

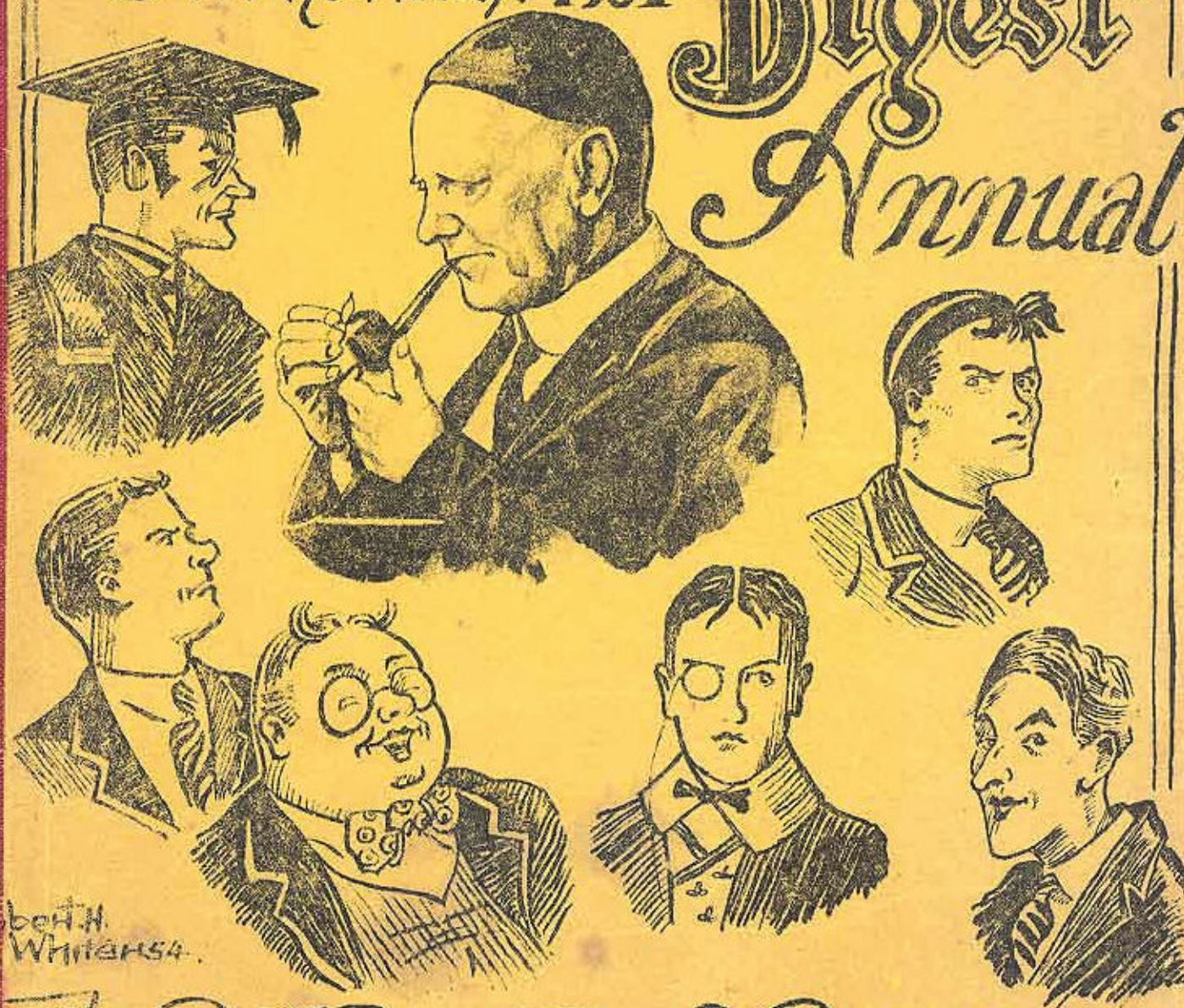
The 8th Year

Collectors'

11'6

Christmas 1954

Digest Annual



ben H. White 1954

The Old Boys Book Collectors' Wisdom!

MANDEVILLE PUBLICATIONS
EDITIONS POETRY LONDON. WILLIAM CAMPION (PUBLISHERS)

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A Reminder -

HAVE YOU GOT YOUR ANNUALS THIS YEAR?

Although there are many annuals available, we refer, of course, to the two that really matter:-

**TOM MERRY'S OWN
BILLY BUNTER'S OWN**

Both books contain fine, new, long stories from the pen, or pens, of FRANK RICHARDS, MARTIN CLIFFORD AND CHARLES HAMILTON, and are illustrated by R.J. MACDONALD AND C.H. CHAPMAN.

TOM MERRY'S OWN has 200 pages and is 10s.6d. BILLY BUNTER'S OWN is a little thinner and is 8s.6d.

The decrease in size of the latter applies, of course, to the book only. Both are of supreme standard. However, you do not have to believe us, BUY THEM AND SEE!

MANDEVILLE PUBLICATIONS

The
 COLLECTORS' DIGEST ANNUAL
 CHRISTMAS 1954

EIGHTH YEAR

EIGHTH YEAR

Duplicated throughout by
 YORK DUPLICATING SERVICES, 7 THE SHAMBLES, YORK, ENGLAND

Editor - HERBERT LECKENBY,
 c/o York Duplicating Services,
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*FOREWORD

Dear Fellow Collectors,

Here's our Eighth Annual and the second to be produced by York Duplicating Services. Quickly after the posting of last year's, compliments on the way they had done their job began to pour in. I am sure all will agree they have done it again.

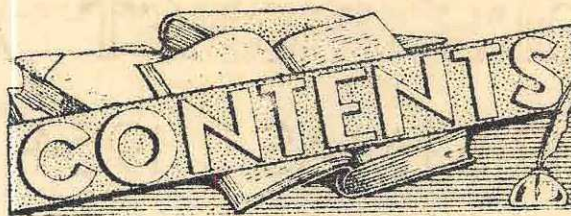
Once again the problem has been to find room for all the material I longed to get in. Despite the fact that there's more words than ever I did not quite succeed. My apologies to those whose articles have had to be held over.

Words! In all we must be approaching the million mark, even though the early ones were much smaller.

My heartfelt thanks to all who have helped, and to all at home and overseas, the old, old wish - "A Very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year".

Yours very sincerely,

Herbert Leckenby



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A PARADOX TO END PARADOXES

In this Year of Grace, nineteen hundred and fifty-four, I have made my first acquaintance with the "Modern Boy". Metaphorically, I have known him as a chubby, harum-scarum schoolboy; then as a man running to seed and finally, sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything. I have read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested some hundreds of the stories and articles contained therein. It has been a shattering experience!

I have come to the conclusion that "Modern Boy" was the most remarkable paper ever to reach the bookstalls. It is a real Collectors' Paradox. I repeat - a Paradox. Very definitely not a Paradise.

For, though it irritates me intensely, it fascinates me and intrigues me. I dislike it very much and like it a lot.

Though it is heavily dated, with its pictures of peculiarly kite-like aeroplanes, its articles on how to make crystal sets, its photographs of a very boyish Prince of Wales, and its predictions of a big future for monster airships, it is nevertheless as up-to-date as New Year, 1955.

It is a paper of staggering variety, and yet its everlasting sameness

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'MODERN BOY'

(AND THE PART THAT CHARLES HAMILTON PLAYED IN IT)

by ERIC FAYNE

lands one in the Doldrums of boredom.

Truly, a Paradox to end Paradoxes.

IT WOULD SUCCEED TO-DAY.

I regard the "Modern Boy" as having appeared two decades ahead of its time. It is the one old paper I know which would be a greater success in 1954 than it was in 1934.

A noisy, blatant periodical, more typical of these raucous post-war days than of the far quieter and more leisurely times in which it saw the light of day. Hurling aircraft scream across every single issue; protesting motor-tyres shriek their warnings of speed and death; the crash of rending steel fills the air with a cacophony of sound; monsters from space bring terror and destruction to a petrified Earth; cannibals wail their war-chants continuously as they perform the 'creep' round the cooking pots. The "Modern Boy" even had scores of stories told entirely in pictures - a system so delightful to the lazy, modern boy of 1954.

It was an untidy paper. Short articles, pictures, pithy paragraphs and countless advertisements adorned every other page, so that the stories were printed in chunks throughout the issues - after the style so beloved of American publications, but so vexatious to English readers.

Truly, "Modern Boy" had everything! At least, everything that would make it a success in 1954.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

The first issue of "Modern Boy" appeared with the date, 6th February 1928. It was described as "The Most Up-to-date Boys' Paper in the World". The first number had 36 pages, but a normal issue was of 32 pages, with Christmas Numbers of 44.

What measure of success the paper had during its fairly long life it is difficult to assess. The large number of advertisements which it carried for a long time no doubt helped it on its way, but it is also safe to assume that advertisers were assured of a reasonably large circulation.

When reviewing "Modern Boy" as a whole, it is easy to see that by 1937 its hey-day was past. In that year, the number of pages was reduced to 28, and advertisements grew less and less. On 19th February 1938, the paper re-started at No. 1, new series, but the new style publication was so fantastic that one can hardly believe that its sponsors could really have expected much success. It now consisted of 24 pages little smaller than those of the "Boys' Friend", which had died some ten years earlier. The quality of the paper seemed inferior, and the covers were not particularly attractive. Always untidy, the "Modern Boy" now became a veritable hotch-potch!

The "Modern Boy" had matured into a rather frowsy middle-aged man, with thinning hair, pasty complexion, and drab clothes. These ultra-large issues - with middle-age spread so apparent - continued for 24 numbers. Then another change was made.

With No. 25 (new series) the size of the sheets was reduced to something between that of the first series and the second, and the old paper limped on its way.

AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING

Another year passed, and in August 1939 the announcement was made that the paper was to resume its original size and style, and that the covers would be printed in blue and orange. So the "Modern Boy" adopted corsets to hide its protruding stomach, and dyed its hair and painted its face to hide the fact that it was dead but wouldn't lie down - and with No. 78 (new series) appeared in yet another guise. Only a few more weeks were left for it, and on the 14th October 1939, the "Modern Boy" breathed his last. One can assume that there were but few mourners at the funeral.

True, the war was then in its very early stages, but surely nobody can have had any doubt that the paper had been dying since 1937, and would have departed - war or no war!

COMPARISON

That may all sound rather callous and, indeed, harsh, for the paper from first to last was wholesome and contained much that would appeal to boys of an adventurous turn of mind. The "Modern Boy" struck one in early days as being a somewhat rowdier, less sophisticated, happy-go-lucky younger brother of the "Boys' Own Paper". The style, plus the advertisements, was distinctly similar,

though "Modern Boy" never suffered from the stodginess and stuffiness which was characteristic at times of the B.O.P.

BILL OF FARE

Many of the hundreds of articles in "Modern Boy" were very fine indeed, and covered almost every topic under the sun which could be of interest to boys. The stories, in the main, were fantastic or farcical, and these two themes were plugged to death. The bill of fare comprised joint, hash, re-hash, more hash, still hash, and hash again.

Alfred Edgar was a writer whose work appeared without break throughout the first two years. He contributed series on motor-racing, motor-cycling, railways, motor-cycling and motor-racing in succession, and, of their type, they were good. As years went by, he still played a large part in the adolescence and middle-age of the "Modern Boy".

"Captain Justice" first came on the scene during 1930. Mostly written by Murray Roberts, the "Justice" story was a main attraction of the paper from No. 146 till the end. There were a few stories on this character by an anonymous substitute writer. The yarns grew more and more fantastic and more embellished with blood-and-thunder as the years passed, and, in my view, long overstayed their welcome.

"Biggles", the famous creation of Flying Officer W.E. Johns, made his debut in 1932, and he remained, with short intermittent rests, until the end. There can be little doubt of the general popularity of this character, though, when one looks at the paper as a whole, there would seem to have been a little too much "Biggles". Still, the Editor probably knew his own business best.

George E. Rochester, Percy F. Westerman, Sidney Hargrave, and John Brearley were writers whose work featured frequently in "Modern Boy".

Old readers of the paper will recall with pleasure the jolly little weekly contributions of the "Old Boy" under the title of "Just my Fooling". This was facetious stuff, but genuinely amusing, and a good deal of variety was worked in by the contributor. It first came on the scene in 1931, in No. 234, and continued until the end.

Competitions and free gifts in variety were offered continuously throughout the life of the paper.

CHARLES HAMILTON

Few could deny that the author who did most of all for "Modern Boy" was Charles Hamilton. With first-class, believable, and altogether charming series he kept the paper on an even keel - and that was "some" achievement. Without his work, the paper would have degenerated into a blood-and-thunder periodical for the rag, tag, and bobtail. After the far-fetched rubbish of many of the other contributors, it was a real joy to turn to the stylishly-written yet thrilling work of this star author.

Perhaps it cannot be claimed that Charles Hamilton's most outstanding writings are to be found in "Modern Boy". Short stories, though in actual fact they made up into gigantic serials, do not quite give the scope for authorship as can be weaved into longer tales. All the same, they were, without exception,

remarkably good, showing all the famous author's great skill for character painting, impeccable atmosphere, and the working up of good plots to breathless climaxes.

KING OF THE ISLANDS

The most outstanding series of all was, of course, that which told of Ken King and his ketch, the "Dawn". No less than 209 stories of King of the Islands were published in "Modern Boy". I know of one man, at least, who is of the fixed opinion that Charles Hamilton never created a more entrancing character than Ken King.

Ken made his debut in No. 1, in a serial which was said to be written by Sir Alan Cobham and Charles Hamilton. Probably Cobham's only connection was the acceptance of a cheque in return for the use of his name - and the name was splashed liberally over the Ken King stories during the first twenty issues of Modern Boy.

MUSINGS ON KEN KING

The great drawback to a very long series on the South Seas must be the inevitable sameness of the background, and the very limited scope available to the author. The ever-present setting of coral islands, sun-drenched tropic beaches, and wide uncharted seas is only too apt to become tedious. Beachcombers, pearl-ers, and cannibals are pleasant in small doses, but tend to lose their charm with much repetition.

That Charles Hamilton actually overcame these limitations is proof of his unequalled genius. True - beachcombers, pearl-ers, and cannibals did figure largely in the King stories. But, somehow, the author always managed to introduce a new twist - a floating island, a wreched Spanish galleon, a mutiny led by former faithful shipmates, a Chinese treasure-seeker, a lackadaisical scallywag turned sea-lawyer - and the result was most satisfying fare for the most jaded palate.

BUNNY

A series of a character little known to-day consisted of twelve stories published in 1930, about one, Bunny Hare. These yarns make interesting reading. Though the Bunny stories contained little of the character work for which the writer is famed, they were amusing and exciting, and carried the reader to various places round the Mediterranean Sea.

THE SCHOOL FOR SLACKERS

Fascinating school stories of an unusual type - the School for Slackers - appeared in 1934. There were 17 yarns to this series, and perhaps the only criticism that can be offered of them is that the new Headmaster never really succeeded in his task.

No doubt this lack of accomplishment on his part was due to the wish, by the author or the editor, to keep the series open for further yarns of a similar type to be added. But somehow, one is left with the impression that this live-wire Headmaster was peculiarly inefficient and spineless in his inability to deal permanently with slacking schoolboys and with an antagonistic colleague, Mr. Chard. I feel that the theme could have been more satisfactorily

handled in a serial which would have worked up to an exciting climax.

With that mild criticism out of my system, I regard "School for Slackers" as a very fine set of school stories - slick, amusing, and exciting - on an original theme.

LEN LEX

There was nothing very outstanding in the Len Lex series, the stories of the schoolboy detective, which began in 1935 in No. 452 and continued for 36 issues. They were typical Hamilton mystery yarns, and, as such, were charming and very pleasant reading. But the plots would have been familiar to any Gem or Magnet fan.

THE RIO KID

The Rio Kid came into "Modern Boy" in 1937, No. 503, at a time when the paper was in fairly deep waters. The stories might aptly have been named "The Rio Kid to the Rescue of the Modern Boy".

Plenty of wild west stories appeared in "Modern Boy" during its lifetime, but there were none with the same tingling quality possessed by the Rio Kid yarns. I have commented on this little series of 21 stories when I wrote fully on the Rio Kid in the Annual a couple of years ago. As I said then, I do not consider that the Kid stories in "Modern Boy" were of the same exceptionally high standard as those which had graced the pages of the "Popular". Nevertheless, they were excellent tales of the West, and nothing better was ever found in "Modern Boy", at any rate. In this series, the Kid went to Hollywood, and he was out of his element in that setting.

HAMILTON ANALYSIS

In the following pages, I make an analysis of the stories by Charles Hamilton which appeared in the "Modern Boy". I offer no apology for the space devoted to it, for the analysis covers stories by the favourite writer which have received little attention in the past, though they are of considerable interests to Hamilton admirers in particular and collectors in general. Nothing would be gained by a full synopsis of the various series, in fact, it would be undesirable and, indeed, impossible, but a complete list of titles is given, with a brief outline of each individual plot.

THE KING OF THE ISLANDS

First series. Commenced in No. 1 (1928)

This was actually a serial, which ran for 20 issues. Ken King, skipper of the ketch "Dawn" rescues a young Australian, Kit Hudson, from Bully Hudson of the schooner "Shark". Hudson becomes mate of the "Dawn" and Ken's close pal. John Chin, trader, learns of a treasure on Faloo Island where Ta'a'ava is chief and Tokaloo is witch doctor. Ken is taken prisoner by the chief, but is rescued by seaplane.

Second series. Commenced in No. 21. (1928)

"NO SALVAGE". Ken King, a stickler for the Laws of the Sea, metes out swift justice to Peter Parsons, a sea-lawyer, who tries to get rich quick.

- "THE MAN WHO FLED". Ken King, on a debt-collecting cruise, seeks Hiram Cook, an absconding trader.
- "BROUGHT TO BOOK". Hiram Cook is rounded up by Ken King.
- "SHANGHAIED". Ken King, kidnapped by Enoch Files, and flung aboard the evil-smelling brig 'Judge P. Hyams', to serve as a seaman.
- "THE UPPER HAND". Ken King turns the tables on Files.
- "THE CASTAWAY OF LU'U". A passenger on the 'Dawn', an unscrupulous remittance-man named Gerald Goring is seeking his young cousin who may be living on the cannibal island of Lu'u. Was this the same Goring who once kidnapped Tom Merry?
- "TRICKED BY CANNIBALS". Further adventures in the Goring series.
- "SOUGHT FOR - and SAVED". Dicky Goring is saved, and leaves for England. Gerald Goring remains in the South Seas to become a beachcomber.
- "THE SEA-LAWYER". Dandy Peter Parsons turns up again to make trouble for Ken on the island of Lalaio.
- "THE TREASURE OF LALAIU". Ken rescues Dandy Peter from death by torture, but Peter is not grateful. Possibly because the treasure turns out to be a myth.
- "THE FLOATING ISLAND". Ken and his shipmate, Hudson, find themselves on a remarkable phenomenon.
- "THE HAUNTED ISLE". Cast away on a floating island that is drifting about the Pacific, and manaced by an Unseen Terror.
- "ABANDONED". Adventures with a mad convict for the castaways on the floating island.
- "SAVED FROM THE SEA". Dandy Peter is unwittingly the cause of the rescue of the chums from the floating island.
- "THE SEA-COOK". Ken engages a new cook for the 'Dawn'. He is a Chinaman named Wu-Fu-Wu. He looks harmless, but turns out to be anything but that.
- "PRISONERS OF THE DAWN". The Chinese sea-cook is now master of Ken King's ketch. The little gnome has seized the ship single-handed, and holds the lives of skipper and crew in his hands.
- "TURNING THE TABLES". King gives the yellow and rascally sea-cook a taste of his own noisome 'soup'. Koko, the Kanaka boy, is the real hero of this story.
- "THE STOWAWAY OF THE DAWN". Danny, once cook's boy on the 'Dawn', stows away and causes fun and games on the ketch.
- "THE GUNS OF GUVUNUKA". A wily old sea-salt, Capt. Peek, tricks Ken into 'running' arms to the savages of the Pacific.
- "ROUGH JUSTICE". The boy skipper takes the law into his own hands and administers stern justice to Peek, the trickster who has illicit dealings with the cannibals of Guvunuka.
- "SALVING THE SUNABAYA". Ken aids Capt. Griffin, the unluckiest skipper of the islands.
- "THE GREAT PEARL OF GOLA". Ken King and Kit Hudson gazed dumb-founded at the largest pearl that eye had ever seen, as it lay in the rough hands of the pearler.
- "A FATAL FORTUNE". The giant pearl brings peril and treachery with it. Ken shoots it into a thousand pieces - out of the thieving fingers of Black Harris.
- "£500 REWARD". A bottle floating in a lagoon - a desperate appeal for help - and adventures come thick and fast.
- "THE PHANTOM FIDDLER". Christmas Eve in the South Seas. From the impenetrable mist come wild and eerie strains of a ghostly violin - the overture to new adventures.

