

*The*  
**COLLECTOR'S  
DIGEST**

No. 38 (Vol. 4). Feb. 1950. Price 1/1 Post Free.  
32 Pages again!



ADD: (Annual "Collectors' Who's Who"):

Gordon, G. 148, Iadbroke Grove, London, W.10.  
Groups 5 (all), 6, 7.

Has collection of his own, and, in addition, is a dealer who is in a position to supply various papers from time to time.

LAST MINUTE FLASH:

Ien Packman reports "Leader" article will definitely appear within next four weeks, if not in Monday, 30th January, issue.

FOR SALE:

A number of Sexton Blake Libraries 4d (2nd Series); Boys Friend Libraries (1927), and Football and Sports Libraries. Offers please. Leonard Packman, 27, Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

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FEBRUARY 1950

Next Issue March

Editor, Miscellaneous Section

Herbert Leckenby, Telephone Exchange,  
C/o Central Registry, Northern Command, York.

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Concerning the "Annual": More than one individual I attend to on my switchboard has said to me of late, "You're in a good humour this morning." I haven't told them the reason, but it's been my mail. Of a truth it's been a tonic for the rest of the day. And it's mainly concerned the Annual. Every morning there have been congratulations making it seem certain we did indeed hit the target this time. There has been practically no criticism; just one or two have thought there was too much Hamiltonia, but they have been sporting enough to admit the answer to that is in the "Collectors' Who's Who". (See the very interesting analysis in the "Letter Box".)

The ballot is going to be extremely interesting. At the moment three or four articles are running neck and neck for the lead. "Magnet Masterpieces" has the distinction of most "firsts", but there are lots of voting papers to come in yet.

Get them in as soon as possible, won't you? I want a 100% poll. And now - finance. No wonder I feel cheerful, for quickly after the dispatch of the January number donations began to come in. Once again it proved what a staunch, generous lot of supporters the C.D. has the luck to possess. I was a little diffident about publishing Cliff Beardsell's open letter, for after all you had, most of you at any rate, carried out your part of the bargain. However, he said he would be displeased if I didn't and, by the way, his letter did not appear in larger type in order to make it more noticeable. It just happened that, as it came in at the last moment, the usual typewriter was not available.

Anyway, at the time of writing we have made a very good start towards wiping out the deficit. I might just say here that I have just received a letter with a generous donation from Jim Southway, with a request to publish it in the February issue. It is on similar lines to Cliff Beardsell's. But, honestly I don't think it will be necessary.

And, having written in such high glee, it does make it rather more difficult to make a plea to those who have so far forgotten to send in their "Annual" subs. There's only about a dozen of you, but that's nearly a fiver, and I'm sure you don't wish to spoil the picture. Last year only one failed us. Let's have a clear book this time.

I have tried to thank individually all those who have sent donations. If I have missed anyone here my heartfelt thanks. And now to a less pleasant subject.

Pointing at Poynter Again: In our March, 1949, issue we had something to say concerning the curious methods of Mr. Poynter, of The Pavilion, Box Hill Road, Tadworth, Surrey. Well, if you have that March number just look it up, then take a note of this.

I have before me two letters written from the same address to a member of our circle, Jack Murtegh, of Hastings, New Zealand. The letters bear the signature, R. Porter. In the first one he offered Jack a number of Nelson Lee's, old series; numbers are given in detail. Mr. - er - Porter asked for three copies in exchange for one of his, a bit of a nerve under any circumstances, but I'll say no more about that.

The numbers offered were some Jack was anxious to obtain to help complete his collection, so he accepted the offer by air-mail and adding he was sending off 30 Nelson Lee's straight away, others to follow.

Mr. - er - Porter replied to this by air-mail nearly a month after it was written. Anyone who receives air-mails from New Zealand knows they seldom take more than 12 days. Mr. Porter said he was surprised to receive it as having not heard earlier he had sold the Nelson Lees a fortnight before. He offered in their place some John Bulls, Local Government Chronicles, Melody Makers, women's books, etc. Oh, Mr. Porter! And how extraordinary, for that's exactly the same offer Mr. Poynter; of the same address in the same handwriting made to Bill Colcombe. The impudence of Mr. Poynter, alias Porter! The Local Government Chronicle is probably of considerable interest to Town Clerks and City Fathers, but hardly a satisfactory substitute for a Nelson Lee to a member of our fraternity. Anyway, Poynter (as we'll call him) got a curt demand from New Zealand for the return of his Nelson Lees.

This correspondence was going on about the same time as the business referred to in that issue of last March and from that time to this Jack Murtagh has never had another word from Poynter. The last letter was returned, "Gone away."

Thanks, however, to Bill Martin I can state that some time ago Poynter was writing from Adelaide Street, Southampton.

Well, in view of Jack Murtagh's bitter disappointment, the transaction with Bill Colcombe and Frank Snell's lost "Gems" three years ago, Mr. Poynter, late of Tadworth, Surrey, would appear to be hardly a satisfactory sort of individual to do business with, to say the least.

I'll just add this. Should any of you be unfortunate enough to find a transaction working out in this way, I should advise you to write to Leonard Packman, in addition to reporting to us. He will promptly take effective legal steps.

You'll make a note of all this, won't you?

Fame: The secretary of the Old Boys Book Club has received a letter from Cairo addressed "Old Boys Book Club, London". Some alert post office official had endorsed it, "Try Mr. Ben Whiter, 706 Lordship Lane, N.22." Bouquet for the G.P.O.

"Chain Chat": On the occasion of the Old Boys' Book Club January meeting I put in a 'phone call and had very pleasant half-minute chats with the members there assembled. The last time the meeting was held at East Dulwich I was there and I could picture the scene. It made me wish I was there again,

nevertheless, the friendly voices coming over the line brought cheer to

Yours sincerely

HERBERT LECKENBY.

P.S.: Unfortunately the date of the British Boys' Paper, on cover of January, did not come out distinctly. It was July 14th, 1888; the author of that other Tom Merry was George Emmett, a prolific author of the day, but not so much so as the creator of "our Tom".

(Note.: It is the fashion just now to look back over half-a-century. Well, here's some thoughts on old boys' books linked up with the "classic" writers by still another new-comer to our pages. H.L.)

O'ER FIFTY YEARS AND MORE

By W. T. Thurbow

It is interesting to look back across some half-century or more of adult reading, and to trace therein the sources of many of the incidents that thrilled us in the "weeklies" of our boyhood.

It was, perhaps, inevitable, that many of the writers for this type of book should borrow from the classics of historical and adventure fiction; for it must have been a great burden to turn out, week after week, a new story. It is perhaps not the least part of the greatness of the protean Charles Hamilton that he could find sufficient inspiration in the events of the contemporary scene and never seemed to find it necessary to borrow incidents from the classics of school fiction.

