his version of Chuck Berry's *Roll Over Beethoven* and Sally from Halifax, Yorkshire. Goodbye and let's get on with more great hits on Radio Luxembourg!" Oliver rang off and then it dawned on him that he was destined for greatness.

Chapter 7, Top Of The Charts, September 1957

The following year, Oliver's popularity grew and grew. By September of 1957, he had released his first album of songs and was continuing to rise in the pop charts. His first album was called "Rock Around With Oliver".

Oliver had turned twelve years old in August and what better way to celebrate it than the completion of his first L.P. album. Bill Fagin decided that it was time for Oliver to make a television appearance. David Freedman, the boy Oliver had met at The '2 i's', had joined him as his drummer and Charlie the piano player, along with several other musicians from Fagin Records, had joined in with Oliver also. The Artful Bopper, however, continued to sing and record on his own, backed up by a small band also. Bill Fagin decided that Oliver and his band needed a professional name. They had recorded songs from November 1956 to September of the following year as the Oliver Brownlow Band. However, Bill wanted a catchy new stage name for the group before they went on national television. Oliver was also thinking about getting a new guitar. The Oliver Brownlow Band assembled at Fagin Records studio as normal to record some songs when Bill Fagin decided to discuss Oliver's future with him.

"Oliver?" asked Bill.

"Yes" replied Oliver.

"I'd like to discuss something with you" said Bill.

"What's that?" asked Oliver.

"Your professional name. The Oliver Brownlow Band is so deadly dull. Now that you're getting very popular, I think it's time we came up with something new and catchy" replied Bill.

"What do you suggest?" asked Oliver.

"I've been thinking. How about Ollie and the Rockers?" exclaimed Bill.

David, the drummer, began to laugh at that name.

"Ollie!!!" yelled Oliver in disgust. "I will not be called Ollie. My name is Oliver!"

"Well, I've written down some others. How about Shakin' Oliver and the Rockers?" asked Bill.

"That's better. Look, I think it sounds better if you switch it round. Instead of Oliver and the Rockers, How about Rockin' Oliver? After all I am the lead singer" said Oliver.

"Rockin' Oliver! Yes I like that, but it needs something to go at the end for the group. It should be Rockin' Oliver and the ... something" said Bill.

Oliver perked up and said "I've got it. I want to honour my famous ancestor, Oliver Twist. After all, people can relate to him and it would help my image. What do you say to Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters?"

"Heyyy! that's good. I like it. It's very catchy" replied Bill.

"It's settled then. On our next record, put by Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters" said Oliver happily.

"Fine, people will be going around calling you Rockin' Oliver before long" said Bill.

"That's fine, I like it. Rockin' Oliver will be my name from now on" exclaimed Oliver.

"I've got some exciting news for you, Rockin' Oliver. You're all going on national television next week. I've booked a spot on one of the youth programmes for you" said Bill.

"Oh wow! the telly! That's great!" shouted Oliver. The whole group clapped and cheered.

"There's more good news, Oliver. Your first album has sold 100,000 copies and is zooming up the pop charts.

Your singles sell close to a million each, so, I am pleased to present you with this, your first royalty cheque!" said Bill. He then pulled a cheque out from his pocket and gave it to Oliver. It was his first royalty cheque. It was for one thousand pounds.

Oliver looked at the cheque and then gasped "One Thousand pounds!!!! Oh thank you!!!" he screamed.

"A Thousand Quid!!! Cor! What are you going to do with all that money?" asked David, running up to Oliver.

"First, you will all get your share, and then I am going straight to Mr. Jessop's music shop in Foxwood High Street and get a brand new guitar. This one is second-hand and is worn out" replied Oliver.

Oliver's father, who was his manager also, had the cheque cashed and divided up among the band members, but with Oliver getting the largest share, since he sang and played lead guitar. Philip also signed a five-year contract for Oliver with Fagin Records. David, who lived in Hackney in the east end of London, often came down to visit Oliver in South London, and one day, he and Oliver went straight over to James Jessop's music shop in Foxwood to look at some instruments. Oliver saw a beautiful Fender Stratocaster guitar hanging in the window.

All kinds of guitars and saxophones and other instruments were hanging there.

"Hey look at this!" said David, pointing at the very expensive guitar.

"Oh it's beautiful. It's the one I want, but 250 pounds. That's a lot of money" said Oliver, reading the price tag.

The boys went into the shop and Mr. Jessop greeted them.

"Hello Oliver. Come to look at the instruments again?" asked Mr. Jessop.

"I've come to buy this time. You see that brand new 1957 Fender Stratocaster in the window? I want one of those in a child's size please" exclaimed Oliver.

"I don't have a child's size of that guitar" stated Mr. Jessop.

"Can't you have it made?" asked Oliver.

"Well, yes, but it will cost a lot of money" replied Mr. Jessop.

"How much for everything? A custom-made child-size Stratocaster, amplifier and microphone?" asked Oliver.

"Let's see. That would be 350 pounds, ten shillings and nine pence, Oliver" replied Mr. Jessop, figuring it out on paper.

"Done! Here you are!" shouted Oliver. He then pulled over 350 pounds out of one of his socks and slapped it on the desk in front of Mr. Jessop. "I want it ready in one week!" he continued.

Mr. Jessop was flabbergasted, but he heartily agreed, "Yes Oliver, I'll get them on to it right away. Gosh, full payment in advance. I've never had that before!" Mr. Jessop wrote up the order and passed it to someone in the back of his shop. He gave Oliver his change.

"Oliver! You shouldn't carry that much money around with you, you could get robbed!" exclaimed David.

"That's why it's in my sock and not in my wallet. I only keep half a crown in my wallet for sweets and bus fare" replied Oliver. Oliver's father was trustee of Oliver's money until he turned 21, but he gave the boy some of it.

Oliver had new cars bought, a Jaguar for his parents and a Triumph for Rose, and new Raleigh bikes bought for himself and for Wesley. He also surprised Wesley with tickets to a Manchester United vs. Arsenal football match.

"Half a crown in your wallet and four hundred pounds in your socks?!" exclaimed David.

"Yes, but I didn't lose any of it" said Oliver, proudly.

"Just remember to take the money out before you put the socks in the wash! And watch out for the tea leafs!" said David jokingly. The two boys then left the shop and headed back to Oliver's house in Kent. Oliver counted the days until his new guitar would be ready.

Exactly one week later, the telephone rang at the Brownlow residence and Rose answered it. She called Oliver to the phone, since the call was for him and it was the call he had been waiting for. Mr. Jessop was telephoning to let Oliver know that his guitar was ready. David was over at the Brownlows' house playing with Oliver when the call came in. Both boys left in a hurry for Mr. Jessop's shop, which was only a half hour bus ride away.

Oliver and David entered the shop and run up to Mr. Jessop, who was behind the counter.

Mr. Jessop shouted towards the back of the shop "bring out the Brownlow order!" He then turned to Oliver and said "Hello, Oliver. Yes it's ready!"

Oliver's eyes lit up with delight when a worker brought out his new child size Fender Stratocaster electric guitar. What a beautiful sight it was! It had been hand made with a gorgeous red wood finish and a high gloss polish. It shone in the light. The name "OLIVER" has been sewn on the strap in big letters. Another workman brought out the amplifier, microphone, guitar case and all the necessary wires and plugs.

"Cor, It's gorgeous!!!" shouted Oliver as the workman gave him the guitar, which he strapped on. "It even has my name on the strap! It's the most beautiful instrument I've ever seen. Thank you Mr. Jessop".

"My pleasure, Oliver. I thought that your name on the strap would make a nice addition to it. Why don't you plug it in and try it out" said Mr. Jessop.

"Can I?" asked Oliver in a very excited voice.

"Of course!" replied Mr. Jessop.

David noticed a big drum set in the middle of the shop and went over and sat at them. "Can I keep the beat with those skins if Oliver jams his new axe?" asked David.

Mr. Jessop had come to understand the '50's cool talk with many of his young customers, so he replied

"Absolutely". David sat behind the big drum set and Oliver plugged in the guitar. He strummed it a few times and was delighted with its clear high quality of sound. It was much better than his old guitar.

"Let's bop!" exclaimed Oliver. Oliver then played a heavy guitar instrumental.

During the performance of this instrumental piece, people passing the shop heard the music and came in. Recognising Oliver, they clapped, cheered and danced. Others began to browse at the things in the shop. The music was a heavy rockabilly guitar piece with some good riffs, which Oliver played beautifully. When they were finished, Mr. Jessop and some other customers clapped, cheered and asked for autographs.

Then suddenly, something awful happened. Oliver felt faint, and collapsed falling on the floor. The crowd in the shop gasped at the sight of this. Meanwhile David and Mr. Jessop came up to Oliver and loosened his tie and removed his new guitar.

"This kid's burning up, he's got a fever. He's very hot" exclaimed Mr. Jessop.

Mr. Jessop called the Brownlow home and Philip answered. David waited with the unconscious Oliver until Philip arrived. Oliver's father rushed up to him. "We had better get him home and put him to bed. I'll call a doctor to come to the house" said Philip. Oliver was then rushed to the car and taken straight home and put to bed, still unconscious. Rose had put him in his pyjamas. The doctor was called as Oliver slept. Meanwhile David brought the new guitar and equipment to Oliver's house in the car and put them in his room. When Oliver woke up a little later, the doctor and his mother were standing over him. He sat up in bed and the doctor took his temperature.

"Hmm, 104, Mrs. Brownlow. This boy is sick" said the doctor.

"I'll get his father to call Bill Fagin and cancel his bookings for a while and I'll put his brother in the spare room" said Jean.

"Good idea. He has a bad case of the flu. He must stay in bed for at least a week and drink plenty of fluids. Give him some soup, some orange juice and some Lucozade" said the doctor.

"Very good, doctor" replied Jean. Oliver's mother then turned to him and asked "how are you feeling, Oliver dear?"

"Awful. My head hurts, I'm hot and I ache all over" replied Oliver.

"Well, you get some rest and don't think about getting up until you're better. I'll put Wesley in the guest room for now" said Jean.

"Thanks, Mum" said Oliver, gratefully. "Mum, I'm supposed to be going on television next week" he continued.

"Well, you can't, you're too sick, it will just have to wait till you're better" exclaimed Jean.

"Just my luck. I get a really big break and I have to go and get sick" moaned Oliver, extremely disappointed. He fell back on his pillow and rested, feeling very upset.

Meanwhile, Wesley came in and grabbed some clothes, pyjamas and toys and went to sleep in the guest room so as not to catch Oliver's flu. Phone calls and letters started pouring into the Brownlow home from Oliver's fans when they heard that his concerts had been cancelled owing to his sickness. Wesley told everyone at school that Oliver would start recording again later and would soon be on television.

One week later, Oliver was feeling much better, and his temperature was back to normal. He was sitting up in bed reading his comic book. His mother and the doctor came in.

"How are you feeling, young fellow?" asked the doctor.

"Much better now" replied Oliver.

The doctor took his temperature. "Normal" was all he said.

"Oh good" said Jean.

"Now I should go back to school, I suppose" exclaimed Oliver.

"Well, that's something your father and I want to talk to you about" said Jean.

"What's the problem?" asked Oliver.

"We'll discuss it later. Here, I'll put the television on for you" said Jean.

Oliver had bought his own television set with some of his money from his first album and it was in his room between both beds so that both he and Wesley could watch. Jean turned it on. The doctor then told Mrs. Brownlow that Oliver could get up when he wished. Jean saw the doctor to the door. Oliver got up and switched the channels on the television until something caught his eye. It was a performance of Jerry Lee Lewis being given in New York. He was playing his hit record *Whole Lotta Shakin' Gain' On* with his pumping piano sound.

Oliver jumped up and grabbed his guitar and started strumming to it. He loved the song so much that he began jumping on his bed with his guitar in time to the music. When it was over, he cheered loudly. Then Wesley came running into the room.

"Oliver! Oliver! Come and see! Come and see!" shouted Wesley.

"What?" asked Oliver.

"All the things for you. People all over England heard you were sick and sent you lots of presents.

They're in the lounge!" exclaimed Wesley.

Oliver jumped up and ran downstairs, still in his pyjamas, though he put on his dressing gown and slippers. Sure enough, the lounge was filled with gifts and sacks of letters from his fans.

"Wow!! Look at all this!" exclaimed Oliver.

"It's like the next ten Christmases and birthdays all in one" shouted Wesley, all excited. The boys started rummaging through the presents.

"Look at this!" exclaimed Oliver. He saw a beautiful fur-lined guitar case. "Oh yeah!" he shouted as he looked inside it. The boys continued to look and came across a brand new bicycle, which Oliver really liked and then a cricket set, which he was also excited about. "This is amazing" shouted Oliver, as he then found a football.

"Hey Wesley, you like football, you can have this!" said Oliver as he threw the genuine leather ball to Wesley, who caught it.

"Oh gee thanks Oliver!" shouted Wesley as happy as can be.

Oliver then found a huge stuffed teddy bear and said "a teddy bear! I'm a bit old for this!"

"I'll have him!" exclaimed Wesley.

Oliver then gave the teddy bear to Wesley, who gave it a huge hug.

"I'm going to call him Ginger because he's got red fur" said Wesley.