- "KEN KING'S ISLAND CHRISTMAS". Wolf Williams and his gang attack the ketch.
- "WHITE MAN'S LUCK". A threat to the 'Dawn', a night attack, a terrific hurricane, and valuable cargo flung overboard.
- "BULLY O' THE SOUTH SEAS". Ken encounters a tough nut - Jabez Wild - and proceeds to crack the nut in his own inimitable style.
- "THE LAST CHANCE". Koko, the fuzzy-haired Kanaka bo'sun, takes a hand, and Ken is able to defeat Jabez Wild.
- "THE SAILORMAN'S SECRET". Ken encounters a sailor, Jim Daunt, seeking sanctuary from enemies and bringing with him the secret of a treasure of gold ingots.
- "BARS OF GOLD". In a cabin aft there was a skeleton sitting at a table, and by his side a chest crammed with bars of yellow gold.
- "THE LUCK OF DANDY PETER". Urged on by the lure of gold, Peter adopts desperate measures to wrest Jim Daunt's secret from him.
- "SAILING FOR TREASURE". Ken King and Dandy Peter, rivals, seek for the Spanish Galleon and the bars of gold.
- "THE LOST GALLEON". The rivals find the galleon and the treasure, only to discover that a giant octopus has got their first.
- "FORTUNE'S FAVOURITE". Ken King finally secures the golden treasure from the galleon.
- "THE LITTLE RED ONE". Story of a death spider, used by a villainous trader, Schenk, in an effort to steal Ken's treasure.
- "THE EXTRA HAND". Peril for Ken King from a half-caste maroon.
- "STAND AND DELIVER". Ken thought that piracy on the High Seas was dead - until he found himself right up against it.
- "MONARCH OF THE ATOLL". An episode concerning a cadger named Monty Pullinger who lived on a tiny island.
- "THE PEARLS OF LUKATU". Ken is swindled into buying oyster beds, only to find that the pearls are cultured.
- "THE LUCK OF THE LUGGER". Ken, hunting down the rascal who cheated him, finds that looking for the man's lugger in the Pacific is like looking for a needle in a haystack.
- "PIRATES OF THE PACIFIC". Ken meets with pirates, who hold up the 'Dawn' and loot his load of copra.
- "KEN KING'S ORDEAL". Ken, who fell overboard in the previous story, is cast on a lonely isle of the Pacific.
- "THE SECRET OF THE ISLAND". Ken crosses swords with a villainous Dutchman on the Robinson Crusoe island.
- "KEEPER OF THE PIRATES' HOARD". Krell, the Dutchman, in an effort to destroy King with dynamite, blows himself up.
- "THE RETURN OF THE RAIDERS". The pirates return to their lair on the island where Ken King is marooned.
- "THE WHIP HAND". Beset with perils on the island, the boy trader stirs up a regular hornets' nest of pirates, who are out for vengeance on the castaway.
- "TO THE RESCUE OF KEN KING". Kit Hudson sets out to search the lonely wastes of the Pacific for his friend - and succeeds.
- "THE WAY OF THE WHALER". Captain Skeet, skipper of an American whaling vessel, attempts to shanghai Ken and his crew.
- "THE WHITE MAN OF AAO". Ken visits a tiny coral island where lives a sinister young man named Poynings.
- "THE MYSTERY OF THE PEARL ISLAND". Ken entertains strange suspicions of Poynings - and meets with foul play.

- "THE PRISONERS OF THE CORAL CAVE". Ken King, kidnapped, finds himself in a cave with other kidnapped men, among them the real Poynings.
- "GUARDIANS OF THE CAVE". Kit Hudson rescues the prisoners of the cave, and the false Poynings meets his just deserts.
- "THE MYSTERY OF THE DERELICT". Ken meets a strange mystery of the sea - a schooner under full sail, without any man apparently aboard.
- "THE SECRET OF THE SCHOONER". The secret of the strange derelict is solved - a savage Papuan is hidden therein.
- "THE TRADER OF VANA-VANA". Another wicked Dutchman crosses swords with the boy trader.
- "FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH". More trouble with the Dutchman, but Ken is saved by Sululo, a black man.
- "CABIN BOY OF THE DAWN". Sululo becomes cabin-boy on the 'Dawn', and rouses the jealousy of Koko, the Bo'sun.
- "FOES OF THE DAWN". Continuing the feud between Sululo and Koko.
- "THE SECRET OF THE BANYAN". A mighty banyan-tree, hoary with age, holds a great surprise for the shipmates of the 'Dawn'.

Third Series. Commenced in No. 103. (Late 1929).

- "PEARLS AND PERIL". Ken picks up a man named Egan.
- "A BID FOR A FORTUNE". Egan hides a great pearl in the hold of the 'Dawn'.
- "THE SECRET OF THE 'DAWN'". Peter Parsons tries to buy the 'Dawn' - with its hidden pearl.
- "THE COOKY-BOY'S FIND". Danny, the native cooky-boy, finds the pearl and tries to keep it.
- "TROUBLESOME TREASURE". Dandy Peter kidnaps Ken King to force him to disclose the whereabouts of the great pearl.
- "KEN KING HITS BACK". Ken escapes from his captors, and returns the pearl to its rightful owner.

Fourth Series. Commenced in No. 155. (1930).

- "THE RETURN OF KING OF THE ISLANDS". The boy skipper in conflict with Barney Hall, ruffian of the South Seas.
- "SPECTRE OF THE SOUTH SEAS". A haunted bungalow on the island of Loya.
- "THE MYSTERY ISLAND". Ken King supports Aileen Craye against Barney Hall.
- "IN THE LAGOON OF LOYA". Well might Ken's heart thump when he hears the sudden crack of a revolver, followed by shouts and yells of the Solomon Islanders.
- "KIT HUDSON - MUTINEER". Hitherto the staunchest of friends, Ken and his shipmate come to the parting of the ways.
- "HUNTERS OF THE SOUTH SEAS". 'You've been a good friend and shipmate to me, Ken', said Kit Hudson. 'You don't know what it means to me to be leaving the old ketch, but - '. The split between the chums was complete.
- "MASTER OF FUFU". Shall Ken set a course for his home port and leave Kit Hudson marooned on the lonely coral island of Fufa? A tremendous decision for the boy skipper.
- "SHIPMATES OF THE DAWN". At last the ketch gets back its young Australian mate - to the joy of Ken and his dusky crew.

Fifth Series. Commenced in No. 186. (Late 1930).

- "THE SOLOMON ISLANDER". Ken King at grips with a savage Yankee trader, Ezekiel Horn.

- "THE COOKY-BOY'S TREASURE". There was a catch in it, but Danny, the cooky-boy, thoroughly enjoyed his visions of wealth when he solved the mystery of the castaway's tobacco-box.
- "BO'SUN OF THE DAWN". Ken is left in a black pit to die, by a villain named Da Silva.
- "THE TICK OF DOOM". Dynamite for Ken King - dynamite packed in a case supposed to contain only clocks.
- "BILLY BOTTLE - BEACHCOMBER". Kit Hudson has to fight a great temptation. A fortune will be his if he abandons a beachcomber.
- "THE DAWN'S QUEER PASSENGER". Hudson shanghai's his strange beachcomber cousin, Billy Bottle.
- "CANNIBAL ISLAND". A fortune won and lost. Kit Hudson does the right thing by his queer cousin.
- "LUCK O' THE SOUTH SEAS". A staggering surprise comes to the chums of the 'Dawn'. They pick up a castaway, who turns out to be a girl for whose rescue there is a reward of £1,000.

Sixth Series. Commenced in No. 218. (Early 1931).

- "SOUTH SEAS SHIPMATES". The 'Dawn' has a strange passenger in Bristow Holt of Kolo.
- "ROARING DEMONS". Ken is a fine seaman. This trip he has two demons to reckon with - one, a hurricane, the other, Bristow Holt.
- "TREASURE OF TOTO". A cannibal island, a box of treasure, and a canoe which vanishes.
- "THE BULLY OF THE OCTOPUS". The skipper of the 'Octopus' is hard up for a crew, and kidnaps Ken's natives.
- "CHIEF OF THE WAI-WAI". A sensational find of pearls on a lonely atoll. Ken narrowly escapes the cooking-pot.
- "THE SHARK'S TOOTH". Ken meets a Dutchman who 'puts it across' the shipmates of the 'Dawn'. But the Dutchman does not have the last laugh.
- "DANNY, THE COOKY-BOY". Kidnapped from under the very nose of his master, the cook of the 'Dawn' gets his own back.

Seventh Series. Commenced in No. 236. (1931).

- "THE QUEST OF WU FANG". A sinister Chinaman, who has been haunting the coral wharf, starts the ball of adventure rolling.
- "THE SEA-CAT'S PRIZE". 'Twenty on the line. Bags of pearls!' That's all they can get out of Ben Keefe, the castaway.
- "THE CHASE OF THE SEA-CAT". A sick man's gabble, hinting at a great hoard of pearls - the greed of Wu Fang, the cunning of a white man, and the efforts of Ken to defeat the villains.
- "LONG PALM ISLAND". Ken finds his trading with natives interrupted, and Dandy Peter, his enemy, makes a terrible acquaintance with a lonely tropic isle.
- "BEN KEEFE'S SECRET". Somewhere in the Pacific lies an island where a fortune in pearls is waiting. Desperate villains have kidnapped the only man who knows the secret of where the treasure lies, but Ken is hot on their trail.
- "KEN KING'S CLUE". The ketch was speeding eastwards under a cloud of canvas. Her course was a mystery to Kit Hudson. But Ken had solved the mystery of the whereabouts of Ben Keefe's pearl island.
- "WARRIORS OF THE SOUTH SEAS". Ken saw land where no land was marked on the chart, - the Island of Pearls. And spear-armed natives were gathering there,

and a war-drum was sounding the alarm.

"THE ISLAND OF PEARLS". It is also an island of head-collecting cannibals, and the comrades have never been nearer a fearsome end.

"THE BEACH OF TERROR". It's death to venture on the island of Aya-ua. But the pearls are a great attraction.

"KEN KING STEPS IN". Wu Fang's cunning enables him to win the prize for which many desperate men have sought - but Ken King takes a hand.

"IN THE HEAD-HUNTERS' LAIR". A pressing invitation comes to Kit Hudson to visit the local devil-doctor, who smokes human heads in his spare time. Ken King and brawny Koko go, too, - but only in the nick of time.

"FEAST NIGHT ON AYA-UA". The great cooking-fire is burning, the white men to provide the feast are there. The cannibals are smacking their lips. Then Ken arrives.

Eighth Series. Commenced in No. 277. (1932).

"KING OF THE ISLANDS". The villainous Dandy stows himself away secretly on the 'Dawn'.

"THE HAUNTED SHIP". The stowaway on the 'Dawn' makes the crew believe that the ketch is haunted.

"THE GRINNING PIRATE". Dandy Peter, pirate of the South Seas, gets the whip-hand. No wonder he grins.

"MAROON ISLAND". A prisoner on his own ketch, Ken King is bound for an uncharted speck of an island in the Pacific.

"LOST TO THE WORLD". Ken is like Robinson Crusoe in this story, but he certainly has his loyal chum and good old Koko with him.

"WILD MAN OF THE PACIFIC". The scrap of paper which the lost millionaire slipped into a bottle and flung into the sea contains many puzzling blanks in the message which contains a clue to a fortune.

"THE ISLE OF SURPRISES". The lonely sea-girt land, seemingly so peaceful and beautiful, where Ken is marooned, suddenly becomes intensely alive.

"THE BULLY OF TONGA". The boy skipper has had a rough time, but luck turns, and we find him in pursuit of the rascal who has stolen his ketch.

"CHASING THE DAWN". With a pirate in command, Ken's ketch goes racing over the Pacific - with the boy trader's motor-boat in hot pursuit.

"KEN KING'S LUCK". Almost crushed by misfortune, Ken suddenly meets with the most amazing good fortune. He gets his ship back - and money to burn.

Ninth Series. Commenced in No. 302. (Late 1932).

"KING OF THE ISLANDS". Ken meets a strange Eurasian, Honest Mr. Jam.

"THE PEARLS OF JAM". Fat Mr. Jam provides a surprise with his amazing pearls, and Billy, the beachcomber, comes out of the sea.

"KEN KING'S JOY-RIDE". Ashore in Tahiti, the boy trader bumps into Mr. Jam - in more ways than one.

"TREASURE OF TUNAVIVA". There's Pink Coral worth five pounds an ounce on Tunaviva says Billy the beachcomber. Ken is doubtful - but not so Mr. Jam.

"TROUBLE ON TAHITI". Never has Ken seen a more beautiful island than Tahiti. But it's more full of trouble for him than any island he knows.

"OUTCAST OF THE SOUTH SEAS". For the sake of a wastrel beachcomber, Ken walks deliberately into a deadly trap.

"ON THE PINK CORAL TRAIL". The market value of Pink Coral is £5 an ounce - and Ken is seeking an island that is made of it.

- "THE ATOLL OF MYSTERY". Ken, seeking pink coral, finds a first-class mystery - and hidden watchers on an island that should be uninhabited.
- "THE SECRET MEN OF TUNAVIVA". On the loneliest island in the world, the bullets start to fly.
- "KEN KING'S DEFEAT". Hair-raising experiences on Tunaviva.
- "KOKO'S GREAT FIGHT". The Kanaka bo'sun has a love for his master which bodes ill for Ken King's enemies.
- "NO SURRENDER". A prisoner in the hands of the Secret Men of Tunaviva, Ken boldly refuses to order Koko to hand over the 'Dawn' to his captors.
- "KEN KING'S MATE BOBS UP". Kit Hudson is going to rescue - or avenge - his chum, even if he has to turn the South Seas inside out.
- "KING OF THE ISLANDS" PERIL". Faithful Koko is faced with a fearful choice - to surrender his master's ship or to see Ken King perish before his eyes.
- "DEATH-TRAP OF THE SOUTH SEAS". Bottled up in a dark, water-logged cavern, Ken is fighting for his life - without weapons or hope.
- "KING OF THE ISLANDS LAST CHANCE". It's touch and go for Ken. Death goggles at him in the very moment that he lays his hands on the precious pink coral.
- "COMRADES OF THE KETCH". Kit Hudson to the rescue.
- "SOUTH SEAS TREASURE". Great lumps of pink coral, and plenty of trouble for Ken King.
- "THE FIRE-SHIP". Death by roasting looks like being the fate of Ken, with dynamite-tipped arrows to blow him to pieces if he escapes the fire.
- "WHITE FLAG - AND BLACK DEATH". A horror lies hidden in the ketch - a tiny thing, black as night, with a single crimson spot. Its bite is death.
- "THE LAGOON OF TUNAVIVA". A strange mystery over the danger-filled lagoon.
- "BILLY THE BEACHCOMBER". Big surprises and a fine windfall for Ken King and his merry men.

Tenth Series. Commenced in No. 347. (1933).

- "SOUTH SEAS SALVAGE". On the surf-ridden shore of a cannibal island lies a wreck with £7,000 waiting to be salvaged.
- "KIT HUDSON'S HUSTLE". Kit Hudson wants that £7,000. So does Dandy Peter Parsons.
- "THE CRACKERJACK'S TREASURE". Kit Hudson on his own - after £7,000.
- "SOUTH SEAS PARTNERS". In partnership with the rascal, Dandy Peter, Kit Hudson is crazed by the vision of Big Salvage.
- "HEAD-HUNTERS OF TREASURE ISLAND". Hot on the trail of seven thousand golden sovereigns, Kit Hudson and Dandy Peter meet the cannibal guardians of a South Seas treasure-wreck.
- "WATER-CANOES OF SUNA-SUNA". Hudson, in partnership with a scoundrel, fights for his life with a hoard of head-hunters - with the fortune they've come to salvage lying in the waters at their feet.
- "GUARDIANS OF SOUTH SEAS TREASURE". Kit Hudson meets with the blackest treachery from his partner, Dandy Peter.
- "KEN KING'S CANNIBAL HUNT". Speed---speed! - is Ken's prayer in his race to save his old comrade.
- "PRISONERS OF THE CANOE-HOUSE". Koko, the giant Kanaka bo'sun, deals with the Devil-doctor of Suna-Suna, and finds Ken King's lost chum.
- "PHANTOM GOLD". Shipmates once more, Ken and Kit join forces in a bid for the 'Crackerjack's 7,000 sunken sovereigns.
- "DANNY, THE DIVER". Cannibals, sharks and trickery lie between Ken and the

salvage of the 'Crackerjack', and only the fat cooky-boy can solve the mystery of the treasure.

"THE COOKY-BOY'S HAUL". Promoted from the galley to deep-sea diver, Danny rifles Davy Jones' treasury.

Eleventh Series. Commenced in No. 413. (1934).

"SOUTH SEAS SCALLYWAG". Ray Paget is the bad lad of the wild Pacific. And it's Ken's job to tame him and to make a man of him.

"KEN KING'S RUNAWAY". The scallywag is ready to face even hungry sharks to escape from the 'Dawn'.

"CANNIBALS OF KUA". The scallywag laughs at Ken's solemn warnings until the cannibals gather him in for the cooking pots.

"HEAD-HUNTERS' LAIR". There's a very real chance that Ken himself may join his runaway deckhand in the cannibals' larder.

"ROGUE OF THE SOUTH SEAS". The scallywag gets into the clutches of Barney Hall, the rogue.

"DESERTER'S TRAIL". The scallywag deckhand has vanished, but Ken gets a clue to his whereabouts.

"KOKO, THE KANAKA". The giant bo'sun helps Ken to wring the truth out of Barney Hall.

"MUTINY ON THE DAWN". A good joke, thought Ken, when the cooky-boy upended a pail of garbage over the scallywag's head. But it led to Mutiny.

"WRECKER OF THE PACIFIC". Ken is a prisoner on his own ship. And Ray Paget, the scallywag, a mutineer, is recklessly determined to pile the 'Dawn' on a coral reef.

"SCALLYWAG'S LUCK". Ray Paget tricks the cooky-boy into playing the traitor.

"DANDY PETER'S CUTTER". With sails all set, Ken goes after the scallywag, who has joined Dandy Peter.

"BEACHCOMBER OF UVUKA". A derelict of the South Seas, Ray Paget would do anything for money. It was Dandy Peter's money that made him tackle King of the Islands.

"KEN KING'S MAN-HUNT". Dandy Peter's cutter is lost in the boundless Pacific. But Ken is determined to find it and settle scores with the man who has carried off Paget.