A few weeks ago, as I turned out a shelf of A.R.P. pamphlets, relics of the wartime Werdens' service, there fell out, incongruous companion, torn, coverless, yellow with age, No.2 of the Aldine Robin Hood Library of circa 1906. As I turned the pages idly, reminiscently, I noticed the striking scene at the end of this book. I at once recalled how, reading belatedly a few years ago "The Cloister and the Hearth", I recognized in the famous scene at the Inn where Gerard and Denys fought the robbers, an incident which the Aldine writer had lifted almost bodily for his story. Incidentally, the resulting anachronism of the clock, was, I believe, deleted from the re-issue of this story in the 1920 Aldine series. For good measure the author had also

borrowed the scene of Locksley at the Tournament from "Ivanhoe". There was a great deal of borrowing from "Ivanhoe" in the early Aldine numbers: particularly No.13. Locksley at the Tournament; the Tournament itself, incidents from the siege of Front de Boeuf's castle, the Black Knight at Friar Tuck's cell, and the attack on Wamba and the Black Knight in the forest; all these incidents were used more than once. I do not think the Aldine team knew Peacock's "Maid Marian", unless perhaps a scene in the series about the "Black Knight of Avallon" was taken from this.

About 1838 Pierce Egan the Younger wrote a story "Robin Hood and Little John", which was published by W.S. Johnson in that year. This story was at some later date taken over and translated into French by Dumas, and published, considerably cut down, as two stories "Robin Hood the Outlaw" and "The Prince of Thieves". About 1903 Methuens decided to issue a cheap edition of the novels of Dumas based on the standard French Edition published in Paris by MM. Callmann Levy. They included the two Robin Hood stories, only discovering when the stories were in process of issue that they were based on the Pierce Egan originals. These novels were published in a 6d. paper edition, as well as in cloth. They were I believe reissued in the early 1920's. It is possible that the Aldine publication may have been inspired by the Methuen publication - at any rate the Aldine writers seem to have known of the Methuen publication and to show traces of its influence.

To turn to another character; the best known and longest liver of them all; Sexton Blake. It is a moot point whether he or Sherlock Holmes is the best known inhabitant of Baker Street. But Blake undoubtedly owes his existence, and his habitation, to his great "senior partner". Sherlock Holmes inspired many imitators, not only in his own country. Vincent Starrett points out in "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" that American, French and Spanish writers of "Thrillers" and "Bloods" copied, adapted or borrowed the immortal Sherlock. Possibly the greatest single contribution to the Blake saga was the genius who invented Tinker - maybe on a hint from Holmes's "Baker Street Irregulars".

My own favourite character in the Blake series was the Zulu, Lobengu. There can, I think, be little doubt that his original was Rider Haggard's immortal Umslopogass, whose great

axe and foreseeing of the future were the prototype of Lobangu's spear and "beaver dreams". The early Sir Richard Loseley seemed a compound of Sir Henry Curtis and Captain Good. In one early story where Blake and Lobangu were up against an Arab slaver there were scenes strongly reminiscent of Haggard's "People of the Mist".

When in 1912 Conan Doyle published that great adventure story "The Lost World" he inspired several very successful followers among the "weeklies". I remember in 1913 the Union Jack advertised a new Lobangu story called "the Long Track". I recollect hurrying home from school to seize my treasure on the Thursday, the day of publication, and fortunately a half holiday, and retiring to a private sanctum to revel in the story. I still have that copy; covers loose, but otherwise intact. - survivor of nearly forty years vicissitudes. That story had a great deal of the "Lost World", including the pterodactyls, with a Rider Haggardish lost city as well.

Reginald Wray also knew his Doyle and his Rider Haggard. I recall a story in the Boys' Friend of about 1915 in which Wray's "Professor Kendrick Klux", founded on Doyle's Professor Challenger, with a dash of Rider Haggard's Ptolemy Higgs, from "Queen of Sheba's Ring", was in a lost world of his own, and one scene was very much akin to Doyle's Malone's terrifying night among the monsters.

Another serial by Wray in the Chuckles in 1915, "Phantom Gold", also showed the influence of Rider Haggard; scenes being apparently founded on both "Queen of Sheba's Ring" and "Allen Quatermain".

Several of the later Lobangu stories of the period just after the 1914-18 war shewed the influence of Edgar Wallace's "Sanders of the River" stories, and Lobangu himself became very much after the fashion of that engaging character Bosomebo.

As one sits beside one's bookcase and pulls out a volume here and there: "Sherlock Holmes", "The Lost World", the row of Rider Haggards; that best of Scott, "Ivanhoe", there comes a feeling of double gratitude to the authors, for not only have they given pleasure in their own right. They also so often inspired the writers who in those penurious, but golden days of our boyhood gave us such riches of enjoyment, and to whom we turn nostalgically these many years later.



POPULAR PAPERS OF THE PAST

No.3.- True Blue

By Herbert Leckenby

The once famous Aldine Publishing Co. did not concentrate on boys' weeklies in the manner of the House of Harmsworth, but they had three which could be said to have had good runs: the "Half Holiday" and "Cheerful Libraries" which each ran for about 18 years, and "True Blue" with a career of just over eight, one which seems to have been more or less chequered.

"True Blue" started at a halfpenny, January 15th, 1898. There were already four of a similar type in the field - the Marvel, Union Jack and Pluck from Harmsworth, and the "Halfpenny Surprise" of Bretts. On the bookstalls True Blue would not compare favourably, for it had a tepid looking blue cover, against the green, mauve and yellow of the Harmsworth three, and the gay orange of the "Surprise". The contents, however, were pretty much the same, a long complete story, a serial, and an editor's chat.

"True Blue" also had a "Trusty Band and Cryptic Club", a "secret brotherhood" with mystic signs and pass-words by which members could recognise each other.

It is amusing to note, too, that the prime motive of "True Blue", like all the other papers of its time, was to kill the penny dreadful. If all their claims were true there would appear, paradoxically, no penny dreadfuls to kill.

"True Blue" had stories by authors who also wrote for the Harmsworth papers, including Alec G. Pearson, Murray Graydon, and E. Hercourt Burrage; and H.M. Lewis was one of the artists.

When the paper had been running just over two years the Aldine Co. embarked on a new enterprise, the "True Blue War Library" at a penny. The first number appeared February 2nd, 1900, with a long complete story of Harry St. George, the "Boy Scout", by H. Philpot Wright. This, of course, was long before the days of the famous movement identified with Baden Powell.

The first three numbers of the "True Blue War Library" were of small pocket size with 40 pages, but with No.4 it was

increased to about 10" by 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " of 20 pages, and its appearance was greatly improved by the change. The cover was a good example of Aldine colour printing, the mast-head having a Union Jack background with the title of the paper boldly displayed across it. The scene from the story was the work of the famous Aldine artist, Robert Prowse. For the first six months every story concerned Harry St. George, V.C., and quite good stories of their type they were, with such titles as "The Boy Scout Perilous Plot", "The Boy Scout and the Invisible Beer", "The Boy Scout's Vow" or "Scarlet and Orange". Nevertheless, interest in war stories appeared to wane, for with No.26 came a change. The word "War" was dropped from the title and the paper became just "True Blue Library". Meanwhile, the halfpenny "True Blue" had continued running, but with the change it was merged with its penny companion. It had had a run of 133 weeks. The penny paper took over the Cryptic Club.

From No.26 on "True Blue" had a varied assortment of stories, but Harry St. George appeared occasionally, also another character, "Sailor Jack", by the same author.

A feature was made of historical yarns, very good ones as a rule, and the cover illustrations for these, usually by Prowse, looked extremely attractive.