Oliver then started to rummage through the sacks of mail. "How on Earth am I ever going to answer all these letters? There must be thousands of them!" he gasped.

"You've got a lot of fans" said Wesley. At this point, Jean entered the room and helped Oliver to open the sacks of mail. There were about four of them.

"How am I going to answer them all, Mum?" asked Oliver.

"I thought about that, we'll get hundreds of copies of a standard thank you card printed up and send them out, so you don't have to write them all" replied Jean.

"Good idea! I'd be here until the year 2000 if I were to write them all!" exclaimed Oliver.

"Your Dad and I will take care of it, so all you have to do is sign them" said Jean reassuringly.

"Oh Mum, I heard a fantastic song on the telly this afternoon. I want to try it. I'm going to call Mr. Fagin" said Oliver. He didn't have to call because the telephone rang and it was Bill Fagin calling to see how Oliver was feeling. Wesley was still rummaging through the presents to see if there were any more good toys he could ask Oliver for.

"I'll get it!" shouted Oliver as he ran to pick up the phone. Oliver answered the telephone and it was Bill on the other end who asked Oliver how he was feeling and when he would be fit enough to record again.

"Today! I've got a great song I want to try out. I'll get dressed and be over there in half an hour. Call the rest of the group please!" shouted Oliver, on the phone, all excited. Bill agreed and Oliver then hung up

and ran upstairs to get dressed. After he was ready, he ran out the door carrying his guitar and jumped in a taxi and it headed for Aldgate in the east end of London. Oliver had plenty of money to pay the taxi fare.

Jean said as Oliver ran out the front door "Oh Oliver, you only just got up. Are you sure you're well enough to go?"

"I'm fine, Mum. See you later" replied Oliver.

Oliver arrived at Fagin Records and Bill, David and the rest of the band were all there to greet him. They were very happy that he had recovered so they set up, practised and then recorded his own version of Jerry Lee Lewis's *Whole Lotta Shakin' Gain' On*.

Oliver played some heavy guitar rhythms and riffs in the song and Charlie did his best to play like Jerry Lee Lewis. The final product sounded great. When they were finished, Oliver turned to Bill and said "Well, what do you think, Mr. Fagin?"

"Heyy, not bad!! That's going to sell. The kids are going to love it!" exclaimed Bill.

"I know!!" replied Oliver with a huge smile.

Oliver's recording of Jerry Lee Lewis's song was a great success. He performed it at The '2 i's', in the bandstand at Foxwood Park in South London and at a community dance. He was a big hit on Radio Luxembourg with his *Whole Lotta Shakin'*. While being interviewed on the radio, Oliver thanked everyone for the gifts he received while he was sick. He was so popular, that the BBC was thinking of starting a rock 'n roll radio programme. Meanwhile, Charlie was getting much better at playing piano like Jerry Lee Lewis. Wherever Oliver went, he was greeted by screaming girls and autograph seekers. His royalties from the recording increased and he zoomed up the pop charts. By the end of September, 1957, Rockin' Oliver had done it, his version of Jerry Lee Lewis's song reached number one on the pop charts. He was now a national sensation.

Soon after, Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters were booked to go on BBC television for their first national appearance. They all arrived at Broadcasting House in London, wearing tuxedos and carrying their instruments.

Oliver had to get used to wearing long trousers instead of shorts. However, as the band leader, he wore a very smart gold-coloured tuxedo, while the rest wore standard black ones. The group looked very smart in tuxedos and shiny '50's style black and white shoes. Oliver was a bit nervous. While they waited to go on, Oliver strapped his new Stratocaster guitar on and peeped on to the stage, where an audience was anxiously waiting for his performance. A full drum set with "Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters" printed on the big drum was set up on stage. Philip Brownlow, Oliver's father and manager, had made sure that everything was taken care of properly.

Tommy Steele, Britain's first rock'n roller was performing.

*I was in London a short time ago,
I said to my friend, your car's too slow,
He turned round to me and said, you with the fuss,
Go take a ride on a downtown bus!
Rock, rock, rock around the town,
Rock, rock, rock around the town,
Baby, roll, roll, roll around the town,*

*Rock, rock rock around the town,
Everybody's doin' it, London Bridge is falling down!
He got in a monster, it was painted red,
A guy in blue turned to me and said,
His words were followed by quite a stare,
I said what you want? He said I want your fare!
Rock, rock, rock around the town,
Rock, rock, rock around the town,
Baby, roll, roll, roll around the town,
Rock, rock rock around the town,
Everybody's doin' it, London Bridge is falling down!*

SAXOPHONE INSTRUMENTAL

*We went around half the night,
And I can say we saw every sight,
When we came back we looked around,
Well what you know? we're back in London town!*

*Rock, rock, rock around the town,
Rock, rock, rock around the town,
Baby, roll, roll, roll around the town,
Rock, rock rock around the town,
Everybody's doin' it, London Bridge is falling down!*

The crowd cheered loudly for Tommy as he left the stage, he came up to Oliver and wished him luck. Oliver replied by saying "Thanks Tommy, you were great!"

The announcer then came up to the microphone and said "Here he is, our youngest little rock 'n roll sensation! Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters!" The group then came out on stage to a huge cheer from the audience. Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters then sang with some heavy guitar riffs:

*Well, come on over baby, whole lotta shakin' gain' on
I said, come on over baby, baby you can't go wrong,
I aint fakin', we got a whole lotta shakin' gain' on.
I said come on over baby, we got kickin' in the barn,
Come on over baby, baby got the bull by the horn,
Oh yeah!*

*I aint fakin', we got a whole lotta shakin' gain' on.
Yeah, shake it baby, shake it,
I said shake it baby, shake it,
I said shake it baby, shake it,
Yeah, shake it baby, shake it,
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' gain' on.
Let's go!*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well, come on over baby, we got kickin' in the barn,
Whose barn? Not your barn! My barn!*

*Come on over baby, baby got the bull by the horn,
Oh Yeah!
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' gain' on.
Yeah, shake it baby shake it
I said shake it baby, shake it,
I said shake it baby, shake it,
Yeah, shake it baby shake it
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' gain' on.*

*Well, come on over baby, we got kickin' in the barn,
Oh Yeah!
Come on over baby, whole lotta shakin' goin' on,
I aint fakin!
Come on over, we got a whole lotta shakin' goin' on.*

Oliver took a deep bow when they were finished as the audience gave him a tumultuous cheer. He was squinting his eyes because of the bright stage and camera lights. He was broadcasted all over Great Britain. Wesley and the rest of the Brownlow family were proudly gathered around the television at their house, watching Oliver's performance. Friends and relations were all invited over to watch.

When Oliver was done, the announcer shook his hand and the group went backstage to leave. As the curtain closed to prepare for the next performance, the crowd started shouting "We want Oliver!" over and over again. Oliver obliged by coming back and performed his first hit, *She's Got It*. He was at the top of the rock 'n roll charts. Oliver and the group had to be rushed out of the back afterwards into cars to take them home immediately for their own safety as they were being swarmed by screaming fans. They managed to get away quickly.

One evening, back at the Brownlow home in early October, Oliver and Wesley were playing in the lounge when Bill Fagin knocked on the door. Oliver looked out to see who it was and answered the door.

"Hello, Bill! Come in" said Oliver, all excited.

Bill came in and took his hat off, he had a package under his arm. "Hey, Oliver I've got great news for you, please assemble your whole family".

"Mum!, Dad! Rose! Come here please!" shouted Oliver.

"Oliver, I'd like to present you with this" said Bill as he then opened the package and gave Oliver his first gold record. "Congratulations! Your first gold record!" he continued. It was Oliver's recording of *Whole Lotta Shakin'* which was number one on the pop charts.

"Wow!" is all Oliver could say.

"Whole Lotta Shakin' is now the number one song in Britain and Jerry Lee Lewis is planning to visit here next year" said Bill.

"Cor! I hope I can meet him!" shouted Oliver.

Oliver's friend and classmate from Clarington House, a new boy, Peter Allen, came to visit the Brownlows. He was in full school uniform and had struggled to get through a crowd of girls, Oliver's fans, outside in the street. He knocked on the door and Rose answered it, letting Peter in.

Oliver noticed Peter and said, "Hey it's Peter Allen, my friend, the new boy from Clarington House. Hello, Peter!"

"Hello Oliver!" replied Peter, " Cor! I'm lucky to get through the crowd of girls outside!" Peter was straightening his uniform, which was a bit messed up by squeezing through the crowd in the street.

Bill then turned to Oliver to remind him of the business at hand, "Oliver, I've got you booked on a six month tour of eighteen cities starting next week. Your Mum and Dad have agreed with me that you are not to return to school. You will have private lessons at home from now on. You don't have time for regular schooling" said Bill.

Peter then exclaimed, "Captain Breen, the headmaster, says your music is a disruptive influence at school. I've never heard such beastly rot! I'm one of your biggest fans. I've got every one of your records."

"Thanks, Peter. Crikey! I should buy that school and throw Captain Breen out!" shouted Oliver, angrily.

"Now that's enough of that talk, Oliver" exclaimed Jean, "We've arranged for them to send a very good teacher over for your lessons at home between each of your concerts" .

"Oh, can I have home lessons too?" asked Wesley hoping for a positive answer.

"No, you're not a star, you will stay in school" replied Philip. Wesley, disappointed, moaned after that.

"Well at least I won't be Brownlow II any more, just Brownlow from now on" said Wesley, reluctantly.

Suddenly, the telephone rang and Philip answered it. It was the mayor of the Midlands Town, he was calling to book Rockin' Oliver to perform at their summer fete in August of 1958, the following year. They would be putting on a performance of "Oliver Twist" and wanted Rockin' Oliver for the title role as well as for him to sing afterwards. They needed to raise money for a new development and bringing in a big name star would do it. Oliver was booked up for six months, so Philip, who acted as Rockin' Oliver's manager, agreed that Oliver was free to go to Midlands Town in a year's time. Since he was his great-great grandson, Rockin' Oliver had played Oliver Twist in school and community plays so many times that he knew the part perfectly. Even Wesley was starting to learn the part. Rockin' Oliver was booked to go to Oliver Twist's birthplace in Midlands Town to perform both a play and rock 'n roll in August, 1958. Wesley's friends from school often came over to the Brownlow home to play with him. They were all Rockin' Oliver fans and were excited about seeing Oliver's things, such as his guitar and his gold records, More and more children wanted to play with Wesley because he was Rockin' Oliver's brother.

"Oliver, that was the mayor of Midlands Town, Oliver Twist's home town! You are to perform in a play about him next year and then put on a concert. It will be on your next birthday!" said Philip.

"Wow! That's great, Dad! I've played Oliver Twist so many times, it will be a piece of cake! In his home town!"

Wowee!!" exclaimed Oliver. "Come on, Peter, let's go upstairs!" Oliver continued. Oliver, Wesley and Peter went upstairs to the boys' bedroom to play. Peter stayed for tea and went home after dark to avoid the fans.

That night after Oliver and Wesley went to bed, the boys lay awake for a while, all excited. Oliver slept with his guitar as he always did, while Wesley slept with his new giant teddy bear, Ginger. They had two twin beds in the same room with a television between them.

While in bed, Wesley asked "Oliver, does all this fame and fortune scare you?"

"No. I love it, but I want to stay a normal boy as much as possible. I'm the youngest rock 'n roll star ever. Frankie Lymon is thirteen and Ritchie Valens is sixteen. I've got 'em both beat because I'm only twelve!" Oliver said proudly. He thought for a moment, "Wesley, can I ask you something?" Oliver asked.

"Sure" replied Wesley.

"Do you feel a bit, you know, jealous of my success? Be very honest with me" asked Oliver.

"I'm not jealous. You've given me so much money and shared your new toys with me. You gave me my teddy, Ginger, my new bike, and my new football. You're the best brother in the world. I am happy about all your success, you really deserve it, you play guitar real well. I like it because you give me stuff. Besides I don't want to have girls screaming at me all the time like you get" replied Wesley.

Oliver laughed at that and then said "And you're a terrific little brother because we have fun together. It's amazing how we don't fight like most brothers do. Anyway, I want our whole family and my group to share in my success. Besides, I owe it to our ancestor, Oliver Twist, who suffered until he came here".

"Just think, we're going to great-great grandfather Oliver Twist's town next year" said Wesley.

"Yes. I'm looking forward to it" said Oliver.

"So am I. I wonder if the old workhouse is still there and if it's haunted" Wesley continued.

"I dunno. We'll see when we get there. Now let's get some sleep, I'm very tired. Goodnight, Wesley" replied Oliver, yawning.

"Goodnight, Oliver" said Wesley, who turned over and went to sleep, clutching Ginger, his teddy bear.

Meanwhile, down in the front room, Philip Brownlow and Bill Fagin were still talking and having a cup of tea.

"Bill? May I have a word with you?" asked Philip.

"Yes. Certainly" replied Bill.

Philip, with a rather concerned look on his face, enquired "Something puzzles me. I have been looking at Oliver's royalty cheques. His records sales are increasing dramatically, but his royalty cheques are getting smaller. Why is that?"

Bill sat up and quickly answered in a shady way "Expenses have gone up considerably with new equipment and booking tours. Well, Phil, you know about these things. You work in Whitehall, after all".