"STEALER OF MEN". The revelation of Dandy Peter's business at Dutchman's Island comes as a stunning blow to scallywag Ray Paget, deserter from the 'Dawn'.

"DANDY PETER'S VENGEANCE". With every stitch of canvas set, Ken races across the Pacific, desperate to save Paget. He succeeds, and the scallywag gives promise for the future.

Twelfth Series. Commenced in No. 6 (New series). (1928).

"KING OF THE ISLANDS". Sunset over the Pacific - the ketch 'Dawn' lying becalmed off the uninhabited island of Kohu. Then came the Dutchman, Van Duck, after a pearler's secret.

"THE BOY WITHOUT A NAME". Ken has picked up a strange refugee, a boy known only as Peter. In some way Peter is connected with the story of a fabulous quantity of pearls on Kohu.

"BULLY OF THE SUNDA". 'The days of piracy are dead - Van Duck will never dare to attack us', declared Ken. But he had forgotten the lure of pearls.

"KEN KING HIPS BACK". The boy skipper hands out rough justice to Barney Hall, his old enemy.

- "FIRE SHIP". Ken, Barney Hall, Van Duck, and the boy Peter continue the search for the pearls.
- "VAN DUCK'S VENGEANCE". Prisoner on board his own ship, Ken makes a midnight voyage to Kohu, where the mystery of the vanished boy, Peter, is deepening.
- "RIVALRY OF PEARL ISLAND". War to the death on Kohu Island.
- "SURPRISE ATTACK". Stealthily Ken swam towards the 'Dawn', risking his life in an effort to recapture his ketch.
- "DUTCHMAN'S PRIZE". Determined to discover the pearls hidden on Kohu Island, Van Duck strikes again, while Ken fights a lone battle.
- "RESCUE UNDER FIRE". No method was too ruthless for Van Duck to get the secret of Kohu out of the boy, Peter. Somehow Ken had to effect a rescue before it was too late.
- "FLAMING ARROWS". They thudded on the deck of the 'Dawn'. Van Duck was making a last attempt to secure the secret of the pearls of Kohu. And the boy, Peter, turns out to be a girl.
- "ISLAND OF SILENCE". It was weird - uncanny. As the 'Dawn' approached the usually busy island of Lalua there was not a soul to be seen, not a sound to be heard.
- "WARNED OFF LALUA". The warning was backed by bullets, but Ken ignored it. He was determined to get to the bottom of the mystery of the Island of Silence.
- "IT'S UP TO KOKO". Overnight Ken and Kit had vanished on the Island of Silence. Now is Koko's chance to prove he is no common Kanaka, as he has often boasted.
- "HURRICANE SALVAGE". Why had the three dagoes stolen the 'Dawn's' boat and put out to sea? Ken thought he knew when he sighted the drifting derelict.
- "MYSTERY OF THE GRAMPUS". The three dagoes had beaten Ken in the race for the derelict schooner. Then, from the supposed derelict, shots rang out.
- "HEAD-HUNTERS' GOLD". A Frenchman brings a story of hidden gold. And Dandy Peters puts his oar in.
- "PHANTOM FORTUNE". In the sand gleamed tiny specks of gold. "It's a fortune, Ken", exclaimed Hudson. "And it's ours for £500." Too late the chums discovered the trickery.
- "THE COOKING-POTS OF GULU". The shipmates of the 'Dawn' lost their money buying a worthless gold-mine. Now the savages attack them.
- "HEAVE TO, DANDY PETER". The 'Dawn' swept down on the 'Sea-Cat'. Ken could not see the swindling Frenchman on board, but he had no doubt the reckoning was at hand.
- "THE GHOST OF THE SANDBANK". Retribution for the Frenchman, and Ken and Kit get their money back.

Thirteenth and Final Series. Commenced in No. 49. (new series) (1939)

- "KING OF THE ISLANDS". Danny, the cooky-boy, reports a 'debble' aboard the 'Dawn' - and the Kanaka crew mutinies.
- "THE CHEST OF TERROR". The 'debble' turns out to be Ken's old enemy, Dandy Peter - and he is quickly conquered.
- "ISLAND OF THE WOLF". The shipmates fall foul of a mystery man of the Pacific - a man who shoots unauthorised visitors to his island on sight.
- "THE MAN FROM THE SEA". He's the one man Kit Hudson wants to meet, but he's unconscious, and nips in the bud the trouble brewing between the pals of the 'Dawn'.
- "THE WORD WAS 'DANGER'". From the island of the Wolf came a grim warning to steer clear of that forbidden spot. But it leads Hudson to quarrel with

his skipper.

"MASTER OF MYSTERY ISLAND". The Wolf they called him - and now he and his cannibals had trapped Kit Hudson.

"SHARK BAIT". 'The name', cried the Wolf. 'Give me the name of the man who visits my island in secret.' If Hudson does not reply he is to be thrown to the sharks.

THE BUNNY HARE SERIES

Commenced in No. 131. (1930).

"THE MAN WITH THE EAR-RINGS". Series starts in Margate.

"BUNNY ON THE TRACK". Bunny saves a man in a swimming-pool.

"SLAVE OF THE WIND". Bunny invests 5/- in a balloon ride, and meets with great peril.

"BUNNY'S LUCK". Bunny is carried to France in the runaway balloon.

"THE VANISHING TRICK". Bunny in a predicament in the Bay of Biscay.

"BUNNY'S SECRET". Bunny in the Straits of Gibraltar.

"MORE KICKS THAN HA'PENANCE". Bunny in a scrap on Gib.

"BUNNY TO THE RESCUE". More trouble on Gib.

"SECRET OF THE SAND DUNES". Bunny in an adventure with pirates in Morocco.

"THE MAN IN THE VELL". Trouble with Nubians.

"THE PUDDING HEAD". Bunny in Tunis.

"TREASURES OF CARTHAGE". Adventures in the ruins of Carthage.

THE SCHOOL FOR SLACKERS

First Series. Commenced in No. 371. (Early 1934).

"THE SCHOOL FOR SLACKERS". The whole of High Coombe School is against the new Head, James McCann. For his middle name ought to be 'dynamite'.

"THE FIGHTING HEAD". Open rebellion in the School for Slackers.

"REBELS OF THE FIFTH". The Wake-'em-up Head issues his challenge - 'Knuckle under - or get out!'

"THE WAR OF THE FAGS". The rebellious Fifth Form use the fags to bait the unpopular new Headmaster.

"FREEING THE FAGS". The Head flings another bomb-shell. Fagging is forbidden.

"THE DANDY'S BOOBY-TRAP". Mr. Chard gets the booby-trap intended for the live-wire Head.

"DORM THREE'S NIGHT OUT". The night birds (breakers of bounds) at High Coombe get their wings badly singed.

"CAPTIVE OF THE FAGS". The fags imprison Colonel Compton - in mistake for the new Head.

"FOURTH FORM AVENGERS". 'Vengeance is mine', vowed Ferguson of the Fourth. But his plot slipped up.

"THE PREFECTS' REVOLT". 'We'll put his head in a bag and tie him up', - it can't go wrong!' said the prefects. But it did!

Second Series. Commenced in No. 384. (Mid 1934).

"THE DANDY PAINTER". Aubrey Compton paints the Head's study, and Bob Darrell is blamed.

"TOO TIRED FOR CRICKET". Jimmy McCann has bucked them up at lessons. Now he is going to do the same at games.

- "WHAT PRICE DUCKS' EGGS?". The Head is humiliated by seeing his boys in the most amazing game of cricket ever played.
- "CAPTAIN - AND FAG". The Head appoints Ferguson of the Fourth as Captain of Cricket - with staggering results.
- "ASKING FOR THE SACK". Aubrey Compton, leader of the slackers, challenges the Head to sack him - and gets the medicine he doesn't want.
- "LAYING FOR THE HEAD". Compton adopts gangster methods in his bitter feud against the Headmaster.
- "THE HIGH COOMBE JOKER". Carter, the funny man of the Fifth, works the biggest jape ever. The victim, the Head, has his little joke, too.
- "THE CRICKET DICTATOR". Ferguson of the Fourth, Head of Cricket, turns out the senior slackers for practice at the nets - at four o'clock in the morning.
- "TAR AND FEATHERS FOR JIMMY McCANN". But the French Master gets the lot.
- "JIMMY McCANN'S MIRACLE". High Coombe beats Okeham at cricket - and the Head has succeeded. But the question asked at the end of the series is "Will it last?"

THE LEN LEX SERIES

First Series. Commenced in No. 452. (Autumn 1935).

- "THE SCHOOLBOY DETECTIVE". The first ten stories appeared under this collective title. Len Lex is sent to Oakshott School by his uncle, Detective-Inspector Nixon of Scotland Yard. He is in search of a crook known as the Sussex Man.
- "MYSTERY OF THE MOAT HOUSE". Len, on holiday with his pals, finds a Christmas mystery when Sir Lucian Jerningham disappears.
- "THE GHOST HUNTERS". The ghost of old Sir Lucian appears at the Moat House.
- "THE VANISHED HOST". More holiday thrills at the Moat House.
- "LOST SIR LUCIAN". Len Lex solves the mystery of the Moat House.

Second Series. Commenced in No. 479. 1936.

- "KICKED OUT". Tunstall, sacked from Higham School, comes to Oakshott, and Len Lex gives him very particular attention.
- "ASKING FOR THE SACK". Len asks himself why Tunstall of the Fifth is deliberately courting expulsion.
- "BULLY OF THE FIFTH". Tunstall, the new Fifth-former, is a wretched bully, but Len makes short work of him.
- "PIE ON THE WARPATH". Thirsting for vengeance, the Goat of the Fifth bikes out on the trail of Tunstall - and disappears.
- "HOUSE OF MYSTERY". Searching for Pie, Len Lex hears suspicious noises from behind shuttered windows in a weird house.
- "THE KIDNAPPED FIFTH-FORMER". Len solves the mystery of the absence of Pie, and Tunstall, an impostor, is shown up.
- "THE HOLD-UP MAN". Lex, cycling with his pals, hears two revolver shots, and goes on the trail of a bank robber.
- "MYSTERY MASTER". Pie Porringe voices strange suspicions of Mr. Young, the new master - and it sets Len thinking hard.
- "THE MAN FROM SCOTLAND YARD". While Oakshott buzzes with gossip about the bank robber, Len gains some useful clues.
- "PIE'S MASTER-STROKE". The Goat of Oakshott thought his rag a complete washout. Not so, Len Lex. It gave him the final link in the evidence against the hold-up man, Mr. Young, of course.

THE RIO KID SERIES

New stories of the famous character from the "Popular". Commenced in No. 503. (1937).

- "THE RIO KID RIDES AGAIN". The Kid rides into Lariat, and finds a heap of trouble.
- "THE LONELY HUT". A lonely hut stood on the empty range. The Kid sat in silence awaiting trouble - and it came.
- "MOONLIGHT STAMPEDE". The Kid in conflict with the rustlers of Lariat.
- "TRAITOR'S TRAIL". Somewhere in the hills was the rustlers' hide-out - until the Kid took up the trail.
- "WATCHERS OF THE RANGE". From their hiding-place the cowboys saw a cloud of dust in the distance - bobbing stetsons of men on horseback. The Kid was right - the rustlers were riding into a trap.
- "RUSTLER'S SECRET". The Kid brings to justice Handsome Harris - rustler in chief.
- "RANGERS ON HIS TRACK". The Rio Kid thought he had said good-bye to outlawry. Then, like a bolt from the blue, came Mule Kick Hall, captain of the Texas Rangers.
- "NIGHT ALARM". The Texas Rangers are after the Kid.
- "HUNTED DOWN". 'Let me see your face', said Mule Kick Hall. 'Push back that stetson. Reckon I've seen you before somewhere'. The Kid knew that his game was up.
- "FALSE TRAIL". Common sense tells the Kid to ride from the Lazy S ranch where he is foreman. But he stays.
- "LYNCH LAW". The Kid knew that he was throwing away his liberty. But he could not let them hang the only man who knew his secret.
- "MULE-KICK GETS HIS MAN". The end of the Kid's foremanship of the Lazy S ranch.
- "THE RIO KID IN HOLLYWOOD". The Kid reaches the film city.
- "FIFTY-THOUSAND-DOLLAR PRISONER". The Kid faces up to Spanish John, the most feared man in Hollywood.
- "RIO KID, TALKIE STAR". The Kid is booked to impersonate himself on the silver screen.
- "JUST LIKE A MOVIE". The film-makers of Hollywood don't have to think out new thrills when the Rio Kid's around. He supplies them himself - red hot.
- "ONE THROW OF THE LARIAT". Success or failure for the Kid in Hollywood? Spanish John takes a hand.
- "THE DEATH RIDE". All that a horseman could do in the way of wild riding the Kid was prepared to put over for the films, but this was a movie stunt gone crazy.
- "THEY CALLED HIM A QUITTER". The Rio Kid had said that he would ride his mustang down the waterfall, but for two days he had been missing. They said he had got 'cold feet' and had gone for good. But they were wrong.
- "FUNK OF THE FILMS". The Kid in conflict with a weak film-star.
- "HOLLYWOOD SHOW-DOWN". The Rio Kid's secret was out. There was nothing for him to do but to ride - but he had a debt to settle first.

WANTED: Magnets Nos. 1122, 1123, 1124, 1125, containing Ravenspur Grange series. Price 10/- per copy. Or the Schoolboys' Own Library number 229 "The House of Terror". Price 10/-. In good condition only.

B. ADAM, 28 DERWENT STREET, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE, 5.

The Cases of PETER FLINT — Detective Extraordinary

By GEOFFREY HOCKLEY, NEW ZEALAND



Peter Flint finds himself in an awkward situation while the rascally Malcolm Dredge smirks in the background. A reproduction of the cover of No. 292 of the Nuggett Library.

BACK in the glorious, carefree days of 1913, when as a schoolboy my only worry was the amassing of the wherewithal to purchase my weekly supply of boys' papers, I developed an appetite for the detective story which to this day remains unsated. And if with the passing of the years my taste in 'tec tales has become perhaps a trifle more matured, I can still lay aside Ellery Queen, Hercule Poirot and the rest of to-day's sophisticated sleuths and turn with nostalgic delight to the doings of the crime-busters of yesteryear ... and what an enthralling company they were! Sexton Blake and Nelson Lee, of course, occupy secure niches in sleuthdom's Hall of Fame, but there were others, less celebrated, perhaps, but nevertheless delightful grist to the schoolboy's mill..... Dixon Brett, Martin Dale, Carson Grey, Martin Trackman and a score of others who have passed into oblivion. Herbert Leckenby, in his article "Detectives in Boys' Literature" in the 1952

"Annual", has done an admirable job in compiling a list of the man-hunters, great and small, whose adventures once regaled us, and it is with the career of one of these lesser lights, whose exploits I still recall with a tingle of delight after some forty years, that I would like to deal, in the hope that it may be of some small interest to our "Brotherhood of Happy Hours".

Among the many publishers whose presses churned out millions of words per week for the delectation of the youth of the period was James Henderson & Co., from whose Red Lion House issued, among other papers, the Nugget Library, a penny weekly containing a single long complete story. Some of these, if my memory serves me right, were reprints of serials which had appeared in the famous Henderson comics, "Lot-O'-Fun" and "Comic Life". The Nugget featured various kinds of stories...school, Wild West, adventure, and detective...and in the detective yarns a central character appeared regularly...John Lyon. Now, although I devoured with gusto any and every dish on the man-hunt menu, the Nugget Library's detective never quite "clicked" with me. True, he regularly and conscientiously dangled by ropes from the spindly-looking aeroplanes of the period, battled criminals on the battlements of lofty castles, hurtled chasms in runaway motor cars, and went faithfully through all the motions of the successful detective of fiction, but he somehow failed to kindle the same spark of enthusiasm in my youthful bosom as did others of the sleuthing fraternity. Perhaps his name may have had some bearing on this state of affairs, for with one or two rare exceptions, who ever heard of a really successful sleuth, from Sherlock Holmes onwards, who did not possess a two-syllable Christian name and a single-syllable surname? Worse still, John Lyon's assistant was a rather colourless personality who bore the uninspiring name of Christian Lesage, who compared most unfavourably with Tinker, Nipper and other youthful helpmates of the great ones. All in all, the firm of Lyon & Lesage completely failed to ring the bell with me, and I seriously considered transferring my allegiance from the Nugget to some other paper in my thirst for thrills. Now, whether my thought-waves were wafted by some mysterious medium into the inner sanctums of Red Lion House, or whether Henderson & Co. had sensed that their detective was not making what would today be called a "smash hit" with their readers, I do not know, but behind the scenes, as it transpired, they were grooming a brand-new and sensational crime-fighter for his debut in the pages of the Nugget. Stephen H. Agnew, who had been writing the John Lyon series, had been requested to get busy and create a new detective for the Henderson weekly, and he responded with gusto, pulling out all the stops in his effort to provide some brand-new and really hair-raising thrills for jaded "Nugget" readers, and in No. 280 his new super-sleuth, Peter Flint, aided and abetted by his youthful assistant Jack Nugget, made his debut in "Peter Flint and the Skeleton Gang."

Now, digressing for a moment, I recall that No. 280, while marking the advent of Peter Flint, also achieved distinction in another direction by being, to the best of my recollection, the only paper of the half-dozen or so with which I regaled myself weekly to ever arouse extremely strong paternal disapproval. "Chums", for instance, had always been tacitly approved of, the "Union Jack", "Boys' Friend", "Magnet" and "Pluck" more or less tolerated, while the pre-Flint "Nugget", whose covers, while not too sensational, could hardly be described as prim, just scraped by. But alas! Probably determined to do his bit in introducing the new 'tec, the "Nugget" artist had really gone to town on the cover of No. 280, and a hydrogen bomb wasn't in it with the explosion which ensued when the head of the house espied it propped up against the milk-jug in front of me at the

tea-table! Glancing at that selfsame cover as I write this, I must admit, although I was rather hurt at the time, that there perhaps may have been some slight justification for the paternal ire...it DOES look a little...er... "penny-dreadful-ish!" Anyway, I recall that after this unfortunate episode, I carefully detached the covers from subsequent numbers of the Peter Flint series before bringing them home!

However, after sampling "The Skeleton Gang" I was left with no doubts as to whether I should continue to expend the nimble copper upon future issues of the "Nugget". The fast-moving plot concerned the activities of a jovial group who conceived the rather original idea of inoculating millionaires with super-virulent cancer viruses and then obligingly offering to supply an antidote at a mere £30,000 per shot. Just as a precaution against unfair fee-cutting, the gang first proceeded to kidnap all the eminent cancer specialists in the country...a rather novel method of eliminating competition which left the unfortunate millionaires with no choice of professional attention. The gang derived its title from its eccentric habit of leaving a human skeleton on the scene of each kidnapping. Just why this rather cumbersome kind of calling-card was used, the author did not explain. However, when Inspector Bigham of Scotland Yard confessed himself baffled, Peter Flint stepped in, and after several chapters of brilliant thrust-and-parry work he drew the case to a whirlwind conclusion. The Skeleton Gang was apprehended, including one member who almost literally came to a sticky end when he tangled with one of Jack Nugget's light-hearted inventions, the Nugget Patent Liquid Linoleum ("pour it onto any floor---wood, brick, concrete or stone---and it hardens into a beautiful linoleum"). The missing specialists were rescued from durance vile and restored to the bosoms of their families, with the exception of one Professor Peterson, who unfortunately had to be liquidated by the gang and whose corpse was discovered bound to the cross on St. Giles' church in Streatham. Recovery operations were somewhat hindered by the descent of a skeleton attached to a parachute dropped from the gang's monoplane. But all in all, it was a triumph for the "Nugget's" new detective. Peter Flint was on the map!