With No.66 the pages were increased to 32, and from then on there were usually two serials. Some which come to mind were "The Submarine City", "Tom Brooke of Baycliffe" and the "Barring-Out at Baycliffe", "War to the Knife" (Murray Graydon) and "The Clash of Arms".

For about five years "True Blue" seems to have run steadily, and it was certainly the most attractive looking of the Aldine weeklies. Then apparently it began to falter, for they began to tinker with the cover. A heavy blue border was introduced, and the title was splashed aggressively right across the page. The effect was too flamboyant and cheap-looking. A little later they went to the other extreme, and gave it a more sedate appearance than during the successful period.

With No.289 came another change - it was the writing on the wall all right. This time the cover printed in colours was dropped and was replaced by a blue paper one similar to that of the old  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. issue. At the same time the page size was increased. How the proprietors expected this change to stop the rot passes one's comprehension. However, it managed to struggle on for a further 43 weeks, and then it was swallowed up by the Half-Holiday Library. This was in May 1906, and the number was 330.

Nearly four years later, in January 1910, there was an attempt to revive "True Blue" and incorporated with it was the Half-Holiday Library which previously had taken over "True Blue". But like they say of the stage star, "they can never come back", and after an undistinguished career of 75 weeks it was amalgamated with the last Cheerful Library, which soon died, too.

Sad to think how once healthy papers fell sick, and died at a comparatively early age.

## OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB

### EAST DULWICH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

January 15th

So much has been written about the endeavours and efforts of our worthy chairman, Len Packman, that it came as no surprise to any member that he was re-elected by an unanimous vote. Opening the meeting with a very fine address and review of the past year, he stated that the subscribing membership of the club had reached the amazing figure of 60. He remarked about the grand publicity that has been the lot of the hobby during the past twelve months and added that the "Leader" article would definitely appear. He thanked the postal members for their loyal and valuable support, also the members who travelled long distances to attend the meetings. He thanked all those whose untiring efforts towards the smooth running of the club meant so much, including John Geal who had the printing done. Unfortunately, owing to pressure of other business, research had not been up to standard, but he hoped that this would be remedied in the ensuing year.

The secretary then gave his report and read the correspondence. Then followed the treasurer's report. The income for the past sixteen months was 27-12-0, whilst the expenditure was £25-8-9½, thus giving a balance in hand of £2-3-2½. The club's books were audited by Mr. C. Wright, and the report was adopted. The thanks of the club were accorded to the auditor for his work in auditing the books.

A proposal by S. Godfrey and seconded J. Geal, that the officers of the club should be re-elected en bloc was carried unanimously. Mrs. Josie Packman was elected as deputy chairman and Mr. Pedro was elected press agent. The latter gentleman is

in a position to supply press cuttings, so members who keep these may be able to obtain those they have not got.

The rules of the club were then read by the chairman.

Photo rephs taken by the "Leader" photographers were circulated round and orders taken for those required.

A fine handicap quiz, composed by the chairman, was won by Harry Homer, second place was taken by Eleanor Packman and third was A. Blunden. Shering fourth place was Bob Blythe and John Geal.

One of the highlights of the meetings under Len Packman is the cheery 'phone messages that all members can give to the club's vice-president, Herbert Leckenby. So it was with the greatest pleasure that members heard the 'phone bell ring and then have the usual pleasant conversations with Herbert.

After the usual vote of thanks to the chairman for his untiring work on behalf of the club, the meeting developed into the social side and exchange and mart took place, also many interesting conversations.

New members were E. Reynolds, L.W.Scagell, J.W.Hurrell, H.Fletman, E.Hubberd, P. Prodro, W.Goodhead.

Attendance: Len, Josie and Eleanor Packman, S. Godfrey, H.Homer, W.Lewson, C. and O.Wright, B.Prime, A.Blunden, Ian Whitmore, J. and Mrs.Geal, R. Deacon, M.Asdourian, R. Blythe, R.Knight, H.Fletman, J.Hurrell, C.Wallis, A.Richardson, L.Scagell, P.Prodro, E.Reynolds, Bob and Ben Whiter.

Apologies for non-attendance were received from H. and M.A.Dubb.

Next meeting at 706, Lordship Lane, Wood Green on Sunday, February 19th.

List of subscribing members: M.Asdourian, A.Blunden L.Branton (P), M.Bond (P), J.Boland (P), R.Bennett (P), R. and L.Blythe, E.Bartlett (P), W.Colcombe (P), P.Cushing, H. and M.A.Dubb, R.Deacon, J.Dow, (Jun. (p), E.B.Flinders (P), E.Fayne, W.Fenn (P), H.Fletman (P), J.Geal, S.Godfrey, W.Goodhead (P), H.Homer, E.Hubberd (P), J.Hurrell (P), R.Jenkins (P), F.Keeling, R.Knight, E.Lendy (P), H.Leckenby (P), W.Lewson, J.Large (p), R.Mortimer, D.Marshall, W.Orr (P), L.and J.Packman, V.Page, B.Prime, P.Prodro, D.Reader (P), J.Robyns, Frank Richards, A.Richardson, G.Reuss (P), A.Southway (P), T.Strype (P), P.Sutherland (P), J.Smith (P), L.Scagell, C.and O.Wright, J.Weite, E.Willett, I.Whitmore, W.and R.and B.Whiter, E.Windover (P), J.Ward (P), W.Well, C.Wallis.

P. means Post Member.

BENJAMIN G. WHITER.

A THOUSAND TO ONE CHANCE COMES OFF!

HARRY HARTLEY, BOYS' LEADER PRIZE  
WINNER OF 1905, FOUND!

Followed by an Amazing Coincidence.

By Herbert Leckenby

In its short career the "Collector's Digest" has sprung some surprises; here is the story of what is probably the most surprising of all.

In the review of the "Boys' Leader" in the December number I told how, in 1905, Harry Hartley of Liverpool and a companion, both aged 16, had won a prize which took them on a six months' tour of the U.S.A. and Canada. I said how interesting it would be if we could find Harry Hartley and get his recollections of that experience of 45 years ago. I thought the chance rather remote, for quite a lot has happened in the interval. Well, thanks to Frank Case, of Liverpool, we've found him. When Frank saw my comment he wrote to me saying the idea greatly appealed to him, and that, first opportunity, he was going to do a bit of sleuthing. And some sleuthing he did, for some days later I spotted a letter in my mail on the back of the envelope of which was written, "From Frank Case and Harry Hartley". I opened that letter first, as you can guess, and this is what it told me.

Frank had set off to the address of Harry Hartley in 1905. There he drew a blank, for the people now living there had never heard of him. So our Sexton Blake started making enquiries in the neighbourhood without much success. Eventually, however, he came across a very old lady who remembered that prize-winner of long ago quite well. She was greatly interested about Frank's quest was that dear old lady, and very helpful, too, so much so that shortly afterwards Frank Case was off hot-foot for quite a different part of Liverpool, there to receive a very cordial welcome from Harry Hartley himself, now a man of 61.

It goes without saying that he was astonished when he learned that quite a lot of people were interested in that adventure of his of nearly half-a-century ago.

But there was something else in Frank's letter that made me open my eyes wider in surprise. For, he said, Mr. Hartley

mentioned he was expecting to come to York shortly - to Fulford Barracks. You can perhaps understand my surprise when I say that my office is sited in the middle of one of the two Fulford Barracks.