Philip was not satisfied with Bill's answer, so he asked "Expenses are supposed to be your concern. They don't come out of Oliver's royalties. Besides, they can't have gone up that much. He has the number one record, yet he is making less than he did when he first started with you over a year ago. He got one thousand pounds then and now he only gets five hundred. That doesn't make sense to me".

Bill had to think for a moment and then replied "I have set up a trust fund for Oliver. He gets part of it now and will get the rest later. You must understand, Phil. I have the boy's best interests at heart. If I gave him a lot of money now, he would spend it foolishly. This way, there'll be plenty later on. Trust me, Phil".

"Hmmm! I want to see some records or some statements" Philip then asked.

"Of course!" replied Bill, " I'll let you come in and see the books. My friend Seth Sykes is my accountant. I'll see that you have a word with him".

"I can't understand why you didn't mention this before" Philip then said, still rather confused.

"Don't worry, Phil. Everything is going just fine" reassured Bill.

"I hope so, because if it isn't, I want to know about it. I am the boy's manager as well as his father" replied Philip, getting rather annoyed at Bill's vague answers.

"As it should be. I've got to go now. I have a very busy schedule. Goodbye" exclaimed Bill, as he hurried out the door, as though he was trying to get away from Philip's insistent interrogation.

Philip then thought to himself and then said" Something's not right. Oliver should be making more money with more record sales, not less. Well, Bill must know what he is doing". Philip finished his cup of tea and went upstairs to his bedroom.

Rockin' Oliver now had a gold record and was at the top of the pop charts. But the high point of his life was yet to come the following year in a town about seventy miles north-west of London. One major thing that Oliver's music achieved was that it broke down class barriers and brought people of different social classes to enjoy life together. Toff and Cockney alike were jiving to the rockin' beat of Oliver's swingin' guitar. The membership of the Twisters group proved that. In the following year, 1958, Rockin Oliver was due to meet Jerry Lee Lewis when he visited Britain, however, this was cancelled when the fury over Jerry's marriage to his young cousin broke out. Nevertheless, Oliver did meet Buddy Holly backstage when he played at the London Palladium during a visit to Britain that same year, and Oliver had his photograph taken with Buddy. Rockin' Oliver was very lucky as tragedy was to befall Buddy Holly in the near future. The meeting took place during Oliver's exhausting first tour of eighteen British cities.

Chapter 8, Midlands Town Summer Fete, August 1958

On August 14, 1958, Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters arrived in Midlands town, a city about 70 miles northwest of London. The group came in two cars with a van bringing up the instruments. When they got to the hotel, a huge crowd of screaming kids were there to greet them. The mayor of Midlands town was waiting inside the hotel foyer.

The fete was due to open the next day, which also happened to be Oliver's 13th birthday. Midlands Town area had been drenched with a week of steady rain, but sunshine was promised for August 15th. The play was to be performed in the church hall, but the field in which the outdoor events would be held, such as the races, sales and food, was now very muddy. Cars had to be parked in town and the people had to walk to the event because of the wet conditions. Oliver, Wesley and David had brought casual clothes, jackets and rubber Wellington boots after their parents heard of the steady rain in Midlands Town area, even though London was basking in sunshine. Oliver and David also brought costumes to perform in the play. Jean Brownlow had made an Oliver Twist costume for Rockin' Oliver, based on the clothes in the painting in their house. David was to play one of Fagin's gang.

That evening after they had had their tea and a rest, Rockin' Oliver and David made their way over to the church hall for the rehearsal of "Oliver Twist". When they arrived, they were mobbed by the children in the play, who screamed and asked for autographs. An understudy had carried Oliver's role in the play during previous rehearsals. It was, of course, a dress rehearsal, so Oliver and David arrived wearing their costumes. Oliver's outfit was a good imitation. The rehearsal went very well and Oliver carried the part perfectly. Tickets had been sold out weeks before. Wesley, now nearly eight years old, came along and watched the rehearsal. He was too young to have a part, though he was learning the title role for when Oliver became too old for it. After the rehearsal, the boy who played the Artful Dodger, who was older than Rockin' Oliver, talked with Oliver as they all enjoyed refreshments of tea and currant buns.

"You were great, Rockin' Oliver. You sure know the part well" said the boy actor.

"I should do, I've done it enough times" replied Oliver.

"I have all your records. What are the top rock 'n roll groups in England now?" asked the boy actor.

"The king of rock 'n roll, Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly and Chuck Berry are American, and Tommy Steele and the Steelmen, Cliff Richard and the Shadows, John Lennon and the Quarrymen and Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters are all English" replied Oliver proudly. "the American Jerry Lee Lewis used to be big here, but he's in trouble now. Something to do with his marriage, I think" he continued.

"You know, the real Oliver Twist story started right here in this Midlands town over a hundred years ago" said the boy actor.

"Is there anything left of the old workhouse?" asked Oliver.

"Sort of" replied the actor "it closed down a long time ago, but the ruin still stands today. The council is raising money to pull it down and build shops and houses there. Tomorrow's fete should pay for some of it."

"Hey, I'd like to go see it. After all, my ancestor was there" said Oliver.

"Don't go after dark" exclaimed the actor.

"Why?" asked Oliver.

"They say it's haunted" replied the actor.

"Really?" asked Oliver, getting interested.

"Yes, haunted with the ghosts of children who died there" replied the actor, "and they come out at night. I know someone who has heard them. I also know they don't like loud noise".

David was listening in on this conversation and turned to Oliver and said "do you want to go there at night? I dare you!"

"Alright. You're on!" exclaimed Oliver.

"Be careful" said the boy actor, "I hear it's pretty scary".

"Better still!" exclaimed Oliver.

After the play group left, Oliver and David walked Wesley back to the hotel and put him to bed. Philip and Jean Brownlow were staying at the hotel also. The boy actor from the play gave Oliver directions to get to the ruins of the workhouse. Oliver and David said goodnight to Philip and Jean, then changed into casual clothes and jackets. They sneaked off into the thunder storming night, carrying battery-operated torches (flashlights). They followed the directions closely and came to the workhouse gate, which was hanging off its hinges. The boys entered the property and went inside the building. It was a very creepy place. It was overgrown with weeds and was falling down. They entered the big stone hall where many a gruel supper had been served in the past and noticed the remains of some lettering on the back wall which barely made out GOD IS LOVE. David put his foot on the stairs and it went right through.

"Careful of them stairs" said David, "I put me foot right through, they're not safe".

Oliver stood in the very spot where his ancestor had asked for more gruel and he suddenly got a chill down his spine, "Gosh! I'm standing where my great-great-grandfather said those famous words" he exclaimed.

"What? You mean, please Sir, I want some more?" asked David.

"Yes, that's right" replied Oliver.

The boys shone their torches around and took a look at the ruin.

"Look at this place!" exclaimed David, "What a dump! It looks like a prison!"

"These workhouses were just like prisons" said Oliver. They could hear the rattling of ghostly chains.

"Hey, do you hear something?" asked David, getting scared.

Just as David said that, the spirits of Dick and John, the best friends of Oliver Twist who sat beside him at meals, began to appear. They had haunted the workhouse for a long time and heard this conversation. They pointed at Oliver and whispered to each other because they recognised him. Rockin' Oliver looked exactly like Oliver Twist and they thought that Oliver Twist had returned.

"It's Oliver!" they said to each other. "He's got a friend with him, too" continued John.

Oliver then touched the wall and cut his finger on a piece of glass from a broken window. David saw the two little spirits and got extremely scared.

"Oooooow!" yelled Oliver, shaking his cut finger. He then turned to David and saw the horrified look on his face.

"What's the matter, David? You look like you've seen a ghost!" exclaimed, Oliver.

"Yes, two of them! said David, frightened.

"Oh come off it!" shouted Oliver confidently, "there's no such thing as ghosts!"

David noticed the spirits again and got very scared, "th-then what's that behind you?" he asked.

Oliver turned around and saw the two little spirits, barefooted and dressed in rags and ghostly chains. He let off a blood-curdling scream. "GHOSTS!!! Let's get out of here!" he shouted. The two boys headed for the door quickly.

"No please don't run away. Don't be afraid!" said Dick.

"We're your friends" shouted John.

Oliver and David stopped and turned around. They walked back and took a look at these ghostly visitors, but they were still quite scared.

Dick came up to Oliver and said "John! Oliver's back and look at his toggs! He looks like he's been rich and healthy and he's got no chains! Please, Oliver, put out your candles, they are too bright!"

"What do you mean?" asked Oliver, puzzled.

"He means our torches" said David. Oliver and David put out their torches and could see the spirits by moonlight. They had an angelic aura about them.

"Don't you remember us, Oliver? Dick and John. Your friends in the workhouse?" asked John.

"I don't know what you're talking about!" said Oliver, confused.

Dick reached out and touched Oliver's arm and noticed his cut finger, "blood! he's alive!" he shouted.

"But that can't be" said John, "how can Oliver still be living and still be a boy after a hundred years?"

"Wait a minute!" exclaimed Oliver, "I don't think you know who I am."

"You're Oliver Twist, aint ya?" asked Dick.

David and Oliver burst out laughing, and Oliver then said, "No, of course not! He died over fifty years ago. I'm his great-great grandson, Oliver Brownlow, and this is my best friend David Freedman!"

"Oh!" said Dick, "in life we were Oliver Twist's best friends. I'm the spirit of Dick Swubble and this is the spirit of Johnny Unwin. I'm pleased to meet you."

"You mustn't be afraid of us" said John, "we're just little children, we don't want to scare nobody".

"It's just that we've never seen ghosts before" said Oliver, wrapping a tissue around his cut finger.

"Please don't call us ghosts" said Dick.

"We prefer to be called spirits" said John, "ere Dick, he speaks real good, he's must have had schoolin".

"Everybody goes to school nowadays" said Oliver, observing, "Why do you wear those chains?"

"These are the chains we forged in life. We made them link by link" said Dick.

"Ours are very light. You should see Mr. Bumble's chains. He was the workhouse guardian who starved us to death. His chains are so heavy, his spirit can hardly move" said John.

"That's justice!" exclaimed David "that bloomin' geezer got what was comin' to him!" The spirits agreed.

"I get the feeling that your chains will be light too, Oliver. You have been a good boy" said John.

"I hope so" exclaimed Oliver, "Boy, talking with you will help me with history!"

"Oliver, what are them big birds that smash houses with their droppings?" John continued.

"Big birds? What big birds?" asked Oliver.

"Yes, a few years ago, these big birds flew across the sky and spat at each other. They then dropped stuff and smashed buildings" exclaimed John.

David started to-laugh very hard and said "those are aeroplanes! You're talking about the war! They are like carriages that fly through the air. We were at war and they were dropping bombs!"

Dick and John started to laugh with disbelief.

At that moment, the spirits of the other boys who had sat at the same table with Oliver Twist, Dick and John and whose gruel ration had been cut in half appeared. "Oliver! You're back!" shouted Sebastian, who had a dirty, sooty appearance. "Hey fellahs, look at Oliver's funny clothes and short hair!" he said.

"No, no!" exclaimed Dick, "this is Oliver Brownlow, Oliver Twist's great-great grandson. He's alive! Oliver, this is the spirit of Sebastian Arkwright. Sebastian, I think this Oliver looks very smart!" he continued.

Sebastian wasn't too happy with Oliver because he blamed Oliver Twist for his death, "Oliver Twist's great-great grandson, eh? Oh really!" he said in a sarcastic way. "I want to scare you" he continued.

"Why?" asked Oliver.

"We died because your ancestor asked for more gruel and got us all in to trouble" shouted Sebastian, "Mr. Bumble cut our rations in half and we starved to death! I'm going to haunt you for the rest of your life and scare all your friends away!"

Luke, another workhouse ghost, who had been a very small boy, suddenly exclaimed, "Not all of us! I died from being sick!"

Sebastian replied by shouting at Luke "be quiet, Luke Vilkins!". Luke's spirit started to cry.

Oliver got very angry and shouted back "Listen. Don't blame Oliver Twist and don't take it out on me! Oliver tried to help you and get you more food. He stuck his neck out for you! It's not his fault that the whole thing backfired! Blame Mr. Bubble who sold Oliver Twist for three guineas, like an animal!"

"That's Bumble not Bubble!" said Dick laughing hard.

"Your getting into trouble has got nothing to do with me! That was a hundred years ago!" said Oliver.

"He's got a point there" said John.

"Why are you all dirty?" Oliver asked Sebastian.

"I was 'prenticed to Mr. Gamfield, the chimney sweep, on account of them buns we ate that John stoled. I died cleaning out a flue" replied Sebastian.

"Anyway, don't mess with me" exclaimed Oliver, "because I've got something that will scare you".

"What?" asked Sebastian.

"A Stratocaster" replied Oliver, knowing that Sebastian had no idea what that was.

Puzzled, Sebastian turned to Luke and asked "what did he say?"

Luke replied by guessing, "it sounded like a, er, a sugar caster?"

"A sugar caster? What's that?" asked Sebastian.

"Not a sugar caster, you big twit! A Stratocaster!" yelled Oliver.

"How am I supposed to know what that is?" asked Sebastian, getting very frustrated with Oliver.

"Why don't you come to the fete tomorrow and you'll find out" replied Oliver.

"Alright. I will" shouted Sebastian who then went away, along with the other spirits, leaving only Dick and John with Oliver and David.