The new 'tec was no modest violet. This lightning combination of Sherlock Holmes and Superman regarded bushels solely as measures of weight, not receptacles for concealing the Flint luminosity. Neither did he suffer fools gladly. Listen to this sample of conversation with the harassed Inspector Bigham:

"'You're a fool and a fathead," said Peter Flint. "Nature obviously intended you to be a dustman, or something in the navy line. My dear fellow, you are absolutely incapable of connected thought!"

"Inspector Bigham grunted. "I had an idea myself that the work of a detective was conducive to thought," he observed defensively.

"Peter Flint snorted. "Connected thought, I said! I admit that the jackasses from the Yard can think, but their minds are so mechanical that if two and two do not happen to make four in the stereotyped manner, their thoughts are valueless!"

No wonder that the Yard got a little hot under the collar at Peter Flint at frequent intervals! But even Inspector Bigham's eyes "gleamed with reluctant admiration" at some of Flint's flights into the realms of deduction, as in this excerpt from "The Black Museum":

"'I have convinced myself of several facts. First, Michael Gripper was not kidnapped forcibly, but left of his own accord; secondly, he disguised him-

self before he went; thirdly, he carried with him an extremely heavy bundle; fourthly, he proceeded towards Bookham in a powerful motor which had one tyre punctured and was driven by a negro chauffeur."

All this after a few seconds glance at the scene of the crime! I can rather sympathise with Bigham, Gurdon & Co. Here's another sample of what they were up against, this time from "The Mysteries of Paris".

"The assassin wore a false beard," reported Flint with lightning rapidity. "He had only just arrived from England, came here for the express purpose of killing his companion, is a barber by trade, left England in a tremendous hurry, and escaped from this room by way of the chimney."

Phew! Sherlock Holmes was no slouch, but Peter Flint started where the Baker Street sage left off!

As Peter Flint stood out from the rank and file of fictional 'tecs like a blob of tomato sauce on a dress shirt front, so did his assistant, Jack Nugget, differ from other youthful stooges by providing a good deal of comic relief with his screwball inventions. During the brief intervals when not engaged in rescuing his boss from explosive-laden cellars, burning buildings, disused mine-shafts, and other ghastly fates, his inventive mind worked overtime producing such crack-pot concoctions as the Nugget Liquid Linoleum, the Nugget Mechanical Waiter, the Nugget Automatic Orchestra and other Heath Robinson-like contraptions. They landed him in trouble on numerous occasions, as when the Automatic Orchestra got out of control and the police descended on Flint's rooms in Mount Street Mansions, summoned by startled tenants as a result of the ghastly cacophony. On another occasion the Mechanical Waiter, introduced surreptitiously into a tea-room for a trial run, created chaos among the customers by plastering a retired colonel with jam tarts and pouring milk down the back of a lady who had just wandered in for her "elevenes".

However, these laughable interludes in the careers of Peter Flint and his assistant served only to throw into stronger relief the many grim and bizarre cases which came their way. Following the clean-up of the Skeleton Gang, Flint crossed swords with Hugo Stark, the Perfume Poisoner, in the strange affair of "The Human Idol". The quest for a green glass clock, which ticked out ancient poison formulas in Morse code, and a terrifying blue idol apparently possessing the ability to move from its throne, taxed Flint's powers to the utmost, and had Jack Nugget not arrived in the nick of time to rescue him from the tentacles of a giant man-eating orchid, the Flint career would have ended there and then! However, in due course the case was nicely cleared up, the baddies received their just deserts, and I was left with my tongue fairly hanging out waiting for the next Peter Flint hair-raiser to appear!

Ever since I was able to read (I think it was at the tender age of five or thereabouts) the bizarre and unusual has intrigued me, and I think this was why the Flint chronicles appealed to me. And the author certainly laid these characteristics on with gusto in the next adventure of his super-sleuth, which bore the delightfully gruesome title of "The Plague of Spiders". Even the case-hardened Flint was momentarily flabbergasted when, in answer to an urgent message from Sir Arthur Hamblenden, the Prime Minister, to meet that august personage at a house in old Shoreham Road, he entered to find the place swarming with enormous tarantula spiders, and---curiouser and curiouser---scarlet human footprints on the walls and ceilings! Events moved at a cracking pace from then on. The message from the

Prime Minister turned out to be a fake (perhaps Flint was so accustomed to receiving notes from him that the thought of a decoy message never entered his head, which just goes to show that even super-detectives slip now and again) to lure him into the house, in the hope that he would provide a tasty meal for the horde of giant spiders. In the meantime, both the P.M. and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been kidnapped by none other than Flint's old friend the Perfume Poisoner, who had escaped from prison and had discovered a method by which the eggs of the venomous *Lycosa* spider could be artificially hatched in a few minutes. Spider incubators were to be secretly installed in banks, jewellers' establishments and other strategic places, and in the panic which would ensue with the appearance of millions of the giant insects, Hugo Stark and his henchmen, protected by a secret spider-repelling perfume, had planned to make a clean-up which would make Morgan's sacking of Panama look like a smash-and-grab raid on a sweet-shop. But once again they had reckoned without Peter Flint. In a cyclone of single-handed action (except for the help of Jack Nugget, who was kept too busy dodging spiders to produce any fresh brain-children) the gang was smashed, the spider plague nipped in the bud (or the egg), the Perfume Poisoner tucked away in the deepest dungeons of Dartmoor, and the Prime Minister and the Chancellor (who had been spirited away because they had been tipped off about the P.P.'s plot by a weak-kneed member of the gang) both tendered Flint their personal congratulations. Incidentally, the uncanny incident of the scarlet footprints turned out to be just a ruse to absorb Flint's attention (something like the boy who, when asked why he added so many totally irrelevant details to the conundrums he asked his friends, said that he put them in "just to make them harder!")

By this time I was a confirmed Flint addict, and the time between each number of the "Nugget" seemed a year!

If, after sleepily reaching out to turn off your alarm-clock at seven in the morning, you happened to glance out of your bedroom window and see, on the spot which only a few hours before had been a vacant weed-grown section, a natty bungalow with every mod. con. and bearing the very appropriate title of "Aladdin Lodge" on the gate, you would naturally doubt the evidence of your senses. Such was the rather startling experience of Mr. Archibald Simpson. However, after comparing notes with the milkman and establishing the fact that it was no hallucination, Mr. Simpson lost no time in bringing this puzzling occurrence to the notice of Peter Flint, thus starting the ball rolling in the strange case of "The Masked Tawareks". The ace 'tec was quickly on the scene and with the aid of his trusty skeleton keys soon effected an entrance to the strange house, though not before drawing his young assistant's attention to (of all things) camel-tracks on the garden path. Bloodstains on the door-handle indicated a tragedy, and sure enough, on the bed lay a corpse with a black cord twisted around the neck. Clues were scanty, but the Flint deductive powers were hitting on all eight cylinders that morning, and in five minutes he announced his conclusions, although "a criss-cross of puzzled wrinkles knitted themselves above his eyes" as he spoke.

"Every clue I find points to a theory which I find almost incredible," he remarked. "If there is any virtue in deduction, this crime was committed by Masked Tawareks!"

"Masked which, gov'nor?"

"Tawareks. They are a Berber race whose domain is the heart of the Sahara Desert. I have found traces of the red-hot snuff used by this tribe; the

cord around the dead man's throat is of black camel-hair; and on the floor is a litham, or black cotton mask, used as a face covering; the fingerprints in the room were made by a man with filthy hands...and a Tawarek, I may tell you, never washes!"

Dirty work, all right! And it all turned out to be part of an elaborate plot by one "Silk-Hat Harry" to rob the Bank of Bolivia, and to cast suspicion on the unfortunate Tawareks, who had been brought to London to see the sights by a celebrated explorer. The two 'tecs were led a thrilling chase before things were finally cleared up. Incidentally, the bungalow which had appeared overnight turned out to be a sample of a new patent Interlocking Portable House which had been erected by the inventor for advertising purposes...one incident for which Jack Nugget couldn't be blamed!

Sooner or later, all detectives seem to clash with a member of the fair sex, and Peter Flint turned out to be no exception, for in "The Knave of Diamonds", which got off to a flying start with a mammoth jewel robbery, he came up against a femme fatale in the person of Kitty Witch, Queen of Rogues. Kitty was quite a personality, for "even the cold-blooded Flint felt some faint stir in his pulses at the sight of her vivid, glowing beauty. She appeared to be quite young...not more than nineteen or twenty...slim and exquisitely gowned, with big, roughish grey eyes, a wealth of curly dark hair, and a saucy smile of irresistible charm."

Sounds as though Yvonne, Rozane and other lady crooks might be "also started" compared with Kitty! Anyway, her beauty was apparently only skin-deep, for she had no compunction in crowning Jack Nugget with a champagne bottle when she discovered him doing a spot of spying! She certainly had quite a way with her, though...after five or six chapters she had exercised her wiles to such good purpose as to persuade Malcolm Dredge, chief of the C.I.D. of Scotland Yard, to throw in his lot with her, which rather complicated matters for Flint, especially as Dredge was playing a double game. Eventually, although Flint recovered the loot, Dredge and Kitty escaped.

However, in the case of "The Schoolmaster Crook" Flint again crossed swords with this formidable pair, and this time it was a resounding triumph for the detective. Dredge, obtaining a post as a master at a private school for the sons of wealthy parents, engineered a colossal scheme involving the disappearance of the pupils for purposes of ransom. In the course of this case, though, Flint took a few hard knocks before stowing the precious pair safely away behind bars. Amongst other little misadventures he was bound hand and foot, tossed into a motor car, and the vehicle pushed over the edge of an abandoned mine shaft, luckily emerging almost unscathed from the wreckage at the bottom of a five-hundred-foot drop. "By the big bombardier, I've got as many lives as a cat!" he muttered, feeling gingerly at his bruised and aching limbs. "I suppose the padded cushions helped to break the fall!"

Ah, upholsterers really made a job of things in those days! I only wish the seats in my car were half as shock-absorbing!

However, Flint found the going not quite so arduous when he tackled the case of "The Great Seaside Panic", in which he found himself pitted against the organisation calling itself The League of Strange Sins, whose object was to create a reign of terror in Brighton, Blackpool, Margate, Eastbourne and other seaside resorts. Fortunately, he was able to get everything under control before

the League managed to get really into its stride, and nothing more serious occurred than the burning of the Pleroma Hotel at Brighton, the Alexandra Hotel at Southend, the dynamiting of the Gaiety Theatre at Blackpool and the destruction of three or four other seaside hostelryes. The only incident really verging on the sensational was a tiff which Flint had with one of the gang on the top of a fifty-foot diving-tower at Clacton, from which both parties took an unscheduled plunge, and he was so anxious to get the whole affair over and done with that he bundled his unconscious prisoner into a taxi without even bothering to change into dry clothes.

Flint had no sooner got all the loose ends in this case tidily tucked away than he and Jack Nugget, no doubt feeling the need of a change, hied themselves cross-channel to look into the case of a phantom gorilla which had been terrorising the Boulevard de Clichy. Co-operation between the British 'tecs and Octave Flambeau, ace of the Paris Surete, ended on rather a dull note when the latter naively accepted one of Jack Nugget's trick cigars, and the Entente Cordiale trembled in the balance. However, after slugging it out with Apaches in Montmarte, causing a near-riot at the Moulin Rouge, battling thugs in the slums, and doing the town over generally (a visit to the Folies Bergere not being included in the itinerary probably in deference to Jack Nugget's tender years) the two made a triumphant departure from French shores...only to discover a few days later that all the credit for clearing up the case had been pinched by the French detective, which peeved Flint enough to cause him to remark that "it was just like Flambeau!" Anyhow, the case was filed in the Flint archives under the title of "The Mysteries of Paris" and he and Jack Nugget had time for a brief breathing-spell before the next case turned up.

Although Peter Flint regarded the Nugget inventions with a somewhat jaundiced eye, in "The Football Cup Mystery" Jack's latest brain-child was directly instrumental in penetrating the disguise of the villainous Malcolm Dredge and leading to the exposure of a complicated bit of skullduggery. Evidently finding time hanging heavily on his hands, the youthful genius produced an improved version of his not-so-successful Patent Hair-Cutter, this time under the title of the Nugget Every-Man-His-Own-Barber. Sallying forth on the Embankment in search of a likely subject on which to try the contraption, he espied a seedy-looking individual whose hirsute state fairly begged for a demonstration of the EMHOB, and without so much as a by-your-leave he clamped the gadget on the tramp's unsuspecting head and pressed the button. The carnage which ensued resembled the efforts of a blindfolded novice sheep-shearer, and the cursing hobo departed at speed, leaving the mangled remains of a wig and a false beard in the grasp of the new Nugget infernal machine, but not before Jack had recognised him as none other than the traitorous ex-C.I.D. chief, who with Houdini-like ingenuity had once more escaped from prison and was engineering a gigantic swindle connected with the Football Cup Competition. However, thus forewarned, Flint was able to finally foil the plot, although he had some narrow shaves in the process, and there were some unprecedented happenings in some of the Cup Competition matches. Crack players were kidnapped and disguised stooges substituted, goalkeepers were momentarily blinded by mysterious flashes of light at critical moments, and one unfortunate goalie, in the act of fending off a threatening ball, vanished in the twinkling of an eye into a yawning chasm which suddenly opened under his feet. Flint and Jack Nugget took an unscheduled cruise to New York in the course of this case when Kitty Witch, justifiably annoyed at the 'tecs continual interference with Dredge's schemes for making a fast buck,

trapped them in a Thames warehouse, nailed them down in packing-cases and dumped them in the river. Fortunately they were picked up by a New York-bound steamer, and though they suffered the indignity of having to work their passages as stokers for the duration of the passage, they returned on the first available liner in time to bring things to a most satisfactory conclusion.

Having evidently benefited by their enforced sea trip, Flint and his assistant next threw themselves with gusto into some of the strangest cases of their careers. For instance, in the peculiar affair of "The Black Museum", which included a vanished bridegroom and a plot to steal a phial of poison from the Black Museum of Scotland Yard, Flint had the unnerving experience, while walking on the telephone wires above a suspect's garden in order to break into an upper room, to see what appeared to be a powerful motor-cycle driven by a robot with a blazing Cyclopean eye rushing at him at tremendous velocity along the wire. He made a flying leap in the nick of time, and although lacking this time the cushioning effect of well-upholstered car seats to break his fall, he luckily landed in a shrubbery and escaped with a few scratches while the uncanny vehicle roared across the spot where he had been standing only a second before and disappeared into the night sky. Even Flint was shaken for the instant.

"By the big bombardier!" he ejaculated, scratching his head. "I'm up against something original this time! I fancy Shakespeare would have altered his dictum that there's nothing new under the sun if he could have seen that! It will make a pretty problem to put before old Bigham if I fail to solve it! I should like to see his face when I tell him I saw a motor-cycle run along a telephone wire driven by a man whose head was a gigantic tiger's eye!"

Needless to say, this unheard-of weakening of the Flint self-confidence was of short duration, and the mystery, which turned out to be a complicated business involving among bizarre features, the theft of the plans of a remarkable gyro-cycle from a murdered inventor was solved without any assistance from Inspector Bigham, which I am afraid would have made my confidence in the Flint infallibility take a distinct nose-dive!

Flint and Jack Nugget developed respectable crops of goose-pimples on several occasions in the course of the uncanny affair of "The Last of the Ogres", a missing heir, a horrible creature confined in an iron hut, a midnight exhumation, and other Gothic touches, combined to make this a memorable case. While engaged in his graveyard delvings, Flint was overpowered by the villains of the piece and he and Jack were left to a ghastly fate in the secret vault of the Crowhaven family, from which they were rescued by none other than Octave Flambeau, the French detective, who was also taking a hand in the case. Considering that he and Jack Nugget had almost resigned themselves to providing early breakfast for a horde of giant rats, and remembering the indignity inflicted on Octave by the Nugget Patent Trick Cigar, Flint's rather off-hand remark of "much obliged, old chap" seemed slightly inadequate as an expression of gratitude!

The long and arduous affair listed in the Flint case-book as "The Serpent Dog" took the 'tecs into hazardous situations by the score. A serpent dog, by the way, is the Paraguayan name for that unpleasant member of the snake family known as the giant anaconda, and Flint spent a very unpleasant few minutes in the embrace of one of these creatures when it was playfully sicked on to him by its owner. The breaking-up of the ruthless organisation known as the League of Borrowed Faces, whose modus operandi was to kidnap prominent figures in the financial world and substitute doubles in their places, to further its unscrupulous

ends, taxed Flint's powers to the utmost. Jack Nugget fell completely from grace on one occasion when with every good intention in the world he let go his Patent Self-Acting Bolas in the hope of emmeshing an escaping crook and the device entangled his long-suffering boss instead. In a trice the tables were turned, and the two detectives found themselves bound hand and foot and thrust into an empty house. Peter Flint was justifiably annoyed. Ultimately, the members of the nefarious Brotherhood found themselves behind bars and the 'tocs once more retired to Mount Street Manions showered with congratulations from press and public.

Peter Flint must have been the most versatile 'tec in the long and illustrious line-up of fictional man-hunters. Once, in reply to a question by Inspector Bigham, he confided that he had been "medical student, articulated clerk, soldier, sailor, tailor, tinker, and tramp", and had followed "almost every trade you could mention." In addition to these accomplishments he was also no small potatoes as a boxer, and it was on the occasion that he obligingly offered to substitute for a missing contender in a middleweight title bout at the International Sporting Club that the baffling affair known as "The Red Globe Mystery" first came to his notice. He was just about to deliver the K.O. when a strange crimson globe floated down into the ring and received the blow intended for his opponent, and he slumped to the floor unconscious. Dragging himself to his feet ten minutes later, he found the thousands of spectators in a state of coma, and upon their return to consciousness it was discovered that they had been relieved of watches, notecases, jewellery and every article of value.... a very ingenious coup! The red globes played havoc in London before Flint traced their operator to his lair, and at the Countess of Roper's ball the guests were relieved of jewels worth £100,000 at one fell swoop when the red globes descended on the thronged ballroom and burst to discharge their stupefying gases. The Red Globe affair would up to a thrilling climax when the villain of the piece, having hired an aeroplane to transport himself and his ill-gotten gains to France, discovered that his pilot was none other than Peter Flint himself, and was so disconcerted that he dived over the side before he remembered that he wasn't equipped with a parachute.

The brief but meteoric trail which Peter Flint blazed through the pages of the "Nugget" came to an end with what in many ways was the most sensational case of his career.... the blood-chilling affair of "The Seven-Handed Death", a disintegrating ray which terrorised London as its crazy inventor reduced sections of the city to black dust with his fiendish weapon. Scotland Yard did its best, but the Assistant Commissioner personally beseeched Flint's help after the East Anglian Express vanished as it pulled into Liverpool Street Station, leaving nothing but a pile of black dust where a second before had been a crowded train.

"Flint, you're the only man to cope with a thing of this," he said. "We're up a tree. Even the Yard must fail when confronted with the impossible!"

Peter Flint responded nobly, but his opponent was a foe worthy of his steel, and the chaos continued until the maniac destructionist walked into a trap and was shuffled off this mortal coil with a slug from Flint's trusty Browning pistol. He must have heaved a sigh of relief at the conclusion of this case, for the vicissitudes he endured during its course would have caused Superman himself to throw in the towel. Not the least of his worries was the occasion when he was

trapped in a chamber of horrors in the death-ray operator's House of Fear, in which he received the full course of treatment in the way of electric shocks, showers of boiling water, a room with a revolving floor and a descending ceiling, and other parlour tricks. However, he emerged, bloody but unbowed, to bring the case to a successful conclusion.