Well, reading that I could not resist trying to get in touch with Mr. Hertley. I succeeded, and when I told him where my office was he was as surprised as I had been. He told me he expected to call on an officer shortly on behalf of his firm. When I heard the officer's name I exclaimed, "Stranger and stranger still. Major D-- is on my switchboard, his office is just across the barrack square and he was the very last person I spoke to, before putting this call in to you."

Well, if you can beat all this for sheer amazing coincidence, I should like to hear of it. If it had been told in a St. Franks or Sexton Blake story we should have exclaimed, "Nay, dash it, that's a bit too far-fetched." Once again it proves the old saw that truth is stranger than fiction.

Well, I am looking forward to meeting Mr. Hertley shortly. Meanwhile, let me tell you some of the interesting facts he gave to Frank Case during their chat. One sad note was that his friend and companion of that 1905 tour, Nicholas de la Mare, died in 1913 at the age of 22, and is buried in Guernsey.

They had first intended going to Russia and Poland, but decided against it, not because of "iron curtains", of course, but language difficulties.

Another very interesting revelation was that the assistant editor of the "Royal Magazine", who acted as guardian, was none other than Rudolf Besier, author of the famous play, "The Berretts of Wimpole Street". He should have known something about drama, for he was born on a raft in the Java Sea whilst his mother was fleeing from a monsoon. "Rather a novel way to be born", comments Frank.

Well, I shall probably have more to say about this remarkable episode next month. And when Mr. Hertley and I meet I hope to be able to have ready for him the records of his tour in the pages of the "Big Budget" of long ago.

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CHUMS ANNUAL: Vol.15 (1907). Good condition. Will exchange for Magnets, Gems, Populars, or S.O.L's. Also copies of Thriller, pre-war adventures, etc., for S.O.L's. P.J. Checkley, 18 Terlington Road, Coundon, Coventry.

WANTED: All back numbers of Collectors' Digest. Also Annuals. Bill Martin, 93 Hillside, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W.10.

# The Nelson Lee Column

All queries and suggestions to Robert Blythe,  
46, Carleton Road, Holloway, London, N.7.

Owing to the length of my article in the Annual a few type-writing errors were bound to occur. However, as it was written for reference from time to time, I think it would be as well if they were corrected. True, they are only minor errors, but they are apt to be misleading. There are only four, as follows:-

Page 75, for HARTON read HARROW.

" " The Old Series No. intro. Arthur Steele.

For 116 read 125.

Page 76, Williams. Add "Chauffeur" after Dr. Brett.

" " Col. Glenthorne. For O.S. No. 253 read 353.

One or two of you have been kind enough to write to me pointing out errors of my own in the same article. I was very grateful for this because, as you can imagine, it was a lengthy job and one in which it was easy to make mistakes. That may be all right as far as wrong story numbers were concerned, but it was no excuse for omitting two such well known characters as Jerry Dodd and Ernest Lawrence. Goodness knows how I came to miss them! All I hope is that there aren't any more! Lawrence arrived in O.S. No. 295 and Jerry Dodd in O.S. No. 312. Their story will be included in the Annual. Other mistakes that crept in were:-

Hubbard appeared in No. 112, not 114.

Chambers of the 5th also appeared in No. 112, not 148.

Griffiths' Christian name was Louis, not Timothy.

Jesson and Carlisle should have the figure 5 after their names as they were both Prefects.

Conroy Minor appeared in 138, not 140.

The Duke of Somerton arrived in No. 167, not 166.

Titus Alexis arrived in No. 220, not 221.

Young Ching arrived in No. 359, not 360.

I had better point out that where a character is given as appearing in a certain number, that is the story in which he actually made an appearance, and not one in which he was mentioned by name only.

Well, that's the lot, but if any of you discover any other mistakes whilst reading the N.L., don't hesitate to write and let me know. I'm not infallible, you know, and it's just as well to have the record correct.

Jack Wood of York tells me that he has discovered another reprint. This time it's in the "Schoolboy's Pocket Library". It's called "The Aunt from Bar-2" and is taken from the 1st N.S. No.126. "My Only Sainted Aunt". Brooks used the pen-name of Reginald Browne for this effort.

I recently acquired a "Boys' Friend" 4d. Lib. (2nd Series) 451, 3/10/34, "The Crusoes of Surf Island". The very next day (at the club meeting, in fact) I bought another Boys' Friend. This time it was No.105, "St. Franks on the Rocks". Imagine my surprise when I found they were identical, in other words, the former was a reprint of the latter!

As a change from reprints I recently discovered some original stories by Brooks. These were in the Boys' Realm (New Series). I only have ten at the moment and the titles are as follows - No.71 (24/11/'8) In Hiding at St.Franks. 72, Fatty Fowkes the Rebel. 73, The Haunted Goalie. 74, The Team of Ghosts. 75, The Phantom of Bannington Grange. 76, The Haunted Crusaders. 77, The Menace of the Triangle. 78, In the Clutches of Zingrave. 79, The Vanishing Crusaders. 80 (20/1/29) The Triumph of the Crusaders.

Incidentally, No.80 was the last issue of the Boys' Realm in that form. The next issue was called the Boy's Realm of Fun and-Fiction". Each of the above are full length stories, and as you see they are mainly concerned with Zingrave of the Green Triangle and the Blue Crusaders but the St.Franks juniors play a large part as well. And here's another thing. No's 74,75 and 76 were later reprinted in the Boy's Friend 4d. Lib. (2nd Series). No.265, "The Haunted Team" (4/12/30) and No's 77, 78, 79 and 80 were reprinted in the same Library No.269, "The Vanishing Footballers" (1/1/31).

Now here's another avenue of research. If anyone can give me a complete list of Brooks' stories appearing in the Boy's Realm at this period and possible reprints, let me have them so that they can be included in this column.

Last month you will remember I said that I would commence a list of serials in the Nelson Lee as suggested by Jim Southway of S. Africa. A lot of these were reprinted in the Boy's Friend 4d.Lib. and unless otherwise stated they will all be found in the 1st series.

O.S. No's 1-18. The Boys of Ravenswood College. by S.Clarke Hooke. (B.F.463). No's 19-37, In Polar Seas, by Fenton Ash. 38-52, Neil the Wrecker, by David Goodwin. 55-98, The Island of Gold, by Fenton Ash. 106-130, The Boxing Sailor, by Arthur S. Hardy.



131-160, In the Grip of the Hun, by Clement Hale. 162-193, The Chums of Littleminster School, by Arthur S. Hardy. 194-219, The House in the Jungle, by Alfred Armitage (B.F. 499), 220-241, In Treckless Space, by Robert W. Comrade (B.F. 504). 242-273, Three Boys in Canada, by S.S.Gordon.

And this month's titles:- O.S.No.331, Missing from the Match, 332, The Mystery of the Outside Right. 333, The Interrupted Match. 334, £10,000 to a Shilling. 335, For His Parents' Sake. 336, The Fifth at St. Franks. 337, The Secret of the Box Room. 338, The Head's other Self (Note, first 2d. issue). 339, Shunned by his Schoolboys. 340, Loyalists and Rebels. 341, The Schoolboys' Union. 343, The Communist Plotters. 343, The Schoolboy Soviet. 344, The Communist School. 345, Staunch to the School. 346, The Supreme Council. 347, The Dismissal of Nelson Lee. 348, The Downfall of the Snake. 349, The Boy from Nowhere. 350, The Flood at St.Franks.