"He's just jealous 'cause Oliver Twist got out and we died" said John. "Hey, what year be it now Oliver?"

"It's 1958" replied Oliver. "How come you didn't know about all the things we have now? Didn't you see things come and go all this time? You must have been asleep for the last hundred years".

"We have" said Dick.

"A lot's changed" said David.

"Why have you come here?" asked John.

"To see where my ancestor was born and I am performing tomorrow" said Oliver.

"Where do you live and what do you do?" asked Dick.

"I live on the other side of London and sing and play an instrument and David here is my drummer" replied Oliver.

"Gosh, London! That's a long way away! Whatever became of Oliver Twist?" asked Dick.

"Hey why don't you come to the fete tomorrow. I am playing Oliver Twist in a play about his life at the church hall at one o'clock. Watch it and you'll find out what happened to him. Afterwards, I'll be playing some modern music" replied Oliver. "By the way, I also have a little brother named Wesley; he's almost eight".

"We'll be there!" said Dick. "We now know that Oliver Twist lived, grew up, married and had children."

Oliver and David noticed that it was getting really late, so they said goodbye and left. They walked back to the hotel and sneaked in and went to bed. They were all excited about meeting the spirits and about the upcoming fete. The next day, which was bright and sunny, they went over to the church hall in costume and met up with the spirits of Dick and John again.

"Allo" said Dick, "oh you're dressed like us!"

"Yes" said Oliver, "it's my Oliver Twist costume. My mother made it".

"Hmmm" said Dick, looking at Oliver's costume, "Not bad".

"What do you mean not bad? My mother worked hard on this" replied Oliver.

"It's in too good shape. Oliver Twist dressed like us, our clothes were torn, dirty old rags" said Dick.

John noticed that Oliver was wearing shoes and said "we never got shoes either, except if we had to go outside in the Winter".

"You're trying to look like Oliver Twist? Your hair's too short" said Dick.

"You're too healthy" said John, "And too fat."

"I'm not fat!" exclaimed Oliver, getting angry.

"And much too clean" said Dick.

"It's only a play!" exclaimed Oliver, who was now quite annoyed. "What do I have to do to look exactly like Oliver Twist?" he then asked.

"Don't eat for about two years!" said John jokingly.

"We're only teasing you" exclaimed Dick, "you look fine".

"Come on, Oliver, or we'll be late" said David, looking at the church clock tower.

The two boys and the two spirits went into the church and went backstage for the play. The two spirits sat on the edge of the stage and watched the play. Nobody else could see them. Oliver and David took their places in the play. After the curtain went up, when it came time for the "Please Sir, I want some more" scene, Rockin' Oliver, now playing Oliver Twist, received a huge cheer from his fans in the audience as he walked up on stage with his bowl. His fans obviously knew who he was and were looking forward to his rock 'n roll performance afterwards. The hall was packed with people and the play went very well receiving a tumultuous applause at the end. Dick and John cheered and clapped also.

Wesley was in the audience watching the play and was telling everyone that Oliver was his brother and he was constantly asked for autographs, which he scribbled on bits of paper. He was looking forward to going to the fair afterwards to sample some of the food and take some of the rides.

After the play, the sets were cleared and Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters set up to perform. During the break, Dick and John took a look around. They noticed the instruments being brought out.

"Look at them drums" said John, pointing at the drum kit.

"Maybe they're going to play a marching song!" said Dick. He then noticed the microphone at the front of the stage and exclaimed "I wonder what this thing is?"

John thought and then replied "perhaps it's a lamp, but I wonder how you light it. I can't see the candle!"

Dick noticed Oliver's Fender Stratocaster electric guitar and pointed to it, "What's this?" he asked.

"It's some kind of musical instrument" said John.

"I know that" exclaimed Dick, "but what a strange looking thing. I've never seen an instrument with horns before! "

"What can it be?" asked John.

"It must be a fiddle" exclaimed Dick who picked the guitar up and held it up to his shoulder like a violin.

"It can't be, it's too big" said John.

"Maybe they play it this way" exclaimed Dick, holding it upright like a cello and making moves as though he was holding a bow.

"But there's no bow" said John. "I think I know what it is".

"What?" asked Dick.

"I remember seeing a Spanish instrument called a er. ... a guitar" said John, "you hold it like this". John then picked up the guitar and held it properly and then strummed it. It was not plugged in. "It don't make much sound!" he exclaimed. The instrument was very quiet unplugged.

"Well, maybe they play quiet music" said Dick.

Hey! there's writing on it" said John, noticing Oliver's name on the strap. "It says Oliver".

"It must be that sugar caster that Oliver was talking about" said Dick. "It's his instrument".

At that moment, Oliver noticed the two spirits and came over to them.

"Allo. How do you like the show?" asked Oliver.

"Fine" exclaimed Dick. "Now we know what happened to Oliver Twist. He got 'prenticed to Mr. Sowerberry, ran off to London, got in with a gang of thieves, got caught, got taken in by this nice old gentleman, Mr. Brownlow."

"He was Oliver Twist's grandfather, and my great-great-great-great-grandfather" interrupted Oliver.

Dick then continued, "he got taken back by the thieves and then returned to Mr. Brownlow to stay".

"Oliver Twist went into parliament when he grew up. He later became a colonial governor. It's said that when he was asked if he wanted to be Governor of Tonga, he replied by saying 'please sir, I want Samoa!' And here I am four generations later" said Oliver happily.

"Gosh. Oliver Twist was so lucky. Imagine ending up in a rich family!" exclaimed Dick.

"While the rest of us died from half rations 'cause of Mr. Bumble!" shouted John.

"You should stick around and hear some of my modern music" he continued. "Professionally, I'm called 'Rockin' Oliver' for what I play".

"I remember at Christmas when we were alive" began Dick, "people used to dance in the street to the fiddle and the hurdy-gurdy. It was a jolly affair. Mr. and Mrs. Bumble and the Governors would go out and join them, but we boys weren't allowed, we could only watch from the gate" he reminisced.

"What did you have for Christmas dinner?" asked Oliver.

"We got a piece of bread with our usual bowl of gruel" replied John "and it was often stale".

"What? A piece of bread for Christmas?" exclaimed Oliver, shocked. "I have turkey and ham and pudding and mince pies" he continued.

"Oh stop!" said Dick, "we couldn't even imagine that!"

"I'm on in a minute. Gotta go now, bye" said Oliver.

Oliver left and changed into his tuxedo and got ready to rock 'n roll. Suddenly, his father asked him "Oliver, who were you talking to?" Philip could not see the two little spirits, "You shouldn't talk to yourself, you know" he continued.

"Two people over there" said Oliver pointing to the spirits.

"But there's nobody there!" said Philip, "Are you sure you're feeling alright?"

"Oh they must have left. Oh never mind" exclaimed Oliver.

"Oliver, only children can see us" explained John, "we don't appear to grown ups; we don't like 'em".

Sebastian, the chimney sweep spirit, and the other orphan spirits showed up and joined Dick and John.

Dick noticed Oliver's smart gold tuxedo and exclaimed "cor, look at Oliver's beautiful suit!". All the little spirits gasped in amazement at Oliver who looked so smart and clean.

"Hey fellahs, What's Oliver doing? And what's that thing he's holding?" asked Sebastian, laughing.

"That's his instrument he's going to play, but it don't make no sound!" said Dick.

Sebastian started to laugh "Ooohh, I've got to see this!" he exclaimed.

"Well, I feel sorry for him" said John, "he will be so 'barrassed in front of all them people".

"Serves him right" said Sebastian"

"Shhh" exclaimed Dick, "he's getting ready to play that quiet music now", pointing to Oliver who had strapped on his guitar. Oliver would be able to play his guitar perfectly, even with his bandaged finger.

As the crowd of workhouse ghosts gathered at the side of the stage, Sebastian turned to Luke and exclaimed

"stop shoving!"

"Stop rattling your chains" Luke replied.

Meanwhile, Wesley went out to the muddy field, which held the fete activities. He found a huge mud puddle and proceeded to wallow in it. "Oh yeah! mud!" exclaimed Wesley, who pushed his Wellington boots he was wearing deeper into the mud. Wesley loved his new black Wellingtons and he loved sinking them into deep, gooey mud. He was having fun, just being a dirty boy. It was a sunny day, but the activities field was very muddy from the rain, which made it more fun for Wesley.

Back at the church hall, the mayor came out and announced "now ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, here he is, a great-great grandson of Oliver Twist, that little fellow from London with the rockin' guitar, Rockin' Oliver!" the young people in the crowd cheered wildly. Oliver plugged his guitar into the large amplifier and noticed the little spirits on the side of the stage. Sebastian was standing right in front of the big speaker. Oliver was going to teach him a lesson, so he turned his guitar up full blast. He then showed off playing a very loud blast of rock 'n roll:

Oliver started by introducing the song, "here's a new one just hit the charts last month from Ritchie Valens, a young fellow like me!" he shouted into the microphone.

HEAVY AND VERY LOUD GUITAR INTRODUCTION

Well Come on let's go let's go let's go little darlin'
Tell me that you'll never leave me

Come on Come on let's go again and again and again
Well.... Now swing me swing me swing me way darling

Come on let's go little darlin'
Let's go let's go again once more

Well..... I love you so yeah and I'll never let you go
Come along baby soon

Oh pretty baby I love you so WELL.....
Let's go let's go let's go little sweet heart
Now that we can always be together

Come on come on let's go again
Let's go!

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

I love you so yeah and I'll never let you go
Come along baby soon
Oh pretty baby I love you so WELL.....

Come on let's go let's go let's go little darlin'
Tell me that you'll never leave me

Come on Come on let's go and again and again and again
Come on Let's go and do it again and again and again and again
and again and again and again
Come on let's go and do it again

The spirits immediately covered their ears from the loud guitar riffs and looked at Oliver and each other in puzzlement. Sebastian started howling that it was too loud. Oliver was loving it! He had both the physical and spiritual worlds watching him. At the end of the song, the spirits all ran away screaming, making a huge crash from knocking over dustbins and milk bottles. Dick and John stayed and laughed hard at the spirits running away. The crowd then demanded "We want more! We want more!" over and over again.

"That's the first time anybody's ever asked me for more" exclaimed Oliver jokingly.

Dick and John heard that and started to laugh. Oliver then announced "My next song is dedicated to a little spirit I met last night while I was walking through the ruin of the old workhouse. It has his name in it. Here's a new one from Chuck Berry!"

He said to the band "this is an R&B, watch me for the changes and try to keep up". He played a heavy riff.

GUITAR INTRODUCTION

*Deep down in Louisiana, close to New Orleans,
Back up in the woods, upon the Evergreens,
There stood a log cabin, made of earth and wood,*

*Where there lived a country boy named Johnny B. Goode,
Who never ever learned to read or write so well,
But he could play the guitar like he's ringing a bell. Go Go!*

*Go Johnny Go Go Go!
Go Johnny Go Go!
Go Johnny Go Go!
Go Johnny Go Go Go!
Johnny B. Goode!*

*He used to carry his guitar in a gunny sack,
Sat beneath the tree, by the railway track,
O! engineer would see him sittin' in the shade,
Strummin' with the rhythm that the drivers' made,
People passing by they're gonna stop and say,
Oh my, but that little country boy can play. Go Go!*

*Go Johnny Go Go Go!
Go Johnny Go Go!
Go Johnny Go Go!
Go Johnny Go Go Go!
Johnny B. Goode!*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*His mother told him some day you will be a man,
You will be the leader of a big O! band,
Many people comin' down from miles around,
Hear you play your music when the sun goes down.
Maybe some day your name will be in lights,
Sayin' Johnny B. Goode tonight. Go Go!*

*Go Johnny Go! Go Go
Go Johnny Go! Go Go
Go Johnny Go! Go Go
Go Johnny Go! Go
Johnny B. Goode!*

*Dick had fallen and got real sick,
So Johnny ran out of the workhouse real quick,
Well he stole some buns that he took home,
To all of his friends, who were all alone,
Mr. Bumble caught him and threw him out,
So now the other boys just sing and shout Go Go!
Go Johnny Go! Go Go*

*Go Johnny Go! Go Go
Go Johnny Go! Go Go
Go Johnny Go! Go
Johnny B. Goode!*

Rockin' Oliver began to really show off with his guitar, doing the Chuck Berry duckwalk and jumps and moves. Dick patted John on the back and John smiled, thinking that *Johnny B. Goode* had been written and was being sung for him. When Oliver was finally finished, he got an enormous standing ovation and even Dick and John cheered. The mayor then came out and went up to the microphone "Rockin' Oliver, we have a surprise for you" he summoned a lady holding a cake to come forward. The lady brought in a huge chocolate cake with thirteen burning candles and everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to Rockin' Oliver. Oliver was so touched by this kind gesture.

"It's Rockin' Oliver's birthday today" said the mayor, "how old are you?"

"Thirteen, sir" replied Oliver, who then blew out the candles, "I was born at the end of the war. Gosh! I'm a teenager now!"

"This is just a thank you from the people of this Midlands town for coming to see us today" said the mayor.

"Oh thank you" said Oliver, blushing, but deeply touched. The cake was then shared among the rock 'n roll group and guests, after the curtain closed.

Later, Oliver went over to Dick and John who wished him a happy birthday.