And thus, my long-suffering readers (those of you who have read this far!) ended the Saga of Peter Flint. Perhaps the Great War, which wrote "finis" to so many other heroes of boys' fiction, also compelled his retirement, for I seem to remember the fade-out of the Nugget Library early on. Indeed, the war cut Flint off in his prime just as surely as if he had been one of its human victims, for his creator, Stephen H. Agnew, died gallantly in France early in 1915. The Nugget Library attempted a belated come-back after the war with its New Series, which reprinted many of its earlier stories, including the Flint series, but a year or two saw it laid to rest in the graveyard of many other old favourites.

Peter Flint and Jack Nugget didn't leave any footprints on the sands of time as did Sexton Blake and Tinker, or Nelson Lee and Nipper. Perhaps they were never destined for sleuthdom's Hall of Fame, even had their creator lived on to pen more of their adventures, which perhaps could justifiably be described as being in the real blood-and-thunder tradition.

But by the big bombardier, how I loved them as a boy!

280	PETER FLINT AND THE SKELETON GANG			
283	"	"	"	" KNAVE OF DIAMONDS
286	"	"	"	" FOOTBALL CUP MYSTERY
289	"	"	"	" HUMAN IDOL
292	"	"	"	" SCHOOLMASTER CROOK
295	"	"	"	" BLACK MUSEUM
298	"	"	"	" RED GLOBE MYSTERY
301	"	"	"	" MASKED TAWAREKS
304	"	"	"	" PLAGUE OF SPIDERS
?	"	"	"	" MYSTERIES OF PARIS

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A

BY MAXWELL SCOTT.

DEAD MAN'S SECRET



"He cautiously made his way along the outside of the train, counting the compartments as he passed along."

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NELSON LEE IN FACT AND FICTION

SIXTY years ago, to be exact in *The Marvel* dated September 19, 1894, there was published a historic story by a young Yorkshire doctor who had ambitions to do in the sphere of boys' fiction what Conan Doyle had done for another class of reader, popularise the theme of detection. The story, of course, was *A Dead Man's Secret*, in which Maxwell Scott, pen name of Dr. John Staniforth, first introduced the characters of Nelson Lee and his assistant-to-be, Richard Hamilton, better known, of course, as Nipper.

To all intents and purposes, Nelson Lee no longer has a physical existence as such in the pages of juvenalia, though he will ever live in the hearts and minds of thousands of those of us who read of his adventures during his official existence of something like 40 years. Unofficially, of course, some of us can still recognise within modern stiff covers an occasional re-hash of some of the familiar adventures of old.

But, to quote a familiar phrase of his creator, Maxwell Scott, we must not anticipate, and in the story which follows I want to delve right back into the pages of the past and to wrest something of another *Dead Man's Secret* from the semi-oblivion of the mists of time, memories and print.

It has been a fascinating search, productive of a wealth of information much of which, of course, will be as fresh to most of my readers as it was to me. I hope it will prove as interesting to an older generation who were fortunate enough to read the originals as they came off the presses. Until the jigsaw pieces began to accumulate and to fall into place, I had not fully realised how big a canvas the Nelson Lee picture fills, covering 40 years, three reigns, one world and several minor wars, and a complete world-wide social revolution!

I have only been able to paint the picture in any sort of finality because of the great help and co-operation I have received from many people. The Rev. J.H.M. Staniforth, son of Nelson Lee's creator, has generously loaned me a number of volumes from his father's priceless collection; Stanley Maidment and Harry Stables have provided me with valuable data regarding the dates, titles and artists of the serials, and the former has also loaned me the rare cover to the 1894 *Marvel* (I hope it has been possible to reproduce it here); and Charles Churchill has also rendered me invaluable assistance with information on the earlier Nelson Lee Libraries. To them all, we are all deeply indebted.

But first of all let us look at factual history. There was a Scout named Nelson Lee in the pioneer days of American history - maybe some of our colleagues across the Atlantic can tell us more about him - and there was another

gentleman of the same name born at Kew on Jan 8, 1806 - hence his second Christian name as it was the day of Nelson's public funeral.

Richard Nelson Lee, then, was the son of Lt. Col. Lee, but because of his father's death in India plans for him to enter the Royal Navy fell through and he became a noted 19th century actor and dramatist. He began by acting in the Miller and his Men at a private theatre in Rawsthorne Street, paying for the privilege. He then played as an amateur at Deptford, was in "utility" business at the old Royalty, practised legerdemain and toured with the professional conjuror, Gyngell, as a conjuror.

After giving a conjuring performance on his own account in Edinburgh, he acted with Richardson and then joined Robert William Elliston in his final occupancy of the Surrey which began on Jan 24, 1827. He then remained at the Surrey under different managers for seven years, playing Harlequin in the Christmas pantomimes which he wrote for Osbaldistone. For Yates and Matthews at the Adelphi he is said to have written in 1834 the pantomime Oranges and Lemons in which, in a week, he played clown, harlequin and pantaloone!

In 1836 he managed Sadlers Wells for Osbaldistone, then lessee of Covent Garden. On the death of John Richardson, proprietor of Richardson's Show in Nov., 1837, Lee, in conjunction with Johnson of the Surrey, bought his business, which they conducted with success. In conjunction with Johnson, he managed the Marylebone, Pavilion, Standard and City of London theatres, retaining the direction for 15 years.

After Johnson's death in 1864, Lee remained in management until 1867 when he retired and confined his activities to miscellaneous entertainments at the Crystal Palace and elsewhere, and preparing a biography which is still available in manuscript form.

He wrote over 200 pantomimes and plays for the East End theatres which he managed. The Dramas consisted mainly of adaptations, but though he had little literary faculty, he showed some signs of invention and familiarity with stage resources. In the British Museum Catalogue a Life of a Fairy, illustrated by Alfred Crowgill, of London, in 1850, is attributed to Lee, who died in Shrubland Road, Dalston, on Jan 2, 1872, and was buried three days later in Abney Park Cemetery.

(NOTE: Richardson was an itinerant showman for whom Edmund Kean once played Tom Thumb. Elliston was one of the most controversial actors and managers, and after successes with Tate Wilkinson's Leeds circuit stock company became lessee of Drury Lane where leading artists appeared, and lessee of the Surrey, Leicester and other suburban theatres.)

So much then for Nelson Lee in fact, as revealed in the official pages of the Dictionary of National Biography. Certainly this not especially outstanding actor and dramatist did not realise that a score of years or so later there would step upon the fictional stage a similarly named personality whose adventures would have a far wider audience, who would play a far greater range of parts, who would win equal fame as a detective and as a schoolmaster, and who would be the intimate friend of the highest in the land.

But, once again, we anticipate Dr. John William Staniforth had already written a few stories when that which was to make history was published on Sept. 19, 1894, in The Marvel. For it he received eight guineas only! Maxwell Scott

was most influenced by Conan Doyle, and the construction of a detective story and the deductions from ingenious clues was a form of intellectual exercise which appealed to his scientifically-trained mind. He admired, and occasionally criticised, the Holmes stories from this angle. He took, says his son, to the writing of detective stories from the same motives that attract other people to crossword puzzles, though in writing for boys' papers the intellectual side of detection had to be subordinated to the sensationally adventurous.

Scott took great pains to ensure the accuracy of his local colour, and must have sat writing with timetables at his side - a feature which also characterises the work of Freeman Wills Crofts, and one unusual in a writer of boys' stories.

Having etched in the background, let us take a look at that first Nelson Lee story, one which in its theme of rival claimants for an estate was to set off a whole line of similar tales which would take our hero into many parts of the world. Here that Maxwell Scott authority, Stanley Maidment, takes up our tale, and first reveals the dramatis personae.....

RALPH THOMSON, Australian farmer, finds papers proving that he is the rightful owner of the Riversdale Hall estate. Together with his daughter RUTH he returns to England.

SIR OLIVER DREW, the present owner of the estates, becomes aware of the rival claimant's plans, and decides to be on the boat train himself with the means of liquidating his rival. Sir Oliver kills Thomson by means of a poisoned thorn. At Paddington he steals the dead man's luggage which contains the proofs of Ralph Thomson's right to the title and estate.

NIPPER, riding behind the cab learns the destination of the luggage.

ARTHUR PRYCE, engaged to marry Ruth, consults NELSON LEE, the famous detective, and asks him to find out how Ralph Thomson was killed, and recover the stolen luggage.

PROFESSOR DAWES, a former client and now Nelson Lee's firm friend

It was a wild November night, as black as it was boisterous. The West of England Mail was half an hour behind her time, and as she thundered down the line between Reading and London she experienced the full fury of the gale.

In a third class carriage an elderly man reclined asleep. The only other occupant of the compartment was a young and beautiful girl, also asleep.

Whilst the train was still some thirty miles from London the door of a first class carriage opened and a tall military looking man stepped on to the footboard.

Crouching down to avoid the windows, and counting the compartments he cautiously made his way along until he came to the seventh from his own.

Grasping the handle with one hand, he produced a blowpipe with the other, put it to his lips, and swiftly opening the door gave a vigorous puff, and a poisoned thorn sped through the air and entered the sleeping man's cheek. A sudden spasm shook him; he half rose from his seat, then fell back dead. The dart became dislodged and fell between the cushion and the back of the carriage.

The author of this crime crept back to his own carriage. When the Mail

drew up at Paddington he sprang out and quickly made his way towards a red-haired coachman standing behind the crown. "My task is only half completed" he said. "I must secure his luggage" and hastening to the van he asked for "Mr. Thomson's luggage". The porter, not doubting that he was the owner, found the dead man's things, and handed them over without question. When these had been placed in a waiting cab, the tall man gave the order "Kings Cross as quickly as you can...."

Nelson Lee the famous detective, sat in his room in Grays Inn Road dealing with his correspondence, when he was interrupted by his landlady who entered bearing a card inscribed -

Mr. Arthur Pryce,
19, Raglan Road,
Stoke Newington,
London, N.

"Show him in" said Nelson Lee, "so early a visitor must have a very urgent case." This proved to be only too true when the young man came in. He was, he said, engaged to marry Ruth Thomson, the dead man's daughter.

"I have been recommended to come to you by Professor Dawes, whose kidnapped child you traced and restored in so marvellous a fashion. I should have been ready to accept the theory that Mr. Thomson's death was due to heart failure; but the theft of the luggage so closely on the heels of his death makes me suspect foul play."

"A very natural suspicion" said Nelson Lee. He decided to call on Ruth before going to Paddington to examine the body, and make enquiries about the missing luggage.

The detective interviews Ruth Thomson and learns that her father was prompted to return from Australia on account of a discovery he made when making some alterations to his farmhouse. And that some important papers were sewn inside one of his portmanteaux.

Beyond this her father had not confided in her, and she was unable to give Nelson Lee any further information. As the detective left the Pryces' house where she was staying, he fell into a trap and was rendered unconscious by a blow on the head. When his scattered senses returned he found that his watch and money had not been taken, but every scrap of paper had been removed from his pockets. He comes to the conclusion that his assailants are the same two who took Mr. Thomson's luggage. Evidently they are looking for a document of some kind, and so far have failed to find it, as they appear to have thought it possible that the girl had given it to him to keep.

Nelson Lee's task is now to trace the luggage, and restore it to Ruth before the two men discover where the papers are hidden.

The detective goes to Paddington, examines the body, and finds the tiny puncture in the dead man's cheek. He then inspects the railway carriage which is standing in a siding. He finds the poisoned dart, and whilst making further enquiries someone tries to push him under a train. However, he is given too vigorous a push and hurled clear of danger. His assailant escapes.

In order to trace the destination of the cab which took the luggage, Nelson Lee pursues his enquiries of the railway staff, and learns of Nipper having information as to where the cab went. He arranges for Nipper to see him.

It now occurs to Nelson Lee that the men who attacked him, having failed to find the papers on him, will probably assume that they are still at the Pryces' house, and will not hesitate to break in to get them. In which case Ruth herself may be in danger. Although it is the middle of the night he hurries to the house in Raglan Road. He sees the cab outside the house when he arrives and is just in time to see a man hurry from the gateway and jump in beside the driver, and as they prepare to move off, Nelson Lee springs on to the back and crouches down. After a long drive through the night, they arrive at a large house in the country. The detective drops to the ground and hides in the darkness. As the tall man lets himself in to the house, the driver says "Good night, Sir Oliver." "Sir Oliver" mutters the detective, "now I begin to see daylight."

Watching through the window he sees Sir Oliver looking at some papers, and then leave the room. Nelson Lee breaks in and takes possession of the papers, but is discovered. He makes his escape from the house. The pursuit continues with the aid of bloodhounds. To avoid them he plunges into the lake and swims to the other side, only to find that they have divided, and are after him from both sides of the lake. Nelson Lee reaches the road, and seeing the lights of a small railway station dashes towards it. As luck would have it a train is standing in the station, just about to start. The detective boards the train which moves off as his pursuers arrive. To his surprise he finds Professor Dawes in the carriage and to him he explains that he is faced with professional ruin if he is caught and charged with burglary. They change clothes, and at the next station the professor is arrested, but is soon released with apologies.

Nelson Lee leaves the railway station unnoticed. From the papers he has purloined from Sir Oliver's house he discovers the dead man's secret. One of the Drews had emigrated to Australia, and changing his name to Thomson, never communicated again with his family; in the course of many years he was presumed to be dead. The proofs of his identity were hidden in the walls of the farmhouse, and Ralph Thomson found them when part of his farmhouse in Australia was being pulled down during alterations. Solicitors then took over, and the inquiries that followed brought the matter to Sir Oliver's notice.

Nelson Lee now sees Nipper, the little street urchin who spends his time mostly around the stations, carrying bags and stealing rides on the back of cabs. Nipper tells the detective he rode behind the cab in question, and the destination "Kings Cross" given to the driver was only to mislead anyone listening, and was, evidently, changed soon afterwards. The luggage was taken to a house in Barbers Lane.

The detective accompanied by Nipper goes to the house and effects an entrance. After some very exciting adventures, Nelson Lee secures the coveted papers.

Sir Oliver finding all is lost and in danger of immediate arrest, shoots himself.

The papers prove that Ralph Thomson was heir to the title and estates instead of Sir Oliver, and now his daughter Ruth inherits the property.

Needless to say, Ruth Thomson and Arthur Pryce are married, and, of course, Nelson Lee acts as best man.

* * * * *

So successful was that story that it was repeated years later in Pluck

and in the Union Jack. The success of his first adventure necessitated Maxwell Scott bringing more interesting items from Nelson Lee's case books into the light of day, and how versatile they proved this tall, lithe, youngish man with steely grey eyes which could shine softly with humour and tender understanding, flash with indignation or glimmer with an intuitive grasp of the situation as the need arose, to be. Let us see how Scott developed the character which was his own until 1915 when it was decided Nelson Lee merited his own Library.

From 1894 to 1901, Maxwell Scott was engaged mainly in writing short Nelson Lee stories, of which I have one and have read another. The earliest story I have read is Pluck 137, The Missing Admiral, for which W. Dowling did the artist's work. Here we find the detective with the opportunity to relax for the first time for over a year and debating whether to go and see Henry Irving and Genevieve Ward in Richard III at the Lyceum or to stay at home and tackle a chemical problem. However, leisure, as we might well expect, is not to be his lot and we find him throwing one client downstairs and accepting an opposition client's commission to find the missing Rear Admiral (retired) Bevington, of Ridgeway Castle, Yorkshire.

Lee's declaration of faith is "not merely to amass as much money as I can, it is to assist the weak and oppressed, and to further justice by every means in my power." With the aid of Gerald Asquith, son of the rector of High-bury, Whitby and his fiancée, Ruth Macdonald, the Admiral's companion and adopted daughter, he is, of course, successful, but not before he has bought a horse for £80 "down" in "fivers" and, although he claims to have "taken part in many exciting runs with the hounds, rarely ridden such a fearsome, yet exhilarating, steeplechase" as he does at one stage of the proceedings.

In Pluck 161, Scott tells us that Lee lives at 131a, Gray's Inn Road, which is approached by a narrow stone flagged path and has a neat, but ordinary, brass plate on the door bearing his name. We also learn in the course of his chase half way across the world to recover a £70,000 Aztec opal given by Queen Mary to the Hope family, that Lee "has a smattering of Aztec." On the way, Lee is wrecked and is rescued by Admiral Bevington and the Asquiths "mad with exhaustion and exposure" - Scott certainly never spared the poor man anything and the fact that Scott was a doctor and Lee had qualified, but never practised, ensured that Lee never recovered from his injuries etc., until the proper time, governed, of course, by a particularly hardy constitution.

It was with Birds of Prey in 1901 that Nelson Lee really began the career which earned for him the name of the Prince of Detectives. Here he was up against the Order of the Ring, the first of many criminal organisations which were to occupy his attention in the years to come. The Order, with over 1,000 members (a St. Pancras porter was No. 1330), was governed by Stephen Meredith, the Chief, who was in charge of operations; Ald. Simeon Flegg, chairman of Sheffield Electric Tramways Committee, known as The Squire, who was in charge of the Order's mint; and The Doctor, Doctor David Sholto, who owned the yacht Firefly.

In a lengthy, but successful campaign, in which we were also introduced to the provocative Lady Ursula, Lee had to call on all "his indomitable pluck, limitless resource and unconquerable spirit." We discover that calm, unflinching courage is his most characteristic trait and that he numbers ventriloquism

and disguise among his accomplishments, hotel managers and theatre stage managers among his friends. Knifing, shipwreck and shooting are only some of his trials before the Order's headquarters at the Raglan Club and the Chief, the Squire, the Doctor and Lady Ursula are defeated, and consulting engineer, "Lucky Jack" Langley and Ethel Aylmer, orphan heiress, re-united!

Then we come to The Silver Dwarf and its continuation, The Missing Heir, in which Lee goes across the world to thwart the evil designs of Mark Rymer and restore the new Lord Easington to his inheritance and a bride. We get a glimpse of the detective's incomparable knowledge of poisons, not to mention Bradshaw!

Scott could always provide a thriller on the theme of hidden wills, rascally solicitors, missing heirs and virtue triumphant, and he was at it again in Nelson Lee's Rival in which, apart from being nearly drowned in the underground caves of Derbyshire (some fascinating descriptive stuff here) among other efforts to kill him, Lee has to fight the unscrupulous French private detective, Jean Moreau, late French Secret Service and gendarmerie.

We also find that Lee has a helper in Henry Salter, private detective of Lordship Lane, Stoke Newington, and his staff.

In The Hidden Will we learn a little more about the house in Gray's Inn Road. It is lit by gas and Lee's bedroom is on the second floor of this "small and humble looking private house." There is a little back bedroom on the first floor and an outhouse below the window of that room. Co. Durham and Sheffield provide the setting for this chase after a hidden will, and Lee survived flooded underground passages, being thrown over a viaduct, shots and a runaway train! In the course of events we find him to be a straight shot and to have a reputation for generosity.

It was becoming clear by now, surely, that if, in modern parlance, he was "to cope", Nelson Lee must have a permanent, qualified, assistant, so we revert to Nipper, who made a first brief appearance in the first-ever story nearly 10 years previously. He is still a dirty ragamuffin, aged about 14, with "eyes bright as diamonds and eloquent of quick intelligence, honesty, candour, frankness and indomitable pluck." But, of course, he must be a missing heir, so off we go to Russia, the Pacific and Mosul before we find a fabulous financial reward and the name of Richard Hamilton for our beloved Nipper.

Though the son of a former junior attache at the St. Petersburg embassy, Nipper knows no Russian (fortunately, his governor does!), but he does know French, Italian, German, Latin and Greek! Lee, we learn, knows the ambassador to Russia and apparently he has been brushing up his lack of knowledge of navigation at the time of his battle against the Order of the Ring, for he turns in a magnificent piece of seamanship to save himself and Nipper in the Pacific!