FOR SALE: Complete years of 1931, 1932 and 1933 Magnets. Offers for any of these years to L. Packman, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

A RARITY FOR SALE: Boys' Friend 3d. Library, 383. "After Lights Out", of "Expelled from St.Jims", by Martin Clifford. Bill Martin, 93 Hillside, London, N.W.10.

WANTED For Collection: Magnets prior to No.890. Gems prior to No.1000. Populars, S.O.L's, Holiday Annuals, Nelson Lee, Boys' Friend, Pre-war Champion, Triumph, Hotspurs, Rovers, Pilots, Rangers, Adventures, Wizards and Skippers. Good prices paid. Books with school stories only. P. Willett, 67 Ford Bridge Road, Asford, Middlesex.

WANTED URGENTLY: Your price paid. Gems 819, 878, 879, 946. Can any Fellow Collector oblige? Leonard Packman, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

WANTED: Schoolboys' Own Libraries featuring Greyfriars, 1/6 to 3/- each offered according to age. Bill Martin, 93 Hillside, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W.10.

WANTED Sexton Blake Libraries, 2nd Series, 171 or 723. Leonard Packman, 27 Archdale Road, London, S.E.22.

WANTED Magnets Nos.1123, 1124, 1125, 1144, 1147, 1153, 1154, 1156, 1157, 1158, 1169, 1177. Have several of same vintage for exchange. W. L. Brenton, 63 Theresby Street, Hull.

# LETTER



# BOX

This Will Make the Magnetites Crow!

The Miltons Head Hotel,  
Nottingham. 4th January, 1950.

Dear Editor,

Enclosed herewith please find bits and pieces, also my cheque for 1950 subscription to Collectors' Digest. Also in case it may be of interest to you here is the analysis of the likes of the Who's Who section of the C.D. Annual, as divided into sections made by you.

- 5a. 78% (Magnet)
- 5b. 66% (Gem)
- 5d. 50% (Schoolboys' Own)
- 5c. 44% (Penny Popular)
- 5e. 40% (Holiday Annual)
- 7 35% (Nelson Lee)
- 6a. 31% (Union Jack)
- 6b. 25% (Sexton Blake Library)
- 2 20% (Early 20th Century)
- 6c. 18% (Detective Library)
- 3 18% (Alpines)
- 8. 14% (Between Two Wars)
- 1. 14% (Victorian Papers)
- 4. 9% (Captain, Chums, etc.)
- 9. 4% (School Friend, etc.)

Yours eye,  
JOHN GUNN.

Here's the Programme!

Mandeville Publications,  
55, Victoria Street,  
London, S.W.1.

Dear Mr. Leckenby,

January 5, 1950.

Many thanks for your letter of the 22nd, with the copy of your Annual. My word! we shall have to watch our step - if you do 'go into print' you will put us out of business! Seriously, I think it is a very fine effort and I am certainly going to read it from cover to cover.

Our programme this year is pretty much as follows (we may do more, but certainly not less):

- April: RALLYING ROUND GUSSY  
JACK OF ALL TRADES (a new Frank Richards character - he says his best ever)
- July: A Tom Merry book  
A Rockwood book
- October: A Tom Merry book  
A Carcroft book  
TOM MERRY'S OWN (This is the Annual)  
(We think a better title)

This gives us, as I think you will agree, plenty to get on with. For the moment, anyway!

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

RAYMOND RICHARDS

Richards, Redway, Conquest & Co!

January 18th, 1950.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Many thanks for the C.I.D. - a tip-top number. I like especially your reproduction of the cartoon from the Sunday Sun of Sydney, though it does not flatter. Leon Stone very kindly sent me that copy of the Sun.

I was very much amused by your heading, "Frank Richards must possess the Elixir of Youth", over my letter outlining the present programme, - nine books and an annual per annum. But though this may sound rather an ambitious programme, it is as moonlight unto sunlight, as water unto wine, compared with pre-war productions. In the Magnet alone there was a 30,000 word story weekly: which amounted in a year to a million and a half words, unless my arithmetic be seriously at fault: and that was

double as much as a dozen books. So you see, my dear boy, that in reality Frank Richards is having a very easy time now: so much so that he was able to take six weeks off to write that little book of a different kind. Now we are back in the old groove, and Martin Clifford has recently written "The Scapegrace of St. Jim's," and Frank Richards has followed it up with "Billy Bunter's Postal-Order": and at the moment, Owen Conquest is getting busy on "The Rivals of Rookwood School", kindly sharing the typewriter with Charles Hamilton, who is writing a story of "King of the Islands" for the next annual, — which, by the way, will be called "Tom Merry's Own". Owen is in the planning stage, but waiting rather impatiently for Charles to have done with the machine!

I had a very pleasant letter the other day from Mr. Sutherland in far-off Vancouver, with a really lovely photograph of himself and a dear little girl, a Pluck and a Gem: now framed and adorning my study.

With kind regards,

Always yours sincerely,

FRANK RICHARDS.

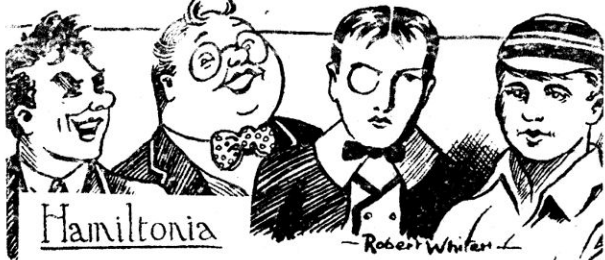
WANTED: Fantasy fiction, bound or paper covered. Please report. Also Boys' Friend Libs. etc. Henry J.H. Bartlett, Peas Hill, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset.

INVITATION TO DEALERS AND COLLECTORS. Wanted, parcels of Magnets, old and new on approval. Deposit forwarded in advance, if required (to "C.D." subscribers). Unretained copies, remittance and postage returned promptly. J. Walsh, 345 Stanley Road, Kirkdale, Liverpool 20.

HIGHEST CASH PRICES offered for Magnets, Gems, Populars, S.O.Ls. and any similar. "Red" Magnets and Xmas Nos. prior 1930 particularly required. Large selection of most types of old boys' books always available for sale. Send S.A.E. with requirements please. Gordon, 148 Ledbrooke Grove, London, W.10.

WANTED: Marvel (1d) No. 393. Boys' Friend Libraries (1st series) No's 1, 2, 76, 100, 109, 119, 122, 126, 130, 142, 154, 159, 169, 184, 188, 193, 197, 203, 208, 211, 217, 225, 245, 258, 293, E. Blight, "Sendhills", Constantine Bay, St. Merryn, Cornwall.

WANTED: Greyfriars, Herald, 1919-20. Good Price Paid. Leonard Peckman, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.



Conducted by Herbert Leckenby

James Walsh, of Liverpool, in an interesting letter raises the question of the "Revenspur" series in the Magnet - those four unique stories in which Bunter is never mentioned, a distinction probably no other story in the Magnet can claim. "They were so different," says James Walsh, "that I cannot believe the real Frank Richards wrote them, yet they do not appear in John Shaw's list of imitations in the Annual."