"What was that funny music?" asked Dick, "You certainly scared Sebastian and the others away with it!"

"Rock 'n roll. Today's music" replied Oliver, "my style is called rockabilly".

"Thanks for that Johnny song, Oliver. By the way, I am good. But why does it have to be so loud?" asked John, who then pushed Dick saying, "Quiet music indeed! It was so loud, it nearly blew me ears off!"

"I didn't know Oliver had a magic box that could make it loud!" protested Dick.

"That's an amplifier and loud is the way people like it!" replied Oliver.

"Rock 'n roll? What a strange idea naming some music after a stone and a lump of bread!" exclaimed Dick, "Say Oliver? Do you get paid when you play that stuff?" he then asked.

"Oh yes" replied Oliver.

John then said, "the fiddleman and the hurdy-gurdy lady got tuppence ha'penny for playing at Christmas in our time. I'm sure this Oliver gets more than that, things cost more now. He must get about a shilling".

"More like half a crown, I'd say" said Dick.

"Oh , I get quite a bit more than that!" said Oliver, starting to laugh.

"five shillings?" guessed Dick.

"ten shillings?" guessed John.

"Keep going" said Oliver, giggling.

"fifteen shillings?" guessed Dick again.

"More" said Oliver, laughing out loud.

"A pound!" said Dick in amazement.

"A guinea!" exclaimed John.

"Any more than that and you must be very rich" exclaimed Dick.

"Brace yourselves, spirits" started Oliver after he calmed down from laughing. "I get two hundred pounds every time I perform. I make over a thousand pounds a week".

"TWO HUNDRED POUNDS! OVER A THOUSAND A WEEK!" shouted Dick and John in total shock.

"That's a fortune! Just for one or two songs?" exclaimed Dick.

"And that's not counting royalties from my records, either" said Oliver.

"Oh, he's just joking, nobody gets that much" said John.

"Just look at my wallet!" said Oliver. He then flashed hundreds of pounds in his wallet in front of the two spirits who looked in total astonishment.

"You're right! Things have changed" exclaimed John, "in life, we never had two pennies to rub together".

"You'll never have to worry about ending up in the workhouse!" exclaimed Dick.

"We don't have workhouses any more" said Oliver proudly, "thanks to the great work of Oliver Twist, child labour's now against the law! People get money, help and kindness and all children go to school! And we don't send boys up to clean out chimneys any more, either! Anyway, I have a family."

Dick then asked "well, where do they put orphans, then?"

"They have nice homes for them and they try to find parents for them" Oliver replied proudly.

Dick then said "Cor, they're lucky, we were worked to death, fed worse than dogs, and beaten!"

John exclaimed "I wish we could have some of that money you got, Oliver!"

"What good would it do us?" said Dick emphatically, "we're dead! Remember?"

John, rather embarrassed, then said "Oh yes, I forgot!"

David then noticed Oliver and shouted to him "Hey Oliver, don't forget they have a big meal for all of us tonight, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding with roast potatoes and blackberry tart with fresh cream for afters! They've even got kosher food for me."

Dick and John fell to their knees. "Oh please don't talk about food, you're torturing us!" exclaimed Dick.

"You are soooooo lucky, Oliver" exclaimed John.

"Sorry about that" said Oliver, "I know all you had was gruel that was like boiled wallpaper paste. It must hurt you to hear about my dinner! Roast beef! Food, glorious food!"

"That's alright. Oliver, can you do us a favour, please?" asked Dick.

"What's that?" asked Oliver.

"Get a vicar to come and bless our graves so we can go to heaven" explained Dick. "We were buried in a hurry in unholy ground, so we can't get to heaven. You could do it for us."

"Sure" said Oliver, "I'd be glad to".

"Oh thank you" both spirits said. "It's like heaven right here with the way things are now! But I'd like to see my ma and pa again" said John.

"But we should go where we belong! exclaimed Dick, "Oliver, we're buried behind the ruin of the workhouse by the rubbish dump in a small plot with crosses but no names". The two spirits then left.

Meanwhile, Oliver noticed Wesley who was covered with mud. "What happened?" asked Oliver.

Wesley lied "I was playing football with some bigger boys and they pushed me into the mud".

"You play football in your Wellies, do you, Wesley?" said Oliver, disbelievingly. He knew his brother was lying. He had been playing in the mud and got carried away. Wesley just laughed at that.

"Can we join you?" asked Oliver, "I want some time to play and be a normal boy and I love getting dirty and I want to try out my new Wellies".

"Sure" said Wesley, "I'm making mud pies". Wesley still spoke with a heavy lisp, so 's' came out as 'th'.

"See you in a minute" said Oliver, all excited. Oliver and David ran back to the hotel and changed into casual clothes and put on Wellington boots. Oliver also put his guitar away. He and David later returned and joined Wesley in the mud, wallowing in it and throwing it at each other. They were having a great time. Oliver had been under so much pressure with concerts and recording, that he needed some play time. Oliver usually spent his play time playing cricket, which he enjoyed very much, but he liked the mud also. A while later, the three boys, who were now very dirty, but as happy as ever, realised that they had better get ready for the big roast beef dinner.

"We'd better get back to the hotel and clean up before Mum sees us" said Oliver.

Oliver saw the church vicar and asked him if he could see him in the evening after dinner. The vicar agreed. Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters returned to the hotel to wash and change. The boys all took baths before supper and put on clean clothes. Oliver would get his birthday presents upon the return to South London. He changed into his grey suit for the dinner and David put on his blue suit and wore his Jewish kippah (skull cap) as he had kosher food. The dinner was a grand affair with Rockin' Oliver as the guest of honour. After the meal, Oliver asked the vicar to perform the blessing of Dick's and John's graves, of which the vicar knew nothing, but readily agreed. The vicar then drove Oliver and David to the workhouse site. They found the graves in the back and the vicar proceeded to bless them, "I bless this ground and those who are buried here in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen." said the vicar.

David, who was standing beside Oliver and still wearing his kippah, then said a Jewish blessing in Hebrew "Baruch haba bashem Adonai" .

"What does that mean?" enquired Oliver.

"Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord. It is a very powerful Hebrew blessing" replied David.

Immediately after the two blessings, Dick and John's chains fell off. They were free at last. They thanked Oliver and David and then left for heaven, knowing now that they would be able to enter. Rockin' Oliver and David returned to the hotel and were met by the mayor.

"Rockin' Oliver. It's been a pleasure. Many happy returns" said the mayor.

"Why thank you, sir" replied Oliver.

The mayor's wife then interjected, "are you sure you want to keep singing that loud rock 'n roll? I heard it corrupts our youth and leads to impure thoughts. Couldn't you try some calmer music?"

"Well, Ma'am, I serve God, I sing and shout and make people happy. It's just the way I sing. It hasn't corrupted me. I still go to church every Sunday and I donate money to charity" replied Oliver.

"Well, Rockin' Oliver, thanks to you we raised a lot of money. We are just five thousand pounds short of having enough money to pull down the ruin of the old workhouse and build some new houses and shops to be called South Midlands New Town" said the mayor.

"Five thousand short, eh?" asked Oliver. "Tell you what, I'll give you my two hundred pounds I get for singing and performing and I'll give you the other five thousand you need. I've got over a million in the bank and my Dad can write a cheque out for you. Oliver turned to his Dad and asked him for a cheque, so Philip gladly filled one out and gave it to the mayor on behalf of Oliver.

"There you are, Mr. Mayor, from my personal bank account." said Oliver proudly. "Anything to take down that old workhouse in honour of my ancestor and his friends".

"Oh thank you, Rockin' Oliver, you are so kind. We will name two of the streets in the new development as Oliver Twist Street and Brownlow Road. Workhouse Lane will keep its name for historical reasons, though" said the mayor. He then turned to his wife and said "see dear, his music hasn't corrupted him!"

Bill Fagin comes out of the hotel with another man and comes up to Oliver, "Lovely show, Oliver! Well done.

I'd like you to meet someone. This is my friend Seth Sykes. He's my business partner and keeps the books for me",

"Oh. How do you do, Seth?" says Oliver, introducing himself politely.

Seth is a rather nasty rough individual dressed as a Teddy Boy, who just sneers at Oliver "Allo! I hear your Dad's been asking a lot of questions about the accounts".

Oliver is a little taken back and replies "I don't know anything about it. Ask him. All I know is that I've been getting my money and that there have been a lot of expenses".

Seth gets very angry and shouts at Oliver "Well, if he has a problem with it. He'd better see me. There aint nothing wrong with my set of books. If anyone accuses me of doing anything I'm not supposed to, I settle them. Do you understand?"

"Yes" replied Oliver, getting very scared.

Seth then said "Just keep your old man's nose out of my business".

"Of course" replied Oliver, shaking.

Bill then tried to comfort everyone and said "We had all better get back to London because we've got more shows to do"

Oliver, rather surprised at this altercation, just laughed it off and got into the car, with David and the other Twisters, who then left for the other side of London for Oliver's birthday party in Kent with his family, his singing group and his friends. Rock 'n roll had received some fairly bad press from opponents, but it had not corrupted Rockin' Oliver who was still the innocent, kind and fun-loving boy he had always been. This was used as an example by promoters of rock 'n roll in Britain.

Chapter 9, The End Of An Era, February 1959

February 1959 was a time of tragedy for rock 'n roll as three great stars had died in a plane crash. The sudden deaths of Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens and the Big Bopper in America had a profound effect on Rockin' Oliver and the Artful Bopper, who had become very close friends. Shortly after performing in Paris, France, Rockin' Oliver met the Artful Bopper at Fagin Records to record some songs. By now, Rockin' Oliver's career was at its peak, but the Artful Bopper was falling behind. Rock 'n roll, which had suffered some very bad press, was growing with popularity amongst young people and new bands were forming all the time. Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters and the Artful Bopper were getting ready to go on to record.

The Artful Bopper then came up to Rockin' Oliver and said "Say, Oliver, aint that awful about Buddy Holly and the others? Gettin' killed like that! February 3, 1959 was a sad day for rock 'n roll"

"Yes" replied Oliver, "I have most of Buddy's records, it was a terrible thing".

"Oliver, would you like to sing together?" asked the Bopper.

"Yes, sure" replied Oliver.

"Well, let's do a song and dedicate it to remembering Buddy, Ritchie and the Big Bopper" said the Artful Bopper.

The boys were about to do their first recording together.

"Good idea!" exclaimed Oliver, "In fact, I am looking for another voice for our group, a deep bass voice".

"Well then, look no further" replied the Bopper, "I can help you with that".

"Great" said Oliver, "but don't you have your own group?"

"No" replied the Bopper, "I sing on me own, but I have the musicians here back me up. I can play rhythm guitar, but I can't play the fancy lead riffs that you can".

"Hey, Perfect!" shouted Oliver, "you need a lead guitarist and I need a bass singer! Why don't we join up?"

"That'd be great" replied the Bopper who knew that joining the Twisters meant that he could now share in Oliver's huge profits from his appearances and his records.

"Rockin' Oliver, the Artful Bopper and the Twisters would be an awfully long name" said Oliver, "we'll just call ourselves the Twisters".

"Oliver, why do you call your group the Twisters? Is it a gimmick on Oliver Twist?" asked the Bopper.

"Yes. I am descended from Oliver Twist, he was my great-great grandfather" replied Oliver, "I am honouring him".

"Why the Artful Dodger was my great-great grandfather!!" exclaimed the Bopper all excited.

"Hey that's perfect. Then we were meant to sing together" said Oliver. "Is Bill Fagin descended from Bob Fagin, then?"

"No, it's just a coincidence" said the Bopper, laughing, "there's far more money now in music than stealing!"

"Oohh Not half!" exclaimed Oliver, "so Artful Bopper, consider yourself one of us".

"Thanks" replied the Bopper, he paused and then said "say that again, Oliver".

"I said consider yourself one of us" replied Oliver.

"Hmmm, that's sounds really catchy. I have a friend down the east end who is a songwriter, I should mention that to him. You know, Oliver, it's fine for us to keep singing the hits of the day, but we really should start writing some of our own songs" said the Bopper.

"I haven't been able to do that yet, but if you have any ideas, rd like to hear them" said Oliver.

Meanwhile, Bill Fagin interjected, "boys, time is pressing on, are we recording today?"

"Yes" replied Oliver, "we would like to sing together a song to remember Buddy Holly".

"Alright" said Bill, who set up a roll of recording tape.

Oliver then sang a Buddy Holly song:

GUITAR INTRODUCTION

*Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,
That'll be the day when you make me cry,
You say you're gonna leave me, you know it's a lie,
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.*

*You give me all your lovin'
And all your turtle-dovin'
All your hugs and kisses, and your money too.
You know you love me baby,
Still you tell maybe,
That some day, well, I'll be blue.
Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,
That'll be the day when you make me cry,
You say you're gonna leave me, you know it's a lie,
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,
That'll be the day when you make me cry,
You say you're gonna leave me, you know it's a lie,
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.*

*When Cupid shot his dart,
He shot it at your heart,
So if we ever part, then I'll leave you.
You say you'll hold me, then you tell me boldly,
That some day, well I'll be blue.*

*Well that'll be the day when you say goodbye,
That'll be the day when you make me cry,
You say you're gonna leave me,
You know it's a lie,
'Cause, that'll be the day when I die.*

*That'll be the day, Ooh-Ooh.
That'll be the day, Ooh-Ooh.
That'll be the day, Ooh-Ooh.
That'll be the day.*

During the song, the spirits of Dick, John and Sebastian appeared, waved to Oliver and sat down and enjoyed the music. After the song was finished, Rockin' Oliver and the Artful Bopper shook hands. Oliver went over to the spirits and signalled for them to follow him outside.