After his struggle with Lockwood Beck, a man of many faces, and the saving of a stolen submarine, Lee turns back again to the familiar search for a missing heir, this time to Sir Christopher Syme, retired merchant prince, of Redmire Hall, Surrey. He soon finds it is a perilous task, but he collects another ward in Dick Starling (or Syme) and sends him to join Nipper, his first ward, at St. Ninian's. It can hardly be said to be a prosaic existence at that Sussex predecessor of St. Frank's, for Lee, Nipper (head monitor of Rant's House) and Richard Mowbray Syme are speedily involved in exciting times as efforts to kill Starling mount in intensity. A bomb, a wrecked bridge and drowning are

among the hazards the three face. Lee is busy with an abduction case at the beginning, but after being brought into the new case as consulting detective to the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway, he later becomes a master at St. Ninian's and as Mr. John Leeson, assistant maths. master, astonishes everyone with his prowess at football, hockey, boxing and gymnastics. Nipper, we discover, is a centre forward of above average ability and Lee's sitting room is at the top of the stairs to the first floor in Gray's Inn Road, where Mrs. Jones is the housekeeper.

Foiled could well have preceded A. Dead Man's Secret in print, for it certainly does in time and sets forth how Lee saved Professor Dawes' child. A reprint of the latter story also appeared about now.

In The Football Detective, Nelson Lee was seeking an heiress who turned out to be the fiancée of a young orphan £4-a-week professional footballer who had invented a patent drill. To watch the position Lee signed as an amateur for Newport Rovers, for two seasons Cock of the North, and turned out to be a crack Corinthian and the finest outside right in England. We were also told that he trained as a medical man and was recognised as one of Europe's foremost authorities on poisons, but it was his prowess as a footballer that we were mainly interested in and we were delighted when he helped the Rovers to get to the Cup Final at Crystal Palace and scored himself against Blackburn Rovers to gain a cup winner's medal!

In Detective-Warder Nelson Lee we were introduced more closely to the activities of St. Ninian's, now under a new head in Dr. Shuttleworth, and the nearby Greystones Prison, with the basic theme once again a missing heir. Major Davenport, the governor of the prison, is one of Lee's oldest and most intimate friends, and Lee by virtue of his once being an assistant warder at Parkhurst is able quite competently to take on the job of a warder. Nipper, demoted by the new head, is treasurer of the school football club, and like his chief is also an accomplished ventriloquist, but in the following year he was to regain some of his pristine glory and become Captain of St. Ninian's.

In that year (1906), too, Nelson Lee had a varied career. He was first The Soldier Detective, and then he entered the Navy as a seaman to save a new submarine for Britain.

The latter story opens with Lee in conference with the First Lord, the First Sea Lord and the Director of Naval Intelligence, discussing the leakage of naval information to the French. Lee quite rightly says that if his country desires his services he will be only too proud to place them at her disposal and as the acknowledged head of his profession he is soon at grips with Jules Delaroche, the Prince of Political Spies and a master of disguise. In the course of this yarn, Nelson Lee finds another missing heir, reveals his knowledge of Arabic and Spanish and his past travels to Gibraltar, Suez, Morocco and India, and, by his skill and courage, assures Britain of the lordship of the underseas for many years.

In the League of the Iron Hand, Nelson Lee and Nipper joined forces with a Scotsman and an Irishman to fight the menace of the organisation led by Paul Herman, a millionaire and pillar of West End society. The dangerous criminal confederation steals a marvellous new airship and kidnaps the inventor, but Lee, Nipper, Mackenzie and O'Brien are on the trail and Lee proves to have a

"pull" with the Home Secretary which enables a naval gunboat to be put at his disposal for a chase to the Azores. Needless to say, Nelson Lee breaks the organisation which Herman had built up over three years.

In *The Winged Terror*, Sexton Blake and Tinker join Lee and Nipper to stop Hansell wiping out Britain, while in *The New Bowler and Bowled Out* we see Nelson Lee's prowess as a cricketer, plus another missing heir!

One of the last Maxwell Scott yarns was *On His Majesty's Service*, in which Lee and Nipper came north to Yorkshire and east to Norfolk to eliminate a wartime spy threat. We find him here as a confidant of the Prime Minister, the Home Secretary and "the Field Marshal at the War Office." Offered a fee, Lee retorts, "Do not insult me, please. When so many thousands of Britons in all parts of the world are giving their lives for the Empire, surely I can do my little bit, without expecting to be paid for it! If I succeed in ridding the country of even one of the spies who infest it, I shall consider myself amply rewarded!" As he leaves, the Field Marshal speaks for the first time, "Good-bye. You have the right stuff in you. You'll succeed all right."

And succeed he does, despite being shot, offered poisoned coffee, being in an overturned car, getting caught in a man trap and being near a mined engine house. Even Nipper gets shot in that one! Rajah, the detective's bloodhound, is also mentioned.

"The thanks of the whole Empire are due to you. It would be impossible to exaggerate the priceless service you have rendered to your country. In the face of tremendous odds, and practically single-handed, you have rid us of a danger which hampered our action, thwarted our plans, and threatened our very existence," says the Prime Minister to Nelson Lee at the close of this exciting and topical episode!

Which seems a fitting note on which to end Chapter One of our story, which in Chapter Two deals with Lee's adventures in the early stages of the Nelson Lee Library.

CHAPTER TWO - GRAYDON, TEDD and BROOKS!

For the next three years or so it was to be a case of Nelson Lee being developed by other authors than his creator. An exciting three years in which Nelson Lee and Nipper were to find new opponents who by their very variety must have severely taxed their ingenuity and stamina. They were to be pitted without time for rest between the rounds against some of the biggest personalities of crime and some of the most powerful criminal organisations ever conceived.

But first, with cover illustrations by Val, we were to have a few "single" stories of various kinds. In No. 1, *The Mystery of Limehouse Reach*, by the author of *The Stock Exchange Mystery*; *Sexton Blake, Territorial*; *Al at Lloyds* and *the Case of the Derby Winner*; we find Lee as a "highly, bewildered amateur yachtsman" navigating a small sailing boat on a dark, windless night through busy traffic of the Thames, with Nipper, "pert as a magpie, keen as a weazel and clever as a cartload of monkeys," whom "Nelson Lee would not have swopped for the ten best detective officers in the C.I.D." In this rather "thin" story, Nipper is in court for the first time when the death sentence is pronounced and the black cap worn.

In No. 2, by the author of Graft, Plummer v. Sexton Blake and Adventures of Detective Spearing, Lee is "sick and tired of these little affairs - old men whose sons have got into trouble, women who have raised bridge debts that they can't pay, all the little idiotic things of life that people ought to be able to look after for themselves." He strikes a blow for independence about his cases "if it interests me I take it up, if not I must refer you to Scotland Yard." Nipper is said to be quick, not nervous; no fool in a fight; well-developed muscles for his age. Incidentally, he crops up on page 16 as "Tinker". Lee, who has a big car and rides a horse, is "a man of action, of brain, and of all the things that go to make a man the master of men," has had few failures and hates to be thwarted. When thoughtful, he may "smoke" a cold pipe. He is of unusual strength and likes "clean" money from his clients.

No. 3, probably by Graydon, adds little to our knowledge of Lee's character except that he is very thorough and is well-known to Kitchener, while in No. 4, by the author of No. 1, we find that he likes the theatre, takes a dim view of "bally Government offices" - "deuced cheek I call it. Think everybody's got to dance attendance on them" - has a strange and inscrutable mind "ten streets ahead of his body", makes breakfast his main meal and then has little until next morning, knows Hamburg well, and is lion-hearted and level-witted. We learn, too, that there isn't much Nipper doesn't know about motors.

It is in No. 5 that we get a more complete picture of the famous consulting room. It was quietly, tastefully, but comfortably furnished, with an atmosphere of brooding, restful calm. Through the open window comes the roar of traffic and the thousand and one noises of the voice of mightily London. In the middle of a square of rich Turkey carpet stood a large flat-topped mahogany desk, chaotically strewn with a litter of documents and cuttings, and with a telephone on it. One side of the room is lined with shelves, well-filled with books, ranging from ponderous tomes to the smallest of publications. The brown papered walls are hidden behind black framed pictures. A wide grate, a saddle-bag, armchair in front of it. Lee, remarkably tall and thin, is wearing a blue dressing gown and red plush slippers, is smoking a much-blackened briar. Thick brows, keen grey eyes, strong, clever face, aquiline nose, firm lips, redolent of great mental concentration and confidence. Good looking, but for the lines wreathing his nostrils and lips, and wrinkles beneath sunken, clear eyes.

With a quiet, half scornful smile, he shoots off a bit of Holmesian dialogue to a telephone inquiry. "What, the Eppingham murder. Mean to say you're still puzzling over that? Find out where Morton's butler was on the day in question and perhaps you'll get on the right scent." Lee, we discover, has just returned from seeking a secret wireless plant on the East Coast (Scott's O.H.M.S.?) with the fervent thanks of a grateful country ringing in his ears and feeling that there's "no place like London." Deserving a holiday after his strenuous efforts on the coast, he is irritable and wishes Nipper back at school, but soon he is working again

We hear of Mrs. Jones's sister-in-law, "Hannie", of Lee's "dingy bowler" and that Nipper, a bright-faced youth of about 16 with crisp brown hair and twinkling blue eyes, is mischievous as well as being a good shadower, cautious and discreet on most occasions but curious and rash on others. Lee knows German and is on good terms with at least one U-boat commander whom he met professionally before the war.

In No. 6, Lee is found never to be too busy to help clear an innocent man, to have a strong imagination and to have no superior as a judge of character, and to be generous - he gives half his £1,000 fee away as a wedding present, having enough for his own modest needs.

In the next two numbers, we find Maxwell Scott back, with Lee having one of his biggest failures at first and being operated on twice for compression of the brain. We also find him being shrewd enough a business man to loan his brokers' £15,000 on the security of some new shares. In the second number, Lee and Nipper have been in South America for the Argentine Government for three months. Lee's bedroom opens off the sitting-consulting room, and the kitchen is in the basement. Lee can be surprised, no doubt when he finds after all this time that he has no powers of arrest!

In the following numbers, we realise that Lee is a master of disguise, "a blooming Maskelyne and Devant," that he is "not particularly good at shinning up drainpipes," that he knows how to blow open safes, that he is sufficient of a society man to be invited for a week-end's shooting, that he always carries a small make-up case, and that he has agents abroad with whom he corresponds in code - once a letter was opened and Lee still "shudders when he thinks how narrowly he prevented a disaster that would have plunged the courts of Europe into mourning." After being seen at the first night of a new play and at supper with an ex-Prime Minister and a man who swayed the world's finance, he disappeared for six months.

By No. 11, Lee has put his engineering experience at the Government's disposal and has not been given much rest by Lloyd George since being appointed an Inspector of Government factories. He has earned the thanks of the highest in the land for his counter-espionage work.

For the remainder of the N.L.L. until the arrival of Lee and Nipper at St. Frank's to escape the Fu Chang Tong, they were constantly, at work in opposition to organisations such as The Green Triangle, The Circle of Terror, and The Combine, or to individuals such as the Black Wolf, Dr. Mortimer Crane and Jim the Penman. Perhaps, therefore, it would be better and simpler to divide our story accordingly.

* * * * *

NELSON LEE V THE BLACK WOLF

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 17. The Black Wolf. | 19. The Secret of the Swamp. |
| 22. Edges of Steel. | 24. The Tube of Radium. |
| 30. The Mystery of Venice. | 31. The Frozen Man. |
| 34. Robbery Wholesale. | 36. Mystery Man of Llasa. |
| 46. The Mystery Man of Tibet | 61. The Golden Boomerang. |
| 107. Loot. | 108. The Kidnapped Stockbroker. |

These, to judge from G.H. Teed's preface to the first, are pre-war adventures regarding which access to Nelson Lee's notes and permission for publication has just been granted. They open with Lee and Nipper performing their "wet day job" writing up notes of cases during the month. Lee read from a small red leather notebook and Nipper wrote at dictation in a large journal.

Enter M. Jules Fabert, heart and brain of the Paris detective force and

Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur, to seek Lee's aid in laying by the heels The Black Wolf, who is like 100 men, yet no man at all. Like the Scarlet Pimpernel he is sought here, there and everywhere without success. He has been heard of in New York, Montreal, Rio, Buenos Aires, Melbourne, Sydney, Cairo, St. Petersburg, Berlin and Vienna.

On the way to France, Lee, a powerful swimmer, rescues Mlle. Miton who falls overboard from the Channel steamer. Little does he know then that she, small, slim and charming, is The Black Wolf and equally at home as the dapper Comte de Monte Bello, but that rescue is to bring an element of romanticism into their relationship.

Their struggle is to be renewed in many parts of the world - in Paris, in the swamps of Maracaibo, in Paris again (where her identity becomes known), in London, in Venice, in Tibet, in British Guiana and off the coast of Britain where she just fades out of the picture.

Lee, too, feels just a little more sentimentally towards her than duty should permit, for he, we are told, is no misanthrope or misogynist, but virile and healthy and takes a keen interest in life. Despite his feelings, he vows to run the Wolf to earth, "if I have to devote my life to it."

In No. 36, which heralded a new series of their adventures, we were really on to something with Teed at his best. Here he gave us a Lee who was by his professional standing worthy to be one of a select scientific committee of distinguished men which was to investigate the clairvoyancy of an Incan princess. He knew enough Spanish and the rare Incan language, Quichua, to be a success at job, but he approached the problem as a scientist who believed in a material explanation for all phenomena. He had also dipped into psychical mysteries without giving much credence to their scientific weight owing to the opportunities for charlatanism — but in this grand opening novel he found more things than he had dreamed of in his philosophy! I wish I had the sequel number! And now, while still in Teed country, to

NELSON LEE and MORTIMER CRANE

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 55. The Man of Four Identities. | 58. The Crimson Disc. |
| 61. The Golden Boomerang. | 71. The Clue of the Raincoat. |
| 79. Mystery of the Closed Door. | |

As a brain and nerve specialist whose talents had been diverted to wrong doing, Dr. Mortimer Crane, who was at home in three other identities, was a criminal than whom there was none more sinister, cunning or daring. In the very first story, it was Nipper, with his shadowing and intuitiveness, who won the praises, both from Lee - "he will one day be one of the greatest criminologists of his generation" - and from Stuyvesant Roper, an art connoisseur.

Crane, thin, dark, intellectual face, and under 40, led Lee and Nipper a merry dance to S. America, New York and Scotland before he was finally cornered and died before he could be arrested.

It was a short, but notable campaign, which gave us brief glimpses of Lee's encyclopaedic knowledge of crook's methods and of the contrasting subject of first editions.

Another great campaign -

NELSON LEE v JIM THE PENMAN

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 39. The Lightning Clue | 42. The Great Will Forgery. |
| 45. The Forged Marriage Lines. | 49. The Forged War Orders. |
| 51. The Mystery of the Moor. | 54. The Mystery of the Mail Van. |
| 59. The Ribbon of Light. | 62. The Lost Explorer. |
| 64. The Plague Ship. | 66. Mystery of the 10-20 Express. |
| 72. The Secret of the Martello Tower. | 76. The Affair of the Nabob's Jewels. |
| 74. The Caves of Silence. | 80. A Mid-Atlantic Mystery. |
| 78. A Christmas of Peril. | 84. Tracked to The Trenches. |
| 90. Monn the Miser. | 94. The Monk of Montessor. |
| 169. Handforth - Detective. | 99. Mystery of the Grey Car. |

Douglas James Sutcliffe, expert forger, ruthless opponent of Nelson Lee, was probably one of Edwy Searles Brooks's best creations. One never knew where he was going to turn up next and his skill with the pen was only equalled by his skill at disguise, his audacity and brilliant sang froid, his coolness in emergency and his never-ceasing efforts to pull off some spectacular coup. Needless to say his foresight never seemed to gain him a great deal of success when Nelson Lee took up the cudgels against him, and yet, although he said that he "would sooner have the whole of Scotland Yard on my track than that one man," he would insist on being too theatrical whenever he had a chance to put Nelson Lee out of the way for good. With the natural result that Lee and Nipper always escaped to thwart Jim's plans again. At least once (No. 49), it was Jim's inherent patriotism which won the day.

But, finally, before I leave you, let our old friend Charles Churchill tell you a story which marked a significant stage in the development of the Nelson Lee epic, the story of

AN HISTORIC ENCOUNTER!

DORRIE!

The mere mention of this name was enough to cause a throb of pleasure-able anticipation to surge through the veins of any regular reader of the NELSON LEE LIBRARY. It gave one a mental glimpse of holidays with a splice of danger, a beautiful yacht sailing the deep blue sea and of figures in white basking under the tropical sun.

There is no doubt, I think, that Lord Dorrimore was one of the most popular characters to appear in the pages of the good old "N.L." In the vast majority of adventures in which he appeared, we had the genial but sometimes grim figure of Umlosi as well. The black giant was always on hand when aggressive methods were required and when tragedy threatened there he was again, with a flash of white teeth and an encouraging remark.

These two inseparables first appeared in No. 105 of the old small series, in a story entitled "THE IVORY SEEKERS". Now we were told in this that Nelson Lee and Nipper already knew Dorrie but not Umlosi. The story was printed during the first world war and we're told that Lee and his young assistant had been on board a ship sunk in the Indian Ocean by a German submarine. They had managed to be among the survivors and had landed at Mombassa in east Africa. While awaiting a ship for England Lee suggested a short visit to Nairobi, having learnt that Dorrie was there "loafing about, waiting for something to turn up." We read here something that I cannot remember ever being mentioned in any other story, namely that Dorrie was minus two fingers on his right hand and was about 45 years old. (It rather staggers one to think that today Dorrie would be 82!!!).

After this we read how Dorrie interests Nelson Lee in a scheme to travel to Kutaland to secure a valuable collection of ivory which had been stored in a cavern regarded by the natives as "tagati". The villain then appears on the scene in the person of Karl Fischer alias Otto Ganz a so called Swiss. Lee discovers that he was an old adversary of his and when Ganz, as we will call him, gets wind of the treasure and bolts in the direction of Kutaland, Lee agrees to follow in pursuit.

We then have the debut of Umlosi. Dorrie introduces him to Lee and Nipper and he immediately gives them the names which we were to read so many times during the following years - Umtagati and Manzie.

After many adventures the party reached Zenobu, the capital of the Kutas. Umlosi's half brother, another huge man named Fatoomba, held sway over the tribe although their father, the chief, was still alive. He was very old however, and Fatoomba more or less ruled as he liked. He did not get on very well with Umlosi and the latter had, for some while, been away to avoid friction. Fatoomba was not pleased to see Umlosi and managed to conspire with Otto Ganz to stage a fight between his followers and friends of Umlosi. A terrific battle ensued and was only ended by Umlosi challenging Fatoomba to a fight to the finish.

We then had a thrilling battle between the two giant blacks and after an exhausting struggle Umlosi succeeded in administering the coup de grace to his traitorous half brother. By this act Umlosi became more or less the chief of the Kutas, according to the tribal custom. This of course brought all the strength of the tribe to the assistance of Dorrie and Lee against Otto Ganz. The latter and his followers put up a fierce resistance but were finally overpowered.

Umlosi put paid to the chief rogue by rescuing Nipper from his clutches and throwing him high in the air with a terrific effort of his huge strength, for Ganz to crash to the ground yards away, and depart for other realms.

So ended the first story of Dorrie and Umlosi. It was a very good one and a fitting introduction to those two very popular characters.