Well, I think I am right in assuring our Liverpool reader that Frank Richards did write them and there is an interesting explanation. He was asked by the editor to do a series on "Edger Wallace lines". That he succeeded I am sure all who have read that Bunterless series will agree.

As to whether it was one of the best ever, it seems to be a matter of, like a popular radio series, "We beg to differ".

The "Imitation Stories" seem to have caused a lot of interest for among other letters, paying tribute to their value, I received the following from Leslie Brenton:-

63 Thoresby Street, Hull.

Dear Editor,

Jan/50.

In my opinion one of the most useful articles in the "Annual" is the list of "imitation" stories in the Magnet and Gem, compiled by John Shaw. I am, however, very puzzled by one item. Mr. Shaw lists Magnet No.722 as spurious. This is the third and last story of a series on Penfold, the character of which is aptly described by the title of No.721 "Penfold the Blade". According to Mr. Shaw Nos.720 and 721 were written by Charles Hamilton - is it feasible that another author should have finished the series?

I may add that I have not read these copies and am in no position to judge for myself.

Yours sincerely, W. L. BRANTON.

On receipt of it I had a chat with John Shaw. He told me he was convinced No.722 was an imitation, but it happens that 720 and 721 are two of the very few Magnets he has not read, so of course he did not include them in his list, but under the circumstances he thinks it quite probable they were also imitations.

I have had several enquiries concerning the Greyfriars stories now running in the "Comet". Can anyone give the numbers of the Magnets they are taken from?

And now, as there's enough of me in this issue, I'll make way for an old friend who has been absent from our pages for some time. You'll note he is as provocative as ever. It has a right to a place in the Hamiltonia section, though of course Charles Hamilton was not responsible for those inconsistencies in the "School Friend".

BESSIE BUNTER

By Eric Payne.

In my opinion "Bessie Bunter of Cliff House School" is easily the best of the post-war books of our favourite characters. (I have not yet had the opportunity to read Tom Merry's Annual or "Billy Bunter's Christmas Party", so I may wish to modify this statement later.)

The other Bunter Books and the Tom Merry books have made pleasant reading, but I think that few would claim that they have shown the Maestro at his very best. They have tended to be overburdened with dialogue, and the plots somewhat on the thin side.

But with the ~~Bessie~~ Bunter story we see the old genius. The character painting, in which Mr. Hamilton excels, is superb. The dialogue is witty and even, and never becomes tedious. The plot swings along at a spanking pace, and holds the interest from the first line to the last.

Naturally, those of us who knew the "School Friend" are carried back to that old paper. Several intriguing points crop up. I wonder why Marjorie and Clara played secondary roles in that paper, while the new Barbara Redfern took the lead. Thank goodness, that is not the case now.

I wonder why Greyfriars was never mentioned in the School Friend from the first to the last.

Miss Bellew, of course, married and became Mrs. Hartley. Her

place was taken by a Miss Steele. Evidently Mrs. Hartley has dis-  
 posed of her husband and resumed her maiden name. It's all for  
 the best. I wonder why Miss Locke never appeared in the School  
 Friend, though in the early Greyfriars yarns we knew that the  
 Head's sister was a mistress at Cliff House. I wonder who  
 invented Jemima Carstairs who became quite a leading character  
 at Cliff House, though I always thought the character feeble.  
 In short, I wonder why the School Friend ran successfully for so  
 many years, while so many of its stories were trash.

Evidently Phyllis Howell and Philippe Derwent have joined  
 the A.T.S. Thank goodness, once again. The charm of the new  
 Cliff House story is enhanced by the fact that it is not over-  
 burdened with characters. I remember some fifteen years ago,  
 seeing a touring musical comedy called "Bessie Runs Away". It  
 was set at Cliff House, and introduced Bessie, Memmie, Barbara,  
 and Mebel. It was a third-rate affair. I wonder whether any  
 other readers recall it.

I like Mr. Macdonald's pictures. But he would make his  
 schoolboys far more attractive if he put them in school blazer  
 jackets. School blazers and greys would certainly be compulsory  
 wear at schools such as he depicts.

And why, oh why, does Bob Cherry wear a St. Jim's cap?

MAGNET TITLES

1<sup>st</sup>. series (continued)

- 73, the Greyfriars Caravan. 74, The Greyfriars Camp. 75, The  
 Tenants of Study 13. 76, Billy Bunter - Editor. 77, The  
 Greyfriars Bun Fight. 78, Harry Wharton's Bank-Holiday.  
 79, Harry Wharton's Eleven. 80, Boy Scouts from the "Federation".  
 81, Bunter the Boxer. 82, The Head's Holiday. 83, Bunter the  
 Bully. 84, Harry Wharton & Co. Afloat. 85, The Greyfriars  
 visitors. 86, The Chum from New Zealand. 87, Billy Bunter's  
 Windfall. 88, The Lancashire Junior's Resolve. 89, Staunch  
 Chums. 90, "With Flying Colours". 91, The "Fifth" at Grey-  
 friars. 92, Bunter the Detective. 93, The Circus at Grey-  
 friars. 94, The Smuggler's Cave. 95, Billy Bunter's Christmas  
 Dream. 96, The Greyfriars Skaters. 97, The Greyfriars Sweep-  
 stake. 98, The Christmas Winners. 99, Billy Bunter's Resolu-  
 tions. 100, Nugent Minor. 101, The Dandies of the Remove.  
 102, The Disappearance of Wun Lung. 103, The Greyfriars Athletes.  
 104, The Greyfriars Fifteen. 105 (last 1<sup>st</sup>. issue) The Greyfriars  
 Treasure.

(to be continued)

ROOKWOOD STORIES IN THE S.O.I.

As far as I can ascertain this is the first and complete list of the Rookwood tales. Any further information will be gladly accepted. Jack Cook.

No.6. Captain of the Fourth; 12. Expelled; 15... Football Heroes (Greyfriars & Rookwood); 20. The Vanished Schoolboys; 28. The Boy who was Soft; 32. A Schoolboys Temptation; 36. The Shadow of Shame; 42. The Boy from Nowhere; 48. The Colonial Co. (A big gap here - any missing Nos?) 60. The Scapegrace of Rookwood; 68. Sir Japhets Heir; 76. The Fighting Form Master; 84. Chums on Tramp; 94. Rookwood Rebellion; 100. His Own Enemy; 104. Dropped from the Team; 108. Facing the Music; 112. For the Honour of Rookwood; 118. Jimmy Joins Up. (Apparantly first tale of Rookwood introduces Jimmy Silver as new boy); 124. Gunner Gets Going; 128. Backing up Jimmy; 132. Under False Colours (No.335 has same title); 136. Who shall be Captain?; 138. Ghost of the Priory; 142. Chums of the Backwoods; 146. Jimmy Silver & Co. out West; 150. Pale of the Ranges; 154. The War Trail; 158. Chums of the Ranch; 162. Trailing the Phantom; 166. Fourth Form Rebels; 170. Prefects on Strike; 174. Living a Lie; 182. The Terror of Rookwood; 198. Rookwood Secret Society; 202. The Rookwood Gypsies; 206. Masters on Strike; 220. Son of a Cracksman; 226. Fifth Form Rebellion; 262. The Fistical Four; 268. The Rookwood Barring In; 272. Taming the Bully; 278. Follow Uncle James; 284. Jimmy Silver's Xmas Party; 296. Fourth Form at Rookwood; 308. Jimmy Silver Resigns; 317. No Good as Captain; 335. Under False Colours; 341. On Fighting Terms; 347. Chums on the Open Road; 356. The Boy Who Walked by Night; 362. Manders on the Spot; 368. Rookwood Calling; 380. The Rookwood Ragers; 389. Rival Guys of Rookwood; 392. The Sneak of Rookwood.