"Hey what are you fellows doing back?" asked Oliver.

"We've got something wonderful to tell you" exclaimed John.

"We'll tell you at your house" said Dick.

Philip then summoned Oliver to leave the room "Oliver, wait outside for me. I would like to talk to Bill".

"Alright, Dad!" replied Oliver who put his guitar away in its case, put on his coat and went outside. Bill then turned to Philip and asked "What can I do for you, Philip?"

Philip was rather annoyed and wanted some straight answers from Bill, so he thought he would come right out and ask things "Well, for one thing, I would like to see the accounting books on Oliver's royalties".

"What for?" asked Bill, getting worried.

"As I mentioned to you before, his record sales have gone sky high and yet his royalties have gone down. I just don't believe that the expenses have gone up that much. Something's wrong" replied an rather angry Philip.

"Seth. Go get the books on Oliver's royalties, please" exclaimed Bill, sternly.

Seth was not sure if this was a good idea because they have things to hide, then asked "Is that really necessary, Bill?"

Bill winked at Seth as if to signal something secretive, "the books that are in the cupboard please" is all he said.

Seth finally caught on and confidently replied "Oh Yeah. Right away, Governor". He went to the back of the office and opened up a cupboard and pulled a set of rather messy and dusty books from them.

Bill then turned to Philip and said confidently, "I'm telling you, Phil. Don't worry. Everything's alright. Trust me".

Philip was now quite upset and just exclaimed "that's just it. I don't".

Bill was a bit offended so he retorted "come now, Phil. You've known me for three years. Have I ever steered you wrong?"

"What about that new car you just bought? A Rolls Royce! Where did you get the money for that?" shouted Philip angrily.

Bill then shot back "Business is good! I have plenty of contracts. Besides you and your misses got a new car from Oliver, and so did your housekeeper, Rose. What about the new bicycle for Oliver's brother, Wesley?"

Seth then returned with the accounts book and showed it to Philip.

"Here you are. Everything's in order" said Seth sternly.

Philip checked over the figures closely and then said "Mmmmmm! I see income, expenses, royalties paid.

What's this trust fund?" he then asked.

"That's the money I've put aside for Oliver when he gets older. You'll get it when he turns twenty-one. By then, it will have earned lots of interest" Bill replied.

Philip then shot back loudly "But he's only fourteen! He's got years to go before he sees any of that money. Where are the deposit statements for the trust fund? Why are they not with the books?"

Seth got very upset and then shouted "What are you implying?"

"Nothing" replied Philip. "I just want to see proof that everything's in order".

"Are you saying that you don't trust me?" asked Seth.

"You've got that right. I don't. There are no receipts, no deposit slips and we never got any statements" shouted Philip in disgust.

Seth got extremely angry and screamed at Philip "Who the hell are you coming in here and questioning my accounts. Are you the boy's manager or something?!"

"As a matter of fact, I am" replied Philip.

"Are you implying that I run a crooked business here?" asked Seth.

"Well, it looks that way, and I just want proof that it isn't" replied Philip.

Bill wanted to calm things down so he interceded "I'll show you the receipts tomorrow, Phil. I'm still going through them at the moment".

Philip then gave an ultimatum "Well, they had better be ready". Philip then put on his coat and hat and left the room to take Oliver home. Mary, the owner of "The '2 i's'" coffee bar, then came in to see Bill. She had overheard some of the conversation.

"What's all the row about?" asked Mary.

"Mary, my love, how are you?" asked Seth in a sneaky way, trying to avoid the question.

"Don't you my love me! Who have you been crooking then?" replied Mary, angrily.

"Come now, Mary. We must have civil words. We are just having a bit of difficulty with one of the clients who wants to see the books, that's all" reassured Bill.

"Catching on, is he? I told you that one day you'd get into trouble" warned Mary.

Seth suddenly got very furious and shouted "If he accuses me of anything, I'll break every bone in that boy's body. He'll never sing again because he'll be six feet underground". Bill signalled to Seth to be quiet, but Seth ignored it. "After that, I'll put his manager there! I won't have no snotty-nosed toff of a manager accusing me of being crooked!" continued Seth shouting.

Mary became very angry too and shouted "That kind of talk will get you hung. That's a fact!"

Bill again tried to calm things down by saying "I do apologise, Mary, my dear. My partner doesn't know what he's saying. Be quiet, Seth!"

Mary then left to go back to the coffee bar in disgust.

"For Gawd's sake, Seth! Watch what you're saying about people. That man who was here earlier was the boy's father as well as his manager" warned Bill.

Seth then lit a cigarette and was getting alarmed. "Blimey, Bill. You could have told me that he was his bloomin' father as well. We've got to do something about him. If he finds out that there's no trust fund and that you spent most of the royalty money on our new cars, your new house, holidays in the south of France and bribing wireless stations to play his records, we're up the river" he warned.

"He won't find out. Trust me. I have a second set of books and a set of false receipts put away just in case the auditors show up" replied Bill.

"Well, that geezer's sniffing around and I don't like it. Something's got to be done about it!" shouted Seth.

"Seth Sykes, don't worry. Just keep calm and if anything goes wrong, we will sit down and decide on a proper course of action" cautioned Bill.

"While your keeping calm, I'll be out of the country, mate. You got us into this little lot, you can get us out of it. I don't care how you do it, just get that toff off our backs, will you?" warned Seth sternly. The two of them then moved on to other business, hoping that Philip Brownlow would not find out about the false documents.

The recording session was finished, so the Twisters left for home. Rockin' Oliver returned to the Brownlow home in South London, and the three little spirits followed him. Wesley was returning from his football game and was still dressed in his football uniform, complete with cleated boots. He was all excited. Meanwhile the spirits met up with Wesley in Foxwood Park as he was coming home.

"Who are you?" asked Wesley, not in the least bit afraid and interested in the spirits.

"We're the spirits of Oliver Twist's best friends from the workhouse" replied Dick. "I was Dick and these were John and Sebastian. Who are you?"

"I'm Wesley Brownlow" replied Wesley.

"Oh you're Oliver Brownlow's brother and Oliver Twist's other great-great grandson" stated John.

"Yes, that's right. You've met my brother, then?" said Wesley.

"We met him when he was in Midlands Town last year" replied Dick.

"He never told me about that. What a cheek not telling me about it!" exclaimed Wesley.

"What do you like to do, Wesley?" asked Dick.

"I like football" replied Wesley.

"Oh football! A great game!" exclaimed Dick, "and your brother plays an instrument".

"Yes. When he's practising, he likes to jam to Chuck Berry with his Stratocaster" said Wesley.

Dick, John and Sebastian looked at each other in puzzlement and then Dick exclaimed "your brother likes to make jam by chucking berries with his sugar caster?!"

"What does he make? Strawberry or raspberry jam?" asked John.

"No! No! No!" exclaimed Wesley, laughing. "Oliver likes to play his guitar to a record of songs by a man named Chuck Berry, he's Oliver's favourite singer and guitar player" he explained.

John turned to Dick and said "See, I was right. I told you a sugar caster was a kind of guitar".

"It's Stratocaster, not sugar caster" exclaimed Wesley, laughing very loudly.

"Then why did you say he makes jam?" asked Dick.

"No, he doesn't make jam. To jam means to play something" explained Wesley, "my mother makes the kind of jam you eat, and marmalade, too" he continued.

"Oh, you mean all that talk about jam was just twentieth century small talk?" asked Dick.

"That's right" said Wesley, "it's called hipster talk" he explained.

"So you jam football, do you?" asked Sebastian.

Wesley began to laugh again and said, "I play football. Jamming is just for music" he exclaimed.

"Oh, we'll never get used to these modern gadgets and the way people talk nowadays!" exclaimed Dick.

After they had all arrived at the Brownlow house, and had gone inside, the three spirits were looking at the portrait of Oliver Twist on the wall and were giggling at it in remembrance. They were also in awe about the beautiful Brownlow home. Oliver came in without his guitar. He had dropped it off at Mr. Jessop's music shop to be fixed. He had been playing it quite heavily and it needed some repairs.

"Hey Oliver!" exclaimed Wesley, "I won my match and I made it on to the school team for my age group!"

"Well done, Wesley. You could be a professional player some day. They make as much money as I do!" said Oliver.

"Look who's here" said Wesley, referring to the three spirits.

"I see them" said Oliver, "what are you doing back? I thought I helped you get to heaven? Were you rejected again?"

"No! no!" said Dick, "we all made it in, even John, after stealing them buns to feed us".

"John stole some buns?" asked Oliver.

"The people in heaven said it was alright because I had said forgive me and because we were starving and I gave the buns to some of the other boys" explained John.

"We've been sent back on a mission" explained Dick.

"Tell him, Dick" said John, excited.

"You see, Oliver, three rock 'n roll singers died and came into heaven a few days ago. One of them had spectacles, another was a big fat man and the other was a young boy not much older than you. They all spoke foreign sounding. Americans, I think" explained Dick.

"That would be Buddy Holly, the Big Bopper and Ritchie Valens" interrupted Oliver.

"I talked to them and the one with the spectacles said he knew of you and had heard your music" said Dick.

"Yes, I met Buddy Holly backstage when he played at the London Palladium last year" explained Oliver.

"Well, he said that you need extra protection so that you won't die young like them, or us, so spirits would be sent to help your guardian angels take care of you" Dick went on.

"Really?" asked Oliver, interested.

"Well, I've been sent to help protect you" explained Dick.

"And I've been sent to help protect little Wesley, who will be a great footballer some day" explained John.

"Hey, that's great!!" exclaimed Oliver. "Did you run into Mr. Bumble in heaven?" he then asked.

"No" said Dick, "he didn't go to heaven".

"Where did he go then?" asked Oliver, knowing the answer.

The three spirits pointed down toward the ground, meaning only one thing. "He got what he deserved" exclaimed John.

"We did meet Oliver Twist in heaven" exclaimed Dick, excited. "He was a very old man, content and happy. He turned himself back into a little boy so we could recognise him!"

"Was he pleased to see you again?" asked Oliver.

"Oh Yes! He remembered us. He said he was very proud of you too" exclaimed Dick.

This meant a lot to Oliver who then said "if you're talking to him again, tell him that I'm very proud to be his great-great grandson".

"We'll do that" said Dick, "now somebody has something to say to you" he continued. Dick then grabbed Sebastian and pushed him towards Oliver.

"Go on up and say it" shouted John "go on!"

"Yes, go on, Sebastian" repeated Dick.

Sebastian walked slowly up to Oliver, deeply embarrassed.

"GO ON!!" shouted John and Dick together. These were the same words they had used to encourage Oliver Twist to go up and ask for more.

"Oliver, I wanted to say I'm sorry. I'm very sorry for blaming your great-great grandfather for my death and taking it out on you and trying to scare you, like I did" exclaimed Sebastian sheepishly. "It was Mr. Bumble who killed us, not Oliver Twist, who was only trying to help us".

"It was Mr. Gamfield, the master sweep, who killed you" exclaimed John.

"Yes, well, Oliver, please forgive me. I won't haunt or scare you" continued Sebastian.

"Well I owe you an apology too" said Oliver, "I'm sorry for turning the music up so loud and scaring you".

"You must admit, it was funny" said Dick, giggling.

"Let's be friends" exclaimed Oliver.

"Alright" said Sebastian, relieved that Oliver would not scare him again with the loud music. "By the way, I've been sent to look after the Artful Bopper".

"He's joined my group, so we can all be together" exclaimed Oliver.

"We'll all be friends" said John.

"Let's celebrate it with a song" said Dick.

"How 'bout that Johnny be a good boy song?" asked John enthusiastically.

"You've certainly changed your mind about rock 'n roll since you heard a song with your name in it" exclaimed Dick to John. Dick then turned to Oliver and asked "is there a song with my name in it?"

"No Dick" answered Oliver, laughing, "and, John, that song is Johnny B. Goode, it's a name".

"Well, Dick is short for Richard" said Dick "is there a Richard song?"

"Still no song I know of, but there's a singer named Little Richard" explained Oliver, "I've done some of his songs" he continued.

"Oh!" exclaimed Dick happily.

"Anyway, how 'bout the Johnny song?" asked John impatiently.

"I can't" said Oliver, "my guitar is at Mr. Jessop's being fixed, it needs new strings and some new plugs".

"What about your old one?" asked Wesley.

"I sold it a while ago" explained Oliver.

"Alright, what about the Spanish guitar?" asked Wesley.

"It doesn't sound right on that thing" explained Oliver.

John was very disappointed, but he understood, so he said "oh well, never mind then".

Philip came into the room, but he could not see or hear the spirits.

Oliver said "Hey, Dad, do you remember when we were in Midlands Town last summer, the mayor said that they were going to pull down the remains of the workhouse and build houses and shops and that two streets would be named after Oliver Twist and our family? Is it all done now?"