* * * * *

In previous Annuals my colleague, Bob Blythe, has already told us all about Professor Zingrave and the Green Triangle and about Eileen Dare's campaign against the Combine, so I do not propose to go over old ground again this year as space is getting short. The Circle of Terror, of course, was a revived Green Triangle League on a more ambitious and audacious scale whose activities crossed with Nelson Lee and Nipper coming to St. Frank's. More about them elsewhere, or, maybe, next year!

In conclusion, I hope what I have written has given you as much pleasure to read as it has me to find it and to write it. I apologise for any omissions which are entirely due either to lack of space or to the many spaces in my own collection. I crave your indulgence, therefore, for any errors and I trust any critics will be as kind as possible. Once again, before you read the lengthy lists appended, my warmest thanks to those who have helped me to paint the picture at all - and the compliments of the season to you all. And now, for the statisticians, the lists.....

<u>Title</u>	<u>Publication and Dates</u>	<u>Artists</u>
(N) A Dead Man's Secret	Marvel 46 18/9/94	Tom Browne

<u>Title</u>	<u>Publication and Dates</u>	<u>Artists</u>
Nelson Lee, Detective	Marvel 52. 31/10/94	
The Adventures of Nelson Lee	Union Jack 35. 20/12/94	
Further Adventures of N.L.	Comic Home 16/8/95	
Detective (The Mystery of the Malton Moors).	Journal. to 10/1/96	
* Nelson Lee, Detective (The Black Ruby).	Pluck 52 16/11/95	
The Dynamite Cartridge	Pluck Xmas No.1895	
Nelson Lee, Detective	Pluck 71. 27/3/96	
Saved from Siberia	Pluck 118. 19/2/97	
The Missing Admiral	Pluck 137 2/7/97	
The Black Brotherhood	Pluck 160 10/12/97	
The Theft of the Aztec Opal	Pluck 161 17/12/97	
Captain Twilight	Pluck 186 10/6/98	
Birds of Prey	Boys' Friend 1-26 15/6/01-9/12/01	A.H. Clarke
The Silver Dwarf	Boys' Friend 26-41 9/12/01-23/3/02	A.H. Clarke
The Missing Heir	Boys' Friend 42-59 29/3/02-9/8/02	A.H. Clarke
Nelson Lee's Rival	Boys' Realm 26-52 6/12/02-6/5/03	Fred Bennett
The Hidden Will	Boys' Realm 64-? 29/8/03-?	Fred Bennett
(N)Nelson Lee's Pupil	Boys' Herald 2-26 8/8/03-23/1/04	Harry Lane
(N)The Great Unknown	Boys' Friend 157-189 11/6/04-21/1/05	A.H. Clarke
(N)Nipper's Schooldays	Boys' Herald 73-97 17/12/04-4/6/05	A.H. Clarke
(N)On the Midnight Mail (A Dead Man's Secret)	Pluck 496 28/5/04	
Foiled	Pluck 505 24/7/04	
The Football Detective	Boys' Herald 118/138 21/10/05-10/3/06	Val Reading
(N)Black House	Boys' Friend 221-236 2/9/05-16/12/05	A.H. Clarke
(N)Detective Warder Nelson Lee	Boys' Friend 237/257 23/12/05-12/5/06	A.H. Clarke
The Soldier Detective	Jester 233/253 21/4/06-8/9/06	R.J. Macdonald
(N)Captain of St. Ninian's	Boys' Friend 257/276 12/5/06-22/9/06	A.H. Clarke
Nelson Lee in the Navy	Boys' Herald 175/194 24/11/06-7/4/07	A.H. Clarke
(N)The Iron Hand	Boys' Herald 207/232 6/7/07-28/12/07	Val Reading
(N)The Fighting Fifth	Boys' Realm 253/? 6/4/07-?	
(N)Britain Beyond the Seas	Boys' Friend 353/387 14/3/08-7/11/08	A.H. Clarke

<u>Title</u>	<u>Publication and Dates</u>	<u>Artists</u>
(N) Detective Nipper	Boys' Realm ? ?	H.M. Lewis
The New Bowler	Boys' Realm 360/370 24/4/09-3/7/09	E.E. Briscoe
Bowled Out	Boys' Realm 371/383 10/7/09-1/10/09	E.E. Briscoe
(N) The Winged Terror (also Sexton Blake & Tinker)	Boys' Herald 329/349 6/11/09-19/3/10	Val Reading
Out to Win	Boys' Realm 431/445 3/9/10-10/12/10	E.E. Briscoe
(N) The Golden Quest	Boys' Friend 459/475 26/3/10-23/7/10	H.M. Lewis
(N) Long Live the King	Boys' Friend 579/528 20/5/11-22/7/11	Val Reading
(N) Nipper at St. Ninian's	Boys' Friend 586 31/8/12	A.H. Clarke
(N) The Film Detective	Boys' Friend 685/698 25/7/14-17/10/14	A.H. Clarke
(N) On His Majesty's Service	Boys' Friend 698/712 17/10/14-6/2/15	G.M. Dodshon
(N) Nipper's First Case	Boys' Herald 511 18/5/12 continued in Cheer Boys Cheer 1 25/5/12 ?	

"N" = Nipper concerned

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That completes more or less the pre-Nelson Lee Library stories of the one whom Maxwell Scott termed the Prince of Detectives. Mr. Maidment, however, adds the following, for which he can find no dates. -

The Mystery of Torgreave Hall, The Case of the Kidnapped Engineer, The Mystery of the Moor, The Vanishing Picture, The Clue of the Six Capsules, The Case of the Babylonian Brick, and Sons of Fire.

Other than Nelson Lee Library titles, I have been able to trace the following -

DETECTIVE LIBRARY: The Mystery of Torgreave Hall (No. 1 dated 28/6/1919), The Kidnapped Engineer (2), The Vanishing Picture (5), The Jaguar's Master (6), The House with the Crooked Window, The Case of the Horned Frog (20 - References to Sons of Fire, The Babylonian Brick, The Swinbury Poultry Killing Mystery, and the cases of the missing solicitor of Bedford Row and the bogus butler of Harlech), The Case of Dr. Mau-Ling-Su (21), Jim the Penman series (1920), Brotherhood of the Five Fingers and Nipper at St. Ninian's (Apl. 1920). Authors predominantly Scott and Edwy Searles Brooks.

PRAIRIE LIBRARY: The Black Pearl (serial with Huxton Rymer and Ah Wah, 10/1/20); A Dangerous Partnership (Huxton Rymer and the Black Wolf, serial), The Inner Seven (Apl, 1920). Authors predominantly G.H. Teed.

NUGGET LIBRARY (1921). 45, White Man's Secret (Kew & Carlac). 46, Man in the Copper Casket (Lawless). 47, The Bridge Builders (Trouble Nantucket). 48, The Sign of the Red Claw (Chulda Ghan). 49, The Amazing Schoolboy (Timothy Tucker).

50, Case of The Two Impostors and Nipper's Wager (Kew & Carlac). 51, The Outsiders (Langley Mostyn). 52, Rogues of the River (Thames Police). 53, Expelled from St. Frank's (Watson & Harrington). 54, The Sign of the Shepherd's Crook. 56, Meshes of Mystery. 58, The Case of the Heavyweight Champion (Lawless). 62, Lost - A Football Team (Lawless). 66, The Case of the Arab Footballer (Lawless). 68, Nelson Lee in India, or The Rajah's Secret. 70, The Treasury Notes Mystery. Authors predominantly Andrew Murray. Possibly some Sexton Blake reprints (?).

UNION JACK - 16/11/1918. The Studded Footprints (E.S. Brooks, with Blake and Tinker). A Dead Man's Secret (reprint, 1919).

NELSON LEE LIBRARY, excluding purely St. Frank's stories - O.S. 370. The Ivory Hand. 371, On the Ninth Green. 372, The Tyneside Mystery. 373, The 11-15 p.m. to South Shields. 374, The Bank Car Puzzle. 375, House of the Clanging Bells, or The Case of the White Lead Substitute. 376, Case of the Racing Tipster (Bernhard Hugh). 377, The Hollow Club, or Clue of the Gloved Hand. 378, The Missing Valet. 379/80, The Strange Case of the Thurlingham Hall Robbery (Zenith; J.H. Valda). 381, The Case of the Wooden-Legged Sailor (H.M. Lewis). 382, The Stencil Clue. 383, The Kidnapped Goalie. 384/5, The Mayfair Mystery (Briscoe). 386/7, The Strange Affair at Heather Hall (Briscoe). 388, The Case of the Cardiff Contractor (Briscoe). 389/90, The Flaming God. 391, The Man with the Cut Lip. 404/408, The Black Mask (Gil). 410/9, The League of the Iron Hand (Briscoe). 420/431, The Silver Dwarf (Briscoe). 431/41, The Missing Heir (Briscoe). 442/45, Night Owl and the Alliance of 13 (Jones). 484/96, Green Triangle and Jim the Penman. 497/502, The Hollowdene Manor Mystery (Eileen Dare). 503/12, The Invisible Grip (Zingrave).

First New Series. 1, The Clue of the Crimson Dust (R.H. Eyles). 2, The Stolen Messenger. 3, Mystery of the Chinese Vase. 4, The Wraith of the River. 5, The Case of the Black Cobra. 6, Slasher's Derby. 7, The Case of the Haunted Hotel. 8, The Vanished Mummy. 22, The Lion Tamer's Secret. 23, The Green Eye. 24, The Sleeping Mystery. 25, The Bermondsey Miser. 131/44, What's Wrong with the Rovers (Saville Lumley). 183/6, Return of the Tong. 187/9, Eileen Dare and Molly Stapleton.

BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY (3d): 4. Birds of Prey (Cover, Harry Lane). 16, The Silver Dwarf. 17, The Missing Heir. 19, Nelson Lee's Pupil (E.E. Briscoe). 24, The Great Unknown. 25, The Stolen Submarine. 34, Nelson Lee's Rival (D.D. Fitz). 62, The Football Detective (Lane). 138, The Hidden Will (Lane). 171, Nipper's Schooldays (T.W. Holmes). 301, On His Majesty's Service (G.M. Dodshon).

BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY (4d): 474, The Fighting Fifth. 483, Detective Nipper (Lewis). 519, The Black House. 530, Detective Warder Nelson Lee. 633, The Idol of St. Frank's. 649, The Green Triangle (Arthur Jones). 656, Return of Zingrave (Jones). 657, The Wonder Craft (Jones). (NOTE: 649, 656 and 657 are repeats of Nugget Weekly 1920 stories).

2nd New Series. 1/3, Return of Zingrave and the Green Triangle. 4/8, Dacca the Dwarf. 9/23, Detective Academy Stories. 24/27, Sargasso series. 28, Legion of the Lost. 32/43, Nighthawk and the Master of the World. 47, The Death Grip. 51/53, Nighthawk, The Seven Fiends. 54/58, Night Hawk and the Fugitive Prince. 102/109, Zingrave, Penman & Tod Millar. 112/5, The Silver Dwarf and the Missing Heir. 116/120, Green Triangle. 124/5, Green Triangle. 126/7, Birds of Prey (Plunder & The Peril Trail). 131/2, The Shadow & O.H.M.S. (Scott's The Great Unknown and The Stolen Submarine). 157/161, Fellowship of Fear.

3rd New Series. 20/22, Brotherhood of the Brave.

NOTE: This para should have followed "1st New Series"

THE CRICKET TEST

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF A CRICKET MATCH, PLAYED AT LITTLE SIDE, GREYFRIARS;
BETWEEN THE JUNIOR XI'S OF ST. FRANKS AND GREYFRIARS SCHOOLS.

Reported - in rhyme - by WILLIAM JARDINE

'Twas at Greyfriars on the day, that St. Franks had come to play,
There was staged a most enthralling cricket "test".
All our throats were sorely tried, on that day at Little Side,
As we cheered, and wondered, who would come out best.
It was truly an event, in the history of Kent,
In that old familiar district near the shore.
For it's doubtful if you'll see, in a "Magnet" or a "Lee",
Any mention that the teams had met before.

Now, the fixture was "all set", when the rival captains met,
On a railway platform; running nigh in vain!
Harry Wharton panted, "Thanks", after Nipper of St. Franks,
Quickly grabbed, and pulled him in the moving train.
Settling down into their seats, they were soon discussing feats,
Of their cricket teams; the time just seemed to fly.
And before the parting came, they'd arranged to play a game,
Down at Greyfriars, on a day in late July.

Well, the day at length arrived, and blue sky and sun contrived,
Just to add a perfect setting to the scene.
There were crowds around the ground, and excitement did abound;
Even beaks and lofty prefects looking keen.
There were ructions at the start, and St. Franks were "in the cart",
When three wickets all went down for twenty-four.
Nipper, Christine, Pitt, were out, but then Travers stopped the rout,
And with Buster Boots - his partner - raised the score.

They went on to forty-two, but then Inky got one through;
Hitting Buster's middle wicket, with a "crack".
With the score at fifty-three, we saw Travers "all at sea",
When a ball from Squiff deceived him, playing back.
This left Fullwood to defend; Handforth, at the other end,
Started slogging, as each ball came hurtling down.
He hit Inky twice for four, and was piling up the score,
When he "snicked" one, and was smartly caught by Brown.

Sixty-nine was on the board; only three had Fullwood scored,
Keeping up his end, and blocking every ball.
Dodd - the next man in - was grieved, when the first ball he received,
Broke in sharply, shattered wickets, bails and all.
Grey - who followed - came in next; Fullwood now was feeling vexed,
And changed over from "defending" to "attack".
But he tried a risky run, with the score at eighty-one,
And was run out, vainly trying to get back.

Number ten - Tregellis-West - hit two runs with vim and zest,
And Jack Grey assisted him to "wag the tail".
The partnership was merry, but was broken up by Cherry,
With a "whizzer", that removed Sir Monty's bail.
Harry Gresham - last man in - took his stance and gave a grin,
As he swept his first ball to the boundary line.
But next ball spelt his eclipse, Linley caught him in the slips,
And St. Franks first innings closed, for eighty-nine.

In the innings that had passed, all the runs had mounted fast,
There was still a half-an-hour to go to lunch.
Nipper's men went in the field, and the 'Friars batsmen reeled,
From the bowling which contained a lot of "punch".
Harry Wharton got a "duck", and Bob Cherry had no luck.
Johnny Bull and Vernon-Smith were next to go.
When the luncheon break arrived, Brown and Linley had survived.
Nine for four - was all that Greyfriars had to show.

During lunch-time one could see, Mr. Quelch and Nelson Lee
Sitting down to join the teams - a duty call!
'Twas a picture of delight, to observe them smiling bright,
As they chatted with the boys in dining hall.
It was pleasing too, but odd, seeing Pitt and Peter Todd,
Demonstrating - with a knife - a batting stroke.
Harry Wharton, Fullwood too, seemed to share a certain view,
While Bob Cherry, Boots, and Travers, shared a joke.

When the "battle" re-commenced, Nipper placed his field and fenced
Brown and Linley, with a semi-ring of slips.
It paid dividends at first, and Mark Linley came off worst,
When he "edged" a ball to Christine off his hips.
"Howzat", the fieldsmen roared, and with twelve upon the board,
Peter Todd came in to do his best or "bust".
When the score reached twenty-two, Browney said a sad adieu,
As a "sizzler" knocked his wicket in the dust.

But then Squiff came in to bat, and the fireworks flew - my hat!
When he slammed the St. Franks bowling good and hard.
Eighteen runs he quickly scored, forty-one went on the board,
Till a Gresham "special" broke right through his guard.
Peter Todd and Penfold then, raised the score another ten,
And it looked as though the partnership might last.
Three more runs did Toddy add, then a rap against the pad,
Had him leg-before a ball that rose up fast.

Fifty-four was now the sum, only two more men to come;
Donald Ogilvy - so dour - came in to bat.
Slowly sixty runs were reached, when the stout defence was breached,
And a "yorker" knocked the Scotsman's wicket flat.
To the crease then Inky strolled, and the Nabob and Penfold
Stuck together, till the score reached sixty-eight.
Then, a "yorker", Penfold missed, and the 'Friars were dismissed,
Trailing twenty-one behind - a sorry state.

At exactly three-o'clock, to commence their second knock,
 We saw Nipper and Bob Christine at the crease.
 Hitting stylishly and free, Nipper soon scored twenty-three,
 Until Squiff came on to do his "party piece".
 He uprooted Nipper's stumps, then got Travers "in the dumps".
 And Bob Christine followed suit at thirty-eight.
 Reggie Pitt and Buster Boots, didn't seem to give two "hoots",
 As they started hitting runs at quite a rate.

Then - great scott - St. Franks were "stormed", when a hat-trick was
 Buster Boots and Fullwood out - and Handforth too. performed;
 Inky bowled them one by one, it was beautifully done,
 And six wickets now were down for forty-two.
 Jerry Dodd joined Reggie Pitt, and proceeded on to hit
 Hurree Singh's next ball for four, against the ropes.
 Then he tried to hit a six, off the Nabob's "ball o' tricks",
 But his wicket fell, and with it all his hopes.

Jack Grey than did his bit, after joining Reggie Pitt;
 Adding seven runs, then Wharton bowled him out.
 And Sir Montie coming in, gave a rather sickly grin,
 When a googly had him - all the way - in doubt.
 Fifty-five for nine, the score; Harry Gresham to the fore,
 Started slowly, trying to retaliate.
 Thirteen runs, in all, were hit, until Todd caught Reggie Pitt,
 And the St. Franks innings closed for sixty-eight.

So now Greyfriars had to try, and score eighty-nine to tie,
 Or just ninety runs to win - for cricket fame!
 At the interval for tea, with the crowd in ecstasy,
 There were murmurs, "Will they do it"? "What a game!"
 Little Side was densely packed, all to see the final act,
 Of this contest, in which neither side would yield.
 Then a cheering sound arose, and the crowd was on its toes;
 Smiling, Nipper led St. Franks on to the field.

Harry Wharton, smiling wide, with Bob Cherry at his side,
 Followed briskly to the crease, and took his guard.
 Not a risk would either take, there was such a lot at stake;
 Until Cherry hit a loose one, mighty hard!
 From then on he set the pace, and the score began to race
 Up to twenty; and then Wharton's wicket fell.
 Vernon-Smith then took a hand, and we saw a pleasant stand,
 With the Bounder and Bob Cherry batting well.

But when thirty-one went up, we saw Smithy "sold a pup",
 When a ball from Nipper had him "all at sea".
 Next man in was Johnny Bull, and the ball he tried to pull,
 Hit his wicket - with the total thirty-three.
 Then Mark Linley - number five - wasn't able to survive
 Gresham's loud appeal, which had him leg-before.
 Browney - next upon the list, hit a ball - completely missed!
 Forty-three for five, was now the 'Friars score.

Now Bob Cherry in defence, had been playing in suspense,
 As his partners only stayed a little while,
 But with Toddy in support, in the "holding of the fort",
 He went on to raise the score in classic style.
 But the parting came at last, when a ball at length got past
 Peter's guard, and knocked his bails into the air.
 Sixty-one had now been "bagged", but the 'Friars total lagged,
 Twenty-eight behind - they hadn't much to spare!

And so Squiff came marching in, and faced up to Gresham's "spin";
 With a single he eluded Nipper's trap.
 Cherry hit successive "fours", to a burst of loud applause,
 And the seventy was reached, without mishap!
 Then, a slow ball - Squiff mishit, and was caught by Reggie Pitt.
 And Dick Penfold lost his wicket, cutting fine!
 Donald Ogilvy made five, but was caught from off a drive,
 And the total now was eighty-three, for nine.