Any Collector who knows that this list is incomplete is invited to forward the missing numbers and titles, or any other information regarding the Rookwood tales.





All letters, manuscripts, etc to be  
addressed to the Editor of Blakiana  
Section:- H.M. Bond, 10, Erw Wen  
Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

THE ROUND TABLE - FEBRUARY 1950.

I would like to commence this chat by thanking all those readers who have written to me commenting on the contents of the third Annual Blakiana. It appears that my "Consulting Room Chat" feature met with the approval of most Blake fans and this is very gratifying. One reader remarked that it was "just what we need to revive the old Sexton Blake flavour". I would reply that that was the very reason for my concocting the feature. You will recall that I promised to let you have news of this years activities at Baker Street and I have not forgotten this. All being well the report will appear in the March issue in the place of this feature. Very special thanks were received for the excellent feature contributed by Harry Honor, "Monograph on Sexton Blake", but it looks as if the Rex Dolphin effort "The Great Nylon Mystery" was not so successful. Rex can take heart though, for his puzzle feature was a brilliant success by all accounts. We shall see how things worked out for the whole Annual when we read the reports of the voting in an imminent number of the C.D. Herbert is working on this now.

The Round Table (continued).

Comment. It would appear that the current Editor of "The Sexton Blake Library" is under the impression that there must be an occasional bit of "slang" inserted in the titles of the publication. I will admit that the S.B.L. has been classed amongst the more sensational detective novels ever since it's conception in 1915, and there is no doubt that the covers have always been designed to attract attention. For myself I have always regretted the tendency to include Blake amongst those detectives who cannot do any wrong and always have the police beaten to a frazzle. Of course we know that he MUST come out on top in order that he may hold his head up for the next adventure, but to me he is too much of a reality to be classed with some of the lesser known "wonder sleuths". Even so, it is interesting to note that most of the S.B.L. titles in the 2nd and 1st series were quite reasonable. I mean they did not strike one as being sensational, even if the accompanying illustrations were in that category. The same cannot be said of the 3rd series. I must protest at the use of such words as "Spiv", "Stooge" and "Racket". It smacks too much of the Darcy Grinto type of story. I am sure that a better title than "The Riddle Of The Prince's Stooge" could have been found for the latest Anthony Parsons novel, and I don't think sales were increased when the recent "Affair Of the Spiv's Secret" appeared on the bookshelves. If the authors of the series have the handling of the title let me appeal to them to stick to more traditional methods and not pander to what the A.P. might consider to be appealing to the public. If the Editor thinks out the titles himself I would repeat the appeal, and ask him to glance through the 700 odd numbers in the 2nd series. During that time the sales of the Library were much greater than they are now, and slang titles were never used. Mr. Editor, please realize that you have the handling of the most written of character in English literature. HE will be the draw if properly handled and there would be no need to try and attract the modern reader by the use of modern slang. It might be up-to-date, but it certainly cheapens the publication.

H.H. Bond.

For the first time since No. 1. we have pleasure in giving readers an article about a Sexton Blake artist. So much has been said about authors that it is a welcome change, and we feel sure that both new and old readers will be very interested in this new attraction.

H. M. LEWIS.

A Study of a popular "Union Jack" artist by  
WILFRED DARWIN.

In praising the old authors of the Sexton Blake series let us not, for one moment, forget the artists who illustrated their work. For in my opinion they too are worthy of the greatest admiration. Of course, in making this statement I am not suggesting that all the illustrations in the "Union Jack" were beyond criticism. On the contrary, there were some artists whose work for that paper was decidedly poor. Even the most famous ones too, were not so consistently good as to turn out a perfect drawing every time.

But I believe in giving praise where praise is due, and I think that on the whole these old timers were more deserving of praise than criticism. I am calling them old timers because most of them had a long association with the "Union Jack" and in point of fact the paper was very much in its infancy when H. M. Lewis started.

In the old pink cover days almost every drawing bore his signature. Only one other artist appears to have had the same popularity at that time. This was Val Reading, who illustrated the early Confederation and Yvonne series.

Lewis had only one fault. His portraits of Sexton Blake rather resembled Sherlock Holmes more than our own detective. Perhaps this similarity to Conan Doyle's famous character is most noticeable in his drawing of Blake on the cover of "Union Jack" No. 170 containing the story "The Rival Detectives". Of course, one has to take into account the fact that the influence of Holmes was stronger than it is to-day.

Talking of covers reminds me of a very striking and original piece of work by Mr. Lewis which adorned the front of the U.J. containing the story "The Idol's Spell". It

H. H. Lewis. (continued).

depicted a most thrilling and original moment in that story, when Tinker, having penetrated into the secret London Headquarters of the Brotherhood of the Yellow Beetle, finds himself on the threshold of a strange Eastern temple. In the middle of the floor stands a beautiful woman gazing fixedly into the eyes of a fearsome looking idol. Unbeknown to her the yellow devil Wu Ling is concealed behind it, and by means of hypnotism is drawing her further into his power.

With the coming of the coloured covers in the early 1920's the "Union Jack" entered into what is considered by many to have been it's finest period. It was undoubtedly a step in the right direction, for the Blake paper, and gave H. H. Lewis a real chance to shine.

And shine he did, for a time. Most of those early coloured covers bore his name. But with this changeover a new artist appeared on the scene. This was Eric R. Parker, whose later work for the paper was destined to win him a great deal of popularity. From this moment Mr. Lewis seemed to slip out. His familiar sketches still appeared occasionally but not as regularly as hitherto. But in 1927 he made a comeback when he had the honour of illustrating the well remember "Peter the Spider" series. Apparently he had lost none of his old artistic talent in the interval, for he turned out as spirited a set of drawings as would ~~xi~~ have done credit to any artist.

And here, I am afraid, we must leave H.H. Lewis, U.J. artist who, amongst others in that paper, was, if not the most talented, the grandest old timer of them all.

THE END.

\*\*\*\*\*

NEXT MONTH!

THE HONOURABLE MR. PURVALE & CO.

by William Colcombe

With illustrations by Wilfred Darwin.

COMING SOON! "BLAKE'S FIRST CASE" by WALTER WEBB.

DON'T FORGET THAT WE STILL WANT YOUR CONTRIBUTION, PLEASE!

THE UNION JACK FOR 1928.