"Well, Oliver, I was talking with the mayor of Midlands town a few days ago and I'm afraid things didn't quite go as planned. They got the workhouse down alright, in fact it fell down when they started demolishing it. Then something went wrong and the developer pulled out of the project" explained Philip. "So, what happened?" asked Oliver, interested.

"The new town was never built, so the workhouse site was levelled and turned into a big municipal car park instead" continued Philip.

Oliver just laughed. At that moment, there was a knock at the door. A boy from Mr. Jessop's music shop was returning Oliver's guitar, all repaired. Rose answered the door and presented Oliver with his guitar, which he treated like a long lost friend. Oliver gave the delivery boy an autographed photo of himself.

"Hey Oliver! you got your guitar back!" exclaimed Wesley.

"Let's go upstairs and I can play it. There's a song I'm going to try" said Oliver.

Meanwhile, the three spirits, who were now all best buddies, were gazing at the Brownlow home.

"What a beautiful house you have, Oliver" exclaimed Dick.

"Yes, but the house Oliver Twist came to live in, number 26 Bloomsbury Square up in London is even nicer" explained Oliver "Our family moved down here to South London just before I was born".

"Cor, he was very lucky!" exclaimed Sebastian.

Oliver then exclaimed to the spirits, "hey fellows, your workhouse is gone. They've pulled it down!"

The three little spirits responded by cheering Wildly.

"Let's celebrate it with a song. Come on, let's go upstairs" said Oliver. The two boys and the three spirits went up to the attic.

In the attic, Philip had built a complete soundproof music studio for Oliver. It contained all the instruments that the Twisters used: a big drum set, a piano, a saxophone, a bass guitar and, of course, amplifiers for Oliver's lead guitar as well as the bass.

"This is the music studio my Dad built for us. It's completely soundproof!" exclaimed Oliver.

"What's that mean?" asked John.

"It means that we can make as much noise as we like and they can't hear us downstairs" explained Oliver.

"Gosh! the inventions you have today are amazing" said Sebastian.

"You are so lucky Oliver" said Dick, "you live in a wonderful time, where everybody's happy! You have even made us happy for the first time ever! We just might let your father see us, he is very kind and good!"

"Remember, my Dad is descended from Oliver Twist, and our great time is the new Elizabethan age" exclaimed Oliver, "Our prime minister, Mr. Harold MacMillan, said that we've never had it so good".

"He's certainly right about that!" replied Dick "you told us that you get paid two hundred pounds for singing. Imagine making lots of money just for singing or playing a game!" Dick continued.

"That's right, and Tommy Steele, a poor east end boy, now a rock 'n roll singer, gets more, he gets five hundred pounds! There's no more poverty now like there was back in the 1800's" said Oliver proudly.

"What an age these 1950's are!" exclaimed Dick.

"They're almost over. This is 1959. I wonder what new and exciting things the sixties will hold for us" wondered Oliver.

John turned to Dick and said "don't tell him what we know".

Charlie, David, the Artful Bopper and the other Twisters then arrived at the front door and Rose let them in. They went straight upstairs to the sound studio in the attic and met Oliver and Wesley.

"Oh you got your guitar back" exclaimed David who took his seat at the drums.

"Yes, it came a few minutes ago" replied Oliver.

"Let's rock then" shouted Charlie.

The Artful Bopper said "I know a good song we should do. Critics of rock 'n roll are saying that the music will soon fade out or die after this plane crash tragedy. Let's do a song that shows they're wrong. How 'bout that new Cliff Richard number "Move It"?"

"Great. I love that song!" exclaimed Oliver, "you sing lead and I'll back you up and do the riffs"

The Artful Bopper kept the rhythm on his Gibson guitar while Oliver played the solo riffs on his Fender Stratocaster guitar, including the opening. The Bopper and Oliver sang together:

GUITAR INTRODUCTION

*Come on pretty baby, let's move it and a-groove it.
Shake it baby, shake it baby, please don't lose it.
The rhythm that gets into your heart and soul,
Let me tell you baby, it's called rock 'n roll.
They say it's gonna die, but honey please let's face it,
They just don't know what's going to replace it.
Ballads and calypso have nothing on
Real country music that just drives along!
Well move it!*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Come on pretty baby, let's move it and a-groove it.
Shake it baby, shake it baby, please don't lose it.
The rhythm that gets into your heart and soul,

Let me tell you baby, it's called rock 'n roll.
They say it's gonna die, but honey please let's face it,
They just don't know what's going to replace it.
Ballads and calypso have nothing on,
Real country music that just drives along!
Yeah Move it! Yeah Move it! Yeah Move it! Yeah Move it!*

Wesley sat with the spirits, who all enjoyed the music. Wesley got a camera and took a picture of the spirits, scaring them with the flash. When he later got the picture developed, the spirits did not show up in it. Wesley was disappointed to discover that you can't take a photograph of spirits. When the song was over, the three spirits left.

As they were leaving, John turned to Dick and said "we can't tell Oliver what we know. We can't tell him that in heaven they told us what will happen in the future. That Oliver is a boy of the fifties and his music will go down in the 1960's and four boys from Liverpool will soon take over".

"Yes, but it will be Wesley's turn for fame and fortune as he will rise to become a great football player" said Sebastian "and it's your job to look after him, Johnny".

"And Wesley will make as much money with his football as Oliver did with his music" said John.
"Our job is to take care of them no matter what we know and no matter what happens" replied Dick.

"Right!" the three spirits agreed as they left together. The 1950's were drawing to a close and great changes were to come in the 1960's for both Oliver and Wesley.

Meanwhile, in the east end of London, a bombed slum area near the '2 i's' Coffee Bar, where Rockin' Oliver had first performed, was being cleared out and new apartments were being constructed. Workers were draining an old sewer system and constructing a new one to serve the development, when they made an amazing discovery. A small treasure chest and many pieces of valuables were found buried in the mud. They had been there for a long time. A coronet, a tiara, a pocket watch, brooches, necklaces of pearls and a large number of coins were found scattered in the mud. The coins were dated from the 1830's. Workers quickly removed the entire collection and handed them over to the British Museum.

The Brownlows were watching the news on television that evening and became fascinated in the report about this found treasure. The museum workers had cleaned up the collection and restored it to its original beauty. The collection was being shown in detail on television. However, nobody had any idea how the collection of valuables came to be there.

Suddenly, Philip got up and said "I think I know where those came from".

"Where?" asked Oliver.

"A story has been passed down the generations of our family from Oliver Twist about Fagin's lost treasure. It goes that Bob Fagin, the thief trainer whom Oliver Twist stayed with before he came here, had a large collection of stolen valuables, which he called his "little treasure for his old age". It was dropped in the mud in that area when Fagin tried to escape from the police. I think that this discovery is Fagin's treasure".

"Why don't you call the British Museum and tell them?" asked Jean.

"Good idea!" replied Philip. He then picked up the telephone and called the museum and told them the story. They were very interested and asked the family to visit right away. Meanwhile, there was a knock on the door.

Rose answered it. It was a courier delivery man with a package for Rockin' Oliver. Rose signed for it and gave it to Oliver.

"It's from Midlands Town" said Oliver, "from the Mayor's office".

"Open it!" shouted Wesley.

Oliver then ripped open the package and inside was a metal bowl, a very old brick and a letter from the Mayor.

He read the letter quietly after looking at the contents of the package.

"Well, Oliver what is it?" asked Philip.

"Woweeeeee!!!!" yelled Oliver "Do you know what this is?"

"What?" asked Philip.

"According to this letter, this is Oliver Twist's bowl that he ate from and asked for more with, and a brick from the demolished workhouse" exclaimed Oliver. He turned over the bowl and looked on the bottom. There scratched on the metal was the name 'Oliver Twist'. Oliver Twist had scratched his name on the bowl to remember how he had stood up and asked for more gruel. "The bowl was dug up when the workhouse ruin was demolished and the brick is a souvenir for me. The Mayor wants me to have them" Oliver continued, very excited.

"What wonderful discoveries!!" exclaimed Jean. "You must write a thank you letter to the Mayor of Midlands Town".

"I will, right away" said Oliver. He then went to his room and wrote a thank you note. When it was done and stamped and ready to post, Philip became eager to go and see Fagin's treasures. Oliver returns to the front room with his letter.

Jean then turns to Oliver and says " Oliver. Do you remember Mary from the coffee bar?".

"Oh yes. Hello, Mary. Gosh I met you about three years ago" replied Oliver happily.

"You've grown some since then" says Mary after giving Oliver a huge hug and a kiss.

"She's got something to tell you" warns Philip, puffing on his pipe.

"It's about Bill Fagin. You must get away from him" warned Mary.

"Why?" asked Oliver, puzzled.

"He's not to be trusted. My boyfriend Todd recorded with him once and he bribed a radio station to play the record. Then Todd never saw any money from it. I'm sorry, Oliver, but I think he is doing that to you. Your Dad says that your royalties have been getting smaller when your records sales have gone through the roof. I mean, that's not right!" explained Mary.

Oliver was shocked and shouted "What? Payola!"

"Yes, that's right. And that Seth is awful too" replied Mary, cautiously.

"I never liked him" exclaimed Philip in a quiet voice.

"Oliver, I heard him say that if your Dad questions his books again, he'll kill both of you. He means it" warned Mary, getting excited.

"Someone else tried to warn me. I just can't believe it. I don't believe a word of it. You are all just jealous of my success. Bill would never do me wrong. He's my friend. My cheques have got smaller because of expenses of all the tours, that's all" said Oliver, not believing what he was told. Oliver suddenly became very upset and stomped out of the room in a fit of bad temper.

"Thank you for telling us this, Mary. I think it's time that we went to the police" exclaimed Philip.

"That boy's in for a big let down" warned Mary. Oliver had calmed down and returned to the room. Mary then left to return to the coffee bar.

"Hey let's go to the British Museum right now and have a look at Fagin's treasure" exclaimed Philip, "Oliver bring your things from Midlands town" He called the museum manager and told him that they were coming right away.

"Alright, Dad" replied Oliver.

The family drove to the museum, up in central London, which was close to Bloomsbury Square, where Oliver Twist had come to live and on the way, they posted Oliver's thank you letter. Oliver dressed in his grey suit and wore dark sunglasses so that he would not be recognised so easily and mobbed by fans. Upon arriving at the museum, Philip explained who the family was and what the found treasures were. The museum manager welcomed the Brownlows and took the family over to see the treasures, which had been cleaned up and placed in a glass case. The collection fit the description that had been handed down the generations of the Brownlow family from Oliver Twist. This indeed was Fagin's lost treasures. Rockin' Oliver then stepped forward and offered the bowl and the brick to the museum. They were accepted and would be placed in the collection in a second case. Signs would be made for the two glass cases, which would read 'The Lost Treasures of Bob Fagin' and 'Oliver Twist's Bowl'. Many, many people would flock to the museum to see them. The press had been tipped off by the museum about the Brownlows coming over to view the collection and, of course, with Oliver being a famous rock 'n roll star, everyone was eager to get a glimpse of him.

Reporters asked Rockin' Oliver to hold up the bowl and the brick and to stand beside Fagin's treasures. He did so with great pride. The rest of the family gathered around the treasures and many photographs were then taken.

The bowl and the brick were then placed in the second case. Reporters bombarded the family with many questions about the treasures and Philip and Oliver explained where they came from. Reporters were eagerly writing down every word they said. Television cameras arrived and filmed the interviews, which were shown on the news. The events of that Spring day in 1959 were front page news.

Chapter 10, The Twist, Summer 1960

The 1960's had dawned and Rockin' Oliver was now a teenager with a beautiful girlfriend. A new dance craze had suddenly hit and rock 'n roll was beginning to change and take on new characteristics. It was moving away from its rockabilly roots, which Oliver discovered back in 1956. The Twist was a hot dance that everyone was doing and Rockin' Oliver thought that it had the perfect name for his performances. "Rockin' Oliver does the Twist" was a great slogan that would keep him popular. Though, by now, there was very stiff competition in the music world, especially blowing down from the north from cities such as Liverpool.

In the summer of 1960, the Brownlows spent a weekend in Brighton, on the south coast, while Oliver, now aged fourteen, performed at a beach twistin' party. Oliver had now bought a regular adult size Fender Stratocaster electric guitar, as his child size one, the one he had played since 1957, was now too small.

The announcer came out on the stage and said "here he is with the new dance craze of the sixties, Rockin' Oliver and the Twisters!"

Rockin' Oliver came out on to the stage to a huge cheer and shouted "let's twist!" into the microphone. He then sang and strummed his guitar:

*Come on, baby, let's do the twist.
Come on, baby, let's do the twist.
Take me by my little hand, And go like this.
Yeah twist, baby twist, Yeah, just like this,
Come on little miss, And do the twist.
Daddy is sleeping, And Mama aint around.
Daddy's just sleeping, And Mama aint around.
We're gonna twistin', twistin, twistin', Till we tear the house down.
Come on and twist, yeah baby twist,
Yeah, just like this, Come on little miss,
And do the twist. Yeah!*

SAXOPHONE INSTRUMENTAL

*Yeah! You should see my little sis,
You should see my little sis,
She really knows how to rock, She knows how to twist.*

*Come on and twist, yeah baby twist, Yeah, just like this,
Come on little miss, And do the twist. Yeah!
That's alright! Yeah! Twist all night! Twist!*

The teenagers on the beach were all dancing the Twist as Rockin' Oliver sang. He received a great cheer at the end of the performance. The group then left and went back to the Brighton Palace Hotel, where they were staying, and Oliver met up with his girlfriend, Elizabeth. He had met her at a performance and he had developed an immediate crush on her, as she had done on him. She was a beautiful fourteen year old girl with blonde hair who dressed very stylishly, was a good dancer and had all of Oliver's records. The name "the Twisters" had taken on a new meaning for Oliver with this new dance craze.