1264.	The Treasure Of The Isabella.	(1)	G.H.Toed.
1265.	The Black Cloud.		Rex Hardinge.
1266.	The Affair Of The Bronze Mirror.	(2)	E.S.Brooks.
1267.	The Diamonds Of Devil's Boal.	(3)	E.S.Brooks.
1268.	Jungle Justice.	(4)	E.S.Brooks.
1269.	The Mystery Of Manor Green.	(5)	L. Jackson.
1270.	The Girl Of Destiny.	(6)	L. Jackson.
1271.	The Captive Of The Catacombes.	(7)	L. Jackson.
1272.	The Coffee Stall Mystery.	(8)	Gwyn Evans.
1273.	Rogues Afloat.	(9)	Stacey Blake.
1274.	The Case Of The Kaffir King.	(10)	Stacey Blake.
1275.	The Mississippi Mystery.		
1276.	The Case Of The Grey Envelope.	(11)	Anthony Skene.
1277.	The Man Who Walked By Night.	(12)	Gwyn Evans.
1278.	The Phantom Of Scotland Yard.	(13)	Gwyn Evans.
1279.	The Adventure Of The Gold Bars.	(14)	L. Black.
1280.	The Great Budget Conspiracy.	(15)	Gwyn Evans.
1281.	The Mystery Of The Missing Lace.	(16)	Gwyn Evans.
1282.	The Affair Of The Staggering Man.	(17)	L. Black.
1283.	Fraud!		Gwyn Evans.
1284.	Sunk Without Trace.	(18)	L. Black.
1285.	The Victim Of The Veldt.	(19)	Rex Hardinge.
1286.	The Skeleton Clue.	(19)	L. Black.
1287.	The Carnation Wreath Mystery.		
1288.	The Hunchback Of Brotherhood Hall.	(20)	A.Patterson.
1289.	The Seven Sons Of Cynos.	(21)	Robert Murray.
1290.	Hands Up - London!	(22)	C. Brisbane.
1291.	The Legion Of The Lost.		
1292.	The Man With The Burnt Arm.		
1293.	Poison!		
1294.	The Problem Of The Purple Pierrots.		
1295.	The Bandit Of The Bank.	(23)	A. Patterson.
1296.	The Carrier Pigeon Conspiracy.	(24)	Gilbert Chestor.
1297.	A Million In Gold.	(25)	Robert Murray.
1298.	The Law Of The Gun.		A. Patterson.
1299.	The Affair Of The Great Seal.	(26)	Anthony Skene.
1300.	The Strange Case Of The Rejuvenation Club.		
1301.	Who Was The Man On The Stairs?		Gwyn Evans.
1302.	The Adventure Of The Apache Chief.		
1303.	Double Identity.		

THE UNION JACK FOR 1928 (continued).

1304.	The Scourge Of No Man's Land.		
1305.	Poisoned Blossoms.	(27)	G.H.Toed.
1306.	The House Of Fear.	(28)	G.H. Toed.
1307.	The Adventure Of The Gargoyle's Docoy.	(29)	Anthony Skono.
1308.	Sexton Blake - Lord Mayor.		
1309.	The Affair Of The Six Icons.	(30)	G.H.Toed.
1310.	The Probol Of The Broken Stick.	(31)	G.H.Toed.
1311.	The Case Of The Scented Orchid.	(31a)	G.H.Toed).
1312.	The Mystery Of The Black Van.	(32)	R. Murray.
1313.	The Crime Of The Xmas Tree.	(33)	Gwyn Evans.
1314.	The Mystery Of The Siping Vampire.	(	
1315.	The Case Of The Captive Emperor.	(34)	G.H.Toed.

Key to Characters:

George Marsden Plummer.	1. 28.
Rupert Waldo.	2. 3. 4.
Lola De Guise/O.Wasayth.	5. 6. 7.
Splash Page.	8.
Captain Christmas.	9. 10.)
Zenith the Albino.	11. 26. 31.
Mr. Hist.	12. 13. 15. 16.
Peter Brin (the Spider).	14. 17. 18. 19.
Krock Kelk.	20. 23.
Paul Gynos.	21. 25. 32.
Dr. Ferraro.	22.
Gilbert & Dilcen Halo.	24.
June Severenco.	27. 30. 31a. 34.
League Of Robin Hood.	33.
Gloria Dene.	29.

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NEXT MONTH:  
 The U.J.  
 Titles  
 for 1927..  
 .....

.....  
 Carefully keep these lists of titles. When complete they will give you all the information you need about the character stories in the U.J. Information re anonymous stories above will be much appreciated.  
 .....

.....  
 Information re some of the anonymous stories of the U.J. in 1929 are being prepared for publication in the March issue, so be ready to fill in the gaps next month!  
 CONNECTION to the 1929 LIST (JAN ISSUE) Please alter U.J. No. 1354 author from REID WHITLEY to EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.  
 .....

### Remember These ?

**W**HO doesn't remember Tom Merry, schoolboy hero of a thousand exploits, and Billy Bunter, whose postal order was always on the way? The countless thousands who made their acquaintance will be interested to learn that the creator of the famous characters, a writing book with a religious basis, writes a Worcester enthusiast for "The Magnet" and "The Gem."

Few people realize, perhaps, that Frank Richards and Martin Clifford, from whom the Greysians and St. Jan's stories sprang, were one and the same person: the now 75-years-old Charles Hamilton.

Writing in Herbert Leitch's December issue of "The Collector's Digest" (a magazine for collectors of old boys periodicals), Charles Hamilton confesses that, in carrying out his desire to write a book on religion, it may seem out of keeping with Tom Merry and Billy Bunter; but it is not really so, for I am certain that but for the influence of religion I should have written very differently."

Mr. Hamilton's intention is to produce a small book, not over 10,000 words, simply written with some such title as "Faith and Hope" which "may be of use especially to young people who may be troubled by doubt, which

is so easily cleared away in the light of experience and reflection"—and CH can undoubtedly claim to be an expert so far as his appeal to the young is concerned.

### "An Old Bean"

**M**Y correspondent tells me he had a personal note from Charles Hamilton during 1945 in which he wrote: "I began to write in the 'nineties. . . . Age is not so bad as it seems to us in youthful days! One has to change one's manners and customs to suit changed conditions, of course."

"To a chap who has been used to climbing the Alps and the Apennines who has scampered on horse-back over the slopes of Vesuvius, and pulled a boat on the Bay of Naples, all these things are gone—now I have to be careful on a staircase. . . ."

"An old bean who was born very weak in the nineteenth century has one advantage at least over some of our bright young modern writers: He retains unimpaired the beliefs he learned in childhood, and has a hope and trust unknown to the unhappy nit-wits who have so cleverly eliminated God from the universe," as some ass has expressed it."

Certainly a youthfully vigorous outlook for one "almost of Patriarchal age." His new excursion into the realm of young people's literature should prove interesting.

From the "Evening News and Times, Worcester, 20th December, 1949.

The collection of old numbers of boys' story papers is becoming a popular hobby with middle-aged and often quite elderly men. Not only the "penny dreadfuls" beloved by our grandparents, but more modern papers like "The Magnet" and "The Gem" are acquiring a rarity price. I saw the other day that ten shells had been offered for the loan of a copy of one of the rarer of these publications. There is quite a literature connected with the hobby, including at least three periodicals. There are also clubs which meet to discuss various aspects of the hobby. The members even fix dates, and well-known authors of the old papers address the meetings. The latest town to promote such a club is New-astle. There are a few collections in Edinburgh, but not enough yet, I think, to form a club. How many of my older readers can remember the first number of "The Boys' Friend"? It was published on January 29, 1897.

From the "Edinburgh Evening News", of 20th December, 1949