The entire Brownlow family and the rest of the Twisters, including the Artful Bopper who had been a member of the group for two years, were at the hotel in their suite of rooms. Dinner had been brought in. Oliver walked in with Elizabeth.

"Boy I'm starved" exclaimed Oliver, "when's dinner?"

"It's all ready" said Jean.

They all sat down and started to eat a meal of fresh fish. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door and Jean opened it.

A police detective inspector from Scotland Yard, accompanied by two uniformed policemen, is there. The detective inspector is a tall middle-aged man with a deep authoritarian voice and wearing a very expensive blue three-piece suit. His name is Jeremy Clouston. Jean signals him to come in and he asks "Mr. Bill Fagin and Mr. Seth Sykes?"

"Yes" replied Bill.

D.I Clouston showed his badge and then said "I'm Detective Inspector Jeremy Clouston, Scotland Yard. You are both under arrest for fraud and embezzlement and threatening the life of someone. Anything you say may be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to retain counsel" He then handcuffs both Bill and Seth, who are led out by the uniformed policemen.

Bill then tries to put the whole blame on Seth by saying "Is was all Seth's fault. He kept the books!"

"Shut up, Bill. We're both going down for this" replied Seth angrily.

"Oliver intervened and asked "Wait a minute. What's going on here?"

"These two gentlemen, if I may use the term, have been stealing from business funds that belong to other people. They have been bribing radio stations and their records show non-existent trust funds, which they have spent on themselves lavishly. I'm sorry Oliver, but the most money was taken from you. They kept two sets of books. One was kept in the cupboard, which was what you saw, and the other was kept in a vault. The one in the vault was the real set of books which auditors saw. When things didn't add up, we were called in" explained the detective.

Oliver became very shocked and yelled "Oh my God!"

"People tried to warn you, son, but you wouldn't believe it" explained Philip.

Oliver got very angry and yelled at Bill "Bill, how could you? I trusted you".

"That's business, Oliver. I did make you a star" replied Bill in a snarky way.

"By crooked means" added Oliver.

The detective then said "not entirely. He used payola to get you on to Radio Luxembourg initially, but you have been such a hit, that your success was your own doing since then. Bill and Seth have been milking your account since then. However, there's quite a bit left over which the courts have frozen and you will be getting it in due course" He then turned to Bill and Seth and said "come on you two, you'll get

at least twenty years for this". Bill and Seth are then led out to the police car waiting outside and are taken back to London to be formally charged.

As Bill and Seth left, the Artful Bopper then exclaimed "Bill, you bleedin' crook! I'll bet you took from me too. I'm sorry I ever introduced Oliver to you. Thanks to you, Oliver's finished".

"Maybe, but it made me famous. I'll always be grateful for that" reassured Oliver.

"Oliver, do you remember your first royalty cheque for one thousand pounds?" asked Philip.

"Yes. I do. Boy what fun I had with that" replied Oliver.

"Well, it should have been ten thousand pounds! Bill and Seth kept the other nine. I went to the police a while ago and they did an investigation and checked everything out and let me know" explained Philip.

Oliver then shouted "Oh my God!" Then he said calmly "How much is left that can come to me now?"

"Oliver" said Philip, "I've got something to show you that came in the post yesterday".

"What's that, Dad?" asked Oliver.

"It's your bank statement. It shows exactly what you have today, from your performances, records and with interest.

The police gave it to me. Do you want to see it?

Do you want to see it?" asked Philip.

"Sure" replied Oliver.

Philip passed the piece of paper to Oliver, who unfolded it and his eyes lit up in amazement when he saw it.

"What does it say?" asked Elizabeth, putting her arm around Oliver.

"Crikey!" exclaimed Oliver, "it says that I have two million, three hundred and fifty-six thousand, four hundred and twenty-one pounds, ten shillings and six pence in the bank!"

"We're one of the richest families in England, thanks to you. You made far more money than I ever did, that is why I retired from my job and became your manager full time" said Philip, "and as your manager, I think you should take a little advice".

Meanwhile, Rose came in with a ten year old boy who was dressed in shorts, a T-shirt, an Australian bush hat and barefoot in sandals. He had very short hair and spoke with a heavy Australian accent. He had certainly been in the sunshine.

Rose then introduced the boy "Oliver, Wesley, this is Patrick Pirie, from Australia. He has a link with this family".

"How can that be?" asked Oliver.

Patrick then intervened and explained "G'day, folks! My ancestor knew your ancestor, Oliver Twist. He was one of Fagin's gang of thieves. He was later transported to Botany Bay in Australia. When I heard your rock 'n roll records, I had my teacher at school check you out and I discovered who you were. So, I am a sort of friend of the family from over a hundred years ago".

"How did you find us?" enquired Wesley.

"I wrote to your fan club and they sent my later to your Dad. He paid to bring me here to visit you" explained Patrick.

Philip then continued "Patrick is an orphan. He is coming to live with us for a while. He will be joining Wesley at your old school, Clarington House, this September. I arranged all of this as a nice surprise for you".

"Do you play football and cricket?" asked Wesley.

"I'm a keen cricketer. I'm a good bowler and batsman" replied Patrick enthusiastically.

"Wow! That's wonderful. Welcome to the family, Patrick" exclaimed Oliver, happily.

"Thanks. It's great to be here, and you must all come and visit down under some day" said Patrick.

"Oliver, now with the release of what is really owed to you, as your manager, I think you should take a little advice" exclaimed Philip.

"What have you got in mind? Invest some of it?" asked Oliver, guessing.

"No, you should set up your own music business and retire from performing soon. You could take over Bill Fagin's studio. Besides, you should take young Patrick under your wing as a new brother" explained Philip.

Oliver became very amazed and exclaimed "What?"

"You're still a great performer" reassured Elizabeth.

Philip was only trying to be kind to Oliver, so he explained "Now then, Oliver, you must understand that you have been a star for four years. That is a long time in the music industry and I don't want you to suffer the heartbreak of suddenly going out of style. It happens, you know".

"But Dad, I'm still very popular and with this new dance, the Twist, I'm as hot as ever. I don't want to retire! But I do like the idea of having my own studio" protested Oliver.

"Hey, you could print your own record label. You could call it Oliver Records. You can make a fortune" exclaimed the Artful Bopper, all excited.

"I already have a fortune! Gosh! What a day of surprises ! We are certainly starting the sixties off with a bang!" Oliver retorted.

"Oliver, all kinds of new groups are forming in the north, particularly in Liverpool, and they write their own songs. Look at John Lennon and the Quarrymen, who they now call the Beatles, they are performing and recording on the continent, in Germany. In four years, you've never performed outside the United

Kingdom at all. You didn't even perform during our recent summer holidays in the south of France, Spain, Italy or Greece" explained Philip.

Oliver got very annoyed and said "Summer holidays are for relaxing, not performing. Anyway, I won't quit, but I'll think about the new label idea".

"Not right now, son, but think about it. You have more than enough money to live on. You are only fifteen years old. You need time to yourself, especially with Elizabeth here. We could even leave London and go and live in the country house near Ashford, Kent. You love to go there and ride horses, and do some fishing and enjoy fresh air. It gives you a break from your concerts and your fans and possibly the new record label" explained Philip.

"I could manage the studio for you" said the Artful Bopper enthusiastically.

"I love all of my fans. Let's see what happens in the next couple of years, Dad" protested Oliver.

"Alright, son. But remember, I will always be proud of you and your great-great grandfather, Oliver Twist, would be too" reassured Philip.

"Thanks, Dad" said Oliver.

"Another rock 'n roll singer has just been killed" explained Philip, cautiously.

"That was Eddy Cochran, a great guitarist, while he was visiting here in England. Sad! That's four greats gone!" exclaimed Oliver, sadly.

"I shudder to think how I would feel if that ever happened to you. God forbid!" exclaimed Philip.

"So that's it! I appreciate your concern, Dad, but don't worry, spirits are protecting me!" shouted Oliver.

Philip chuckled and then said "Now then, we must think about what is to become of your young brother, Wesley".

Wesley, who was now thirteen years old, then perked up and said "I want to be a football player and play on one of the big division teams".

"You're getting very good at the game, Wesley, but don't neglect your schoolwork" cautioned Jean.

"If you used money for promotion, you can always come to me" said Oliver kindly to his brother".

"Thanks" said Wesley, "while we're talking about money, I could use some new football boots and some practice equipment" .

"No problem" said Oliver, "I'm sure you will be a great football star some day".

After dinner, the Artful Bopper and Oliver went to the hotel ballroom and performed with the group. They reminisced about the last few years and about the raw rockabilly music that launched Oliver's career. Oliver turned to the Bopper and said "I am sure music will change in the future, but I love the old rock 'n roll and rockabilly sound. Let's do one of them tonight for old time's sake, rather than the Twist, eh Bopper?"

"Sure, great idea" said the Bopper "I was going to suggest the same thing. I know just the song to honour Bill and Seth appropriately".

The group came out on stage to a huge cheer and Rockin' Oliver and the Artful Bopper sang together, while Elizabeth and the Brownlow parents sat in the audience. Oliver summoned Wesley to come and watch from backstage. Wesley went up on the stage and picked up a tambourine. Oliver then brought Wesley out on stage with him. During the song, Oliver played the heavy guitar riffs, while the Bopper kept the rhythm. Wesley kept the beat with the tambourine, in addition to David's drumbeat; he enjoyed the music very much, but football remained his fascination. The boys were starting to get used to a new style of microphone that was now becoming common. They sang together:

GUITAR INTRODUCTION

*The warden threw a party in the county jail
The prison band was there and they began to wail
The band was jumpin' and the joint began to swing
You should've heard them knocked out jailbirds sing
Let's rock, everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block*

*Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock
Spider Murphy played the tenor saxophone
Little Joe was blowin' on the slide trombone
The drummer boy from Illinois went crash, boom, bang
The whole rhythm section was the Purple Gang*

*Let's rock, everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock*

GUITAR INSTRUMENTAL

*Number forty-seven said to number three
Well you're the cutest jailbird I ever did see
I sure would be delighted with your company
Come on and do the Jailhouse Rock with me*

*Let's rock, everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock*

*Sad sack was sittin' on a block of stone
Way over in the comer weepin' all alone
The warden said, Hey, buddy, don't you be no square
If you can't find a partner use a wooden chair*

*Let's rock, everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock*

Shifty Henry said to Bugs, For Heaven's sake

*No one's lookin', now's our chance to make a break
Bugsy turned to Shifty and he said, Nix nix
I wanna stick around a while and get my kicks*

*Let's rock, everybody, let's rock
Everybody in the whole cell block
Was dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock*

*Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock
Dancin' to the Jailhouse Rock*

The crowd cheered at the end of the performance. Many people had got up and danced the Twist and the Jive during the song.

After the curtain closed, the Brownlows and Elizabeth went backstage and met up with the group.

"See, Dad, we're still very popular" exclaimed Oliver stubbornly.

Little did Oliver know that this was to be his last year as a great star, since in 1962, the Beatles, from Liverpool, swept the British pop music industry and Rockin' Oliver could not compete with them. He just did not sound the same after his voice cracked and went lower. Rockin' Oliver's five year contract with Fagin Records, signed by his father in 1957, could not be renewed when it expired in September 1962 with Bill Fagin in prison and the recording company sold. Wesley, however, did go on to become a great football player, eventually being hired for the Fulham team. The Brownlows eventually retired to a country house near Ashford, Kent with plenty of money to live on and a nice peaceful life. Rockin' Oliver would always be remembered as the youngest rock 'n roll pioneer of the 1950's and a descendent of the famous Oliver Twist. All Philip could reply to Oliver's teenage stubbornness that evening in 1960 was "let's go home tomorrow, Oliver, we've had enough excitement for now". Oliver understood and reluctantly agreed.

The little spirits, Dick, John and Sebastian, also foretold Rockin' Oliver that even though his music will go down in the 1960's, and that new music styles would rise, he should relax, be patient and keep on playing. At some point in the future, perhaps by the year 2000, his style of music will come back in a big way and a 50-year old Rockin' Oliver will be more popular than ever. People would turn away from new music styles and long for the boppin' beat of the '50's once again. They also foretold that Wesley, who became known as "Winnin' Wesley", the great footballer, would eventually retire and rejoin his older brother in music, backing him up with a tambourine beat.

The two descendents of Oliver Twist would carry on the fame and fortune of the Brownlow family. Rockin' Oliver's future son would play rock 'n roll tributes to his father.

"I'll be back!" is all Rockin' Oliver could say to this as the 1960's progressed. Meanwhile, Rockin' Oliver's school, Clarington House Boys' Preparatory School, would eventually close down due to financial difficulties, and be demolished in 1970. It would be rebuilt into a comprehensive Primary School.

THE END