Oh the drama, the suspense - the excitement was intense,
 Only seven runs the 'Friars needed now.
 Hurree Singh - the last man in; could he "stick" it? Could they win?
 Inky took his guard, with rather furrowed brow.
 He'd got two more balls to play, in the over under way,
 And he blocked them on the leg side, breaking in.
 This gave Bob another "smack", and again a lusty "whack",
 Gave the 'Friars four more runs, and three to win!

Nipper set his field anew, but Bob Cherry hit a two,
 And the scores were "tied"; now could the 'Friars win?
 Only one more run to get, and all Greyfriars seemed to fret;
 For then Nipper brought his fieldsmen closer in!
 Three more balls did Cherry play, but not one was got away
 Through the ring of fieldsmen, all around his bat.
 Then a loose ball - and a "slosh"! Oh he's "skied" it! Oh my gosh!!!
 And the ball was caught by Grey - and that was that!

So the cricket "test" was "tied", and the crowd on Little Side
 Cheered the teams until their throats were feeling sore.
 It was pleasant too, to see, both the captains merrily,
 Shaking hands, and saying, "Glad it was a draw"!
 Cherry, Inky, Grey, and Pitt, all linked arms with vocal wit,
 As they happily walked off the cricket field.
 And in Mrs. Mible's shop, later on, in ginger "pop",
 There were many toasts, and schoolboy friendships sealed.

When the time for parting came, after this historic game,
 There were scenes of mirth, melodious and fine.
 Christine, Linley, Field and Dodd - Smithy, Handforth, Boots, and Todd,
 All - with gusto - sang the words of "Auld Lang Syne"!
 And as Wharton said "goodbye", Nipper smiling in reply,
 Said, "Another game is what I would suggest"!
 So perhaps, some future day, at St. Franks down Bellton way,
 We'll be saying, once again, "Who'll win the test"?

* * * * *

SCOREBOARDST. FRANKS1st Innings

HAMILTON	Bowled H. Singh	6
CHRISTINE	Caught Ogilvy, Bowled H. Singh	11
PITT	L.B.W. Bowled Field	5
TRAVERS	Bowled Field	17
BOOTS	Bowled H. Singh	8
FULLWOOD	Run Out	19
HANDFORTH	Caught Brown, Bowled Wharton	11
DODD	Bowled H. Singh	0
GREY	Not Out	3
TREGELLIS-WEST	Bowled Cherry	2
GRESHAM	Caught Linley, Bowled H. Singh	4
EXTRAS		3
TOTAL		<u>89</u>

2nd Innings

Bowled Field	23
Bowled Field	10
Caught Todd, Bowled H. Singh	12
Bowled Field	0
Bowled H. Singh	6
Bowled H. Singh	0
Bowled H. Singh	0
Bowled H. Singh	4
Bowled Wharton	7
Bowled Wharton	0
Not Out	5
	<u>1</u>
	<u>68</u>

Fall of Wickets:

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
9	19	24	42	53	69	69	81	85

Fall of Wickets:

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
29	29	38	42	42	42	46	51	55

Bowling:

	O.	M.	R.	W.
H. Singh	12.3	2	38	5
Field	8	1	29	2
Wharton	2	0	9	1
Cherry	3	0	10	1

	O.	M.	R.	W.
	10.2	3	27	5
	8	2	25	3
	3	0	10	2
	2	0	5	0

GREYFRIARS1st Innings

WHARTON	Bowled Gresham	0
CHERRY	Bowled Gresham	0
VERNON-SMITH	Caught Handforth, Bowled Dodd	5
BULL	Caught Grey, Bowled Gresham	4
BROWN	Bowled Dodd	10
LINLEY	Caught Christine, Bowled Dodd	2
TODD	L.B.W. Bowled Hamilton	9
FIELD	Bowled Gresham	18
PENFOLD	Bowled Hamilton	8
OGILVY	Bowled Dodd	4
HURREE-SINGH	Not Out	4
EXTRAS		4
		<u>68</u>

2nd Innings

Bowled Dodd	9
Caught Grey, Bowled Hamilton	49
Bowled Hamilton	6
Bowled Dodd	1
Bowled Gresham	2
L.B.W. Bowled Gresham	4
Bowled Dodd	9
Caught Pitt, Bowled Hamilton	1
Caught Handforth, Bowled Dodd	2
Caught T. West, Bowled Gresham	4
Not Out	0
	<u>2</u>
	<u>89</u>

Fall of Wickets:

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
0	2	7	9	12	22	41	54	60

Fall of Wickets:

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
20	31	33	39	43	61	70	75	83

Bowling:

	O.	M.	R.	W.
Gresham	10	2	25	4
Dodd	9	2	28	4

	O.	M.	R.	W.
	8	1	22	3
	9	1	26	4

	O.	M.	R.	W.		O.	M.	R.	W.
Hamilton	4.2	0	11	2		5.3	0	19	3
Grey	-	-	-	-		2	0	9	0
Travers	-	-	-	-		2	0	11	0

20 QUESTIONS FROM MERSEYSIDE

NELSON LEE CHARACTERS

(Example:- One of a Kind - Singleton)

* * *

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|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Religious Assembly. | 6. The following day. |
| 2. New - in Hampshire. | 7. To Shoot at - unseen. |
| 3. You're seeing somebody big? | 8. Elementary! |
| 4. Shine, Sir! | 9. Behind the stalls. |
| 5. The 'eyes' have it. | 10. Associated with Dick Turpin and C.D. |

SEXTON BLAKE CHARACTERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 11. Small hawk. | 16. A gift bestowed. |
| 12. Botanical beauty spot. | 17. First King of Israel |
| 13. Lead swinger? | 18. Eight pints. |
| 14. Any pots or pans? | 19. Victor Lodorum |
| 15. To wither. | 20. Dead centre of community! |

(ANSWERS - see page 64)

NOT TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

By HERBERT LECKENBY

How quaintly read some of the stories which thrilled us in our youth when perused with more mature eyes. Take for instance "John Smith, Detective" which appeared in 'Pluck' 4th November, 1906. It was written by Mark Darran, pen-name for Norman Goddard, who was killed in France during the First World War.

"John Smith" was really a member of the peerage who took on detection work as a kind of a sideline and was patronised by Royalty. At the beginning of this particular story he hears of a number of anarchists who had arrived in this country with the object of assassinating Edward VII when he laid the foundation stone of a monument to Queen Victoria in two days time.

In chapter two we find John Smith driving up to Buckingham Palace in a hansom. He went round to a small entrance "known to few", knocked, and when a footman answered the door, asked "His Majesty in the Palace?". Just like that. The man was new, and therefore did not know John Smith, and, asked with the insolence of an upper servant, "Why?" John Smith, out of temper, steps inside, gripped the footman's ankles and deposited him on the carpet, then after that unfortunate individual had got to his feet, produced a card and ordered him to take it to "His Majesty." In a trice John Smith was in (cont'd page 64).....

(F)OREWORD by the Editor:- In the "Collectors' Digest" I have already paid tribute to Bill Lofts remarkable thoroughness and patience in order to make this feature as complete as ever possible, but I feel I must place my admiration on record here in the "Annual" also. The British Museum is not exactly a cheerful place in which to spend one's time, yet Bill must have put in hundreds of hours there. He must indeed have kept the attendants busy.

In his investigations Bill made many interesting discoveries. I don't suppose even the late John Medcraft, or the late Frank Jay, had ever heard of "Grip", or that third "Union Jack" for instance. He also found a paper which started publication in the last year of the 18th century. This makes the title of this feature not strictly correct. As, however, it is linked up with last year's we have, after some thought, retained the "Hundred Years", but as quite a number of monthlies are included, "weeklies" has been changed to "periodicals".

100 YEARS OF BOYS' PERIODICALS

CORRECTIONS, COMPLETIONS and ADDITIONS

by W. O. G. LOFTS

Regarding the corrections, if a check is made with last year it will be seen that in most cases the errors were only a matter of a number or two, or a week or so in the dates. In the interests of accuracy it was thought best to have them corrected. As a matter of fact in view of the difficulties in compiling hitherto, the record as it appeared last year was gratifyingly near correct.

Bill, in his interesting account of his researches, reveals that the British Museum has by no means a complete record of boys' publications. Thanks to him and those who preceded him, we can confidently claim we have in the C.D. Annuals the most exhaustive one published.

And now I will let Bill tell his story. - H.L.)

100 YEARS OF BOYS PERIODICALS, CORRECTIONS, AND COMPLETIONS

Title	Start	Stop	Issues	Publishers
Boys and Girls Penny Magazine	11/9/1832	9/2/1833	23	W. Howden
Boys Athenaeum (Monthly)	1/1/1875	1/2/1875	2	Ward-Lock-Tyler
Boys Best Story Paper	7/10/1911	22/6/1912	38	Newnes
Boys Champion Story Paper	18/12/1900	25/4/1903	119	James Henderson
Boys Coloured Pictorial	28/2/1903	6/9/1903	16	Brett
Boys Favourite	4/5/1929	22/2/1930	43	A.P.
Boys Guide, Philosopher & Friend	27/10/1888	3/3/1889	19	Brett
Boys Journal (Monthly)	6/1/1863	1/2/1871	96	Vickers

Title	Start	Stop	Issues	Publishers
Boys Life	20/4/1907	12/10/1907	26	Newnes
Boys Miscellany	7/5/1863	30/7/1864	74	E. Harrison
Boys of London and New York	-/6/1837	15/9/1900	1219	H.W. Jackson
Boys of Our Empire	27/10/1900	10/10/1903	155	Melrose
Boys of the United Kingdom	26/11/1887	21/4/1888	22	J.S. Turner
Boys Own Magazine	1/4/1854	/1874	26 Vols	Beeton
Boys Own Journal	3/11/1856	20/1/1857	9	Beeton
Boys Own Times (Monthly)	1/1/1859	1/12/1859	12	T. Nelson
Boys Penny Magazine	1/1/1862	1/12/1862	12	Beeton
Boys Realm (Small Series)	23/7/1927	9/2/1929	82	A.P.
Boys Realm Football & Sports Library	25/9/1909	5/6/1915	299	A.P.
Boys Star (Fortnightly)	1902	1902	24	Charles Strong
Boys Weekly	3/5/1919	13/9/1919	20	James Henderson
Boys Weekly Novelette	28/6/1892	14/9/1895	169	Charles Fox
Boys Welcome	21/7/1897	21/7/1897	1	Aldine
Brave and True	7/10/1893	23/6/1894	38	Bemrose
Bullseye	24/1/1931	21/7/1934	183	A.P.
Champion Journal for Boys	8/9/1877	24/7/1880	147	Ritchie
Cheerio	17/5/1919	17/4/1920	49	A.P.
Cheer Boys Cheer	25/5/1912	13/9/1913	69	
Chums		1941	2077	Cassells and A.P.
Empire Library (1st series)	19/2/1910	22/10/1910	36	A.P.
Empire (Enlarged) Library	29/10/1910	6/5/1911	28	A.P.
Every Boys Favourite Journal	17/1/1892	5/10/1892	43	Charles Fox
Every Boys Journal	12/4/1884	7/6/1884	10	E. Maurice
Fun and Fiction	12/10/1911	21/2/1914	124	A.P.
Greyfriars Herald (2nd series)	1/11/1919	25/3/1922	126	A.P.
Halfpenny Surprise	2/11/1894	28/4/1906	600	Brett
continued as Surprise	5/5/1906	15/9/1906	20	Brett
Jacks Paper	31/10/1922	20/2/1923	17	Pearsons
Lads and Lassies	6/3/1894	28/8/1894	26	Brett
Modern Boy (1st series)	11/2/1928	12/2/1938	523	A.P.
Our Boys	21/7/1897	21/7/1897	1	Aldine
Penny Popular (1st series)	12/10/1912	30/3/1918	286	A.P.
Pluck	5/11/1904	18/3/1916	595	A.P.
Pluck	28/10/1922	11/10/1924	103	A.P.
Prairie Library	15/4/1919	10/7/1920	57	A.P.
Prince	16/9/1893	2/12/1893	12	Best for Boys
Ranger (Small series)	14/2/1931	5/8/1933	130	A.P.
Ranger (Large series)	12/8/1933	28/9/1935	112	A.P.
Red Arrow	19/3/1932	18/3/1933	53	D.C. Thompson
Rocket	17/2/1923	11/10/1924	87	A.P.
Rovers of the Sea	11/3/1872	28/4/1873	61	Brett
School and Playground	12/1/1898	-/1898	32	Charles Fox
School and Sport	17/12/1921	24/6/1922	28	Popular Pub- lishing Co.
Skipper	6/9/1930	1/2/1941	544	D.C. Thompson
Sports Budget (1st series)	13/1/1923	2/3/1935	595	A.P.

Title	Start	Stop	Issues	Publishers
Sports Budget (2nd series)	9/3/1935	14/10/1939	241	A.P.
Startler	1/3/1930	27/2/1932	105	A.P.
Surprise	1/3/1932	11/11/1933	89	A.P.
Thriller	9/2/1929	18/5/1940	589	A.P.
Triumph	18/10/1924	25/5/1940	814	A.P.
Triumph Library	19/9/1908	18/1/1909	17	James Henderson
Union Jack	1/1/1879	25/9/1888	191	Sampson Low & Co. After No. 59 Cecil Brooks
Vanguard	4/5/1907	12/4/1910	153	Trapps, Holmes & Co.
Young Britain (2nd series)	24/11/1923	16/8/1924	39	A.P.
Youths Instructor (Monthly)	1/1/1858	1/9/1858	9	George J. Stevenson
Young Folks continued as	2/1/1871	31/10/1896	1353	James Henderson
Folks at Home	31/10/1896	29/4/1897	27	James Henderson
Young Mans Monthly	2/5/1853	2/5/1853	1	Sampson, Low & Co.
Youths Miscellany (Monthly)	1/2/1822	1/7/1823	18	Sherwood Jones & Co.

100 YEARS OF BOYS PERIODICALS - ADDITIONS

Title	Start	Stop	Issues	Publishers
Boy	3/1/1891	3/1/1891	1	Illiffe & Son
Boys Own Picture Gallery	21/9/1872	23/11/1872	10	Fredrick Farrah
Boys of England Pocket Novelette	1880	1883	170	E.J. Brett
Boys Own Journal	20/6/1889	22/5/1890	41	Popular Pub- lishing Co.
Boys Monthly Magazine	1/1/1863	1/12/1866	36	Ward, Lock, Tyler
Boys Own Library	1/5/1861	1/5/1866	60	Beeton
Boys Magazine (Monthly)	1/1/1887	continued	-	Scripture Union Ltd.
Boys Mail	? 1907	1907	?	Charles Strong
Boys Weekly Reader Novelette	28/11/1853	1/4/1884	676	Charles Fox
British Boy	23/7/1921	31/12/1921	24	United News- papers Ltd.
British Boys Paper	1888	1889	53	Popular Pub- lishing Co.
Buzzer	16/10/1937	18/6/1938	36	George Newnes
Crusoe Magazine (Monthly) continued as	1/6/1924	1/5/1926	24	George Newnes
Golden Magazine (Monthly) continued as	1/6/1926	1/6/1927	13	George Newnes
Golden West (Monthly)	1/7/1927	1/12/1927	6	George Newnes
Detective Library	1895	1895	5	Richard Crompton
Detective Weekly	25/2/1923	25/5/1940	379	A.P.
Excelsior Library	2/10/1894	?	?	Trapps Holmes & Co.

Title	Start	Stop	Issues	Publishers
Girls' and Boys' Penny Magazine	17/10/1832	19/6/1833	36	W. Strange
Golden Hours	30/3/1895	31/10/1896	85	Sully & Ford
Grip	15/11/1883	7/2/1884	13	General Publishing Co.
Guy Raynors Boys Novelette	1889	1889	40	Popular Publishing Co.
Halfpenny Monarch	6/3/1884	?	?	?
Jack and Jill	7/3/1885	25/6/1887	121	W. Lay
Kind Words for Boys and Girls	4/1/1866	29/12/1870	261	Sunday School Union
Kind Words for Boys and Girls (2nd series)	1/1/1871	1/12/1879	108	Sunday School Union
New Youths Magazine (Monthly)	1824	1824	10	W. Wetton
Our Boys	24/11/1883	17/5/1884	26	General Publishing Co.
Our Boys (2nd series)	24/5/1884	16/8/1884	13	General Publishing Co.
Our Boys	30/7/1892	30/7/1892	1	Boswell Printing Co.
Our Boys and Girls Weekly	28/3/1911	28/3/1911	1	Temple Press
Our Juniors	1/1/1899	1/11/1899	12	Marshall Bros.
Our Bubble	30/6/1894	11/1/1904	123	Dean & Son Ltd.
Pals (Large Series)	9/10/1922	23/7/1923	42	E. Hulton
Pals (Small Series)	30/7/1923	19/11/1923	17	E. Hulton
Pleasure	4/11/1893	4/11/1893	1	Arundel Printing & Publishing Co.
Rovering	22/3/1924	28/3/1925	54	Religious Tract Society
Rovering (2nd series)	4/4/1925	9/5/1925	6	Religious Tract Society
Schooldays (Monthly)	1/3/1891	1/5/1905	173	Commonwealth Publishing Co.
Scholars Own	-/9/1893	-/10/1914	254	Educational Newspaper Ltd.
Union Jack Library	1888	1888	12	General Publishing Co.
Tom Ball Magazine for Boys (Monthly)	-/6/1920	-/3/1921	10	Commonwealth Publishing Co.
Wizard	23/9/1922	continued	-	D.C. Thompson
Work and Play	1/3/1914	1/4/1917	128	Odhams Press
Young Britons Journal	16/6/1888	2/3/1889	38	Guy Raynor
Young Britains Novelette	1888	1888	40	Guy Raynor
Young Britannia	?	?	?	Guy Raynor
Young Gentlemans Journal	1/11/1869	14/6/1872	150	Harrison
Young England	3/1/1880	-/1937	58 Vols	Sunday School Union
Young Men (New Series)	7/1/1888	14/4/1888	15	Mills & Knight
Youth	2/8/1882	25/4/1888	294	Alfred Gibbons
Young Gentlemans and Lady's Magazine	1/2/1799	1/1/1800	12	J. Walker

Title	Start	Stop	Issues	Publishers
Youths Instructor and Guardian	1/1/1817	1/1/1855	39 Vols	J. Mason
Youths Magazine (Monthly)	1805	1867	62 Vols	W. Kent
Youths Playhour (Monthly)	1870	1872	25	Graphotyping Co.

NOTES REGARDING CORRECTIONS

Whilst our Editor did an admirable job in compiling his list of "100 Years of Boys Weeklies" in last year's Annual, still much research had to be done in making the list complete and accurate. So I, having the time to spare, and also the facilities of the British Museum at my disposal, decided to check upon all dates of periodicals listed, also issues, and to fill in dates, issues and publishers that were missing. All corrections and data I have carefully checked. I have seen nearly all first and last issues, so I am in a position to state that my list is at least 99% accurate.

Actually the list last year was not strictly accurate as given under the title "100 Years of Boys Weeklies", as some publications were issued monthly, and one in fact fortnightly. So I think the correct title of my two articles should be "150 Years of Boys Publications", as I have discovered that there was a boys publication as far back as 1799.

Please do not imagine that one can just walk in the British Museum and pick up any Old Boys Book for the asking. One has to look up various catalogues to find the respective reference number then wait at least an hour before the paper is brought to you. Frequently the application slip you have made out comes back marked "Missing", "Mislaidd", "Destroyed" or the tantalising marking of them all "At Binders". Most of the boys publications are to be found under their title heading in the Periodicals (London) Catalogue, whilst many, many more are to be found in different catalogues. Whoever catalogued the "Sexton Blake" Library years ago must have thought he was a real person as he is found under the name Blake in the general catalogue. All comics and quite a few boys papers are in the Newspaper Museum at Hendon. It is strange that originally I went to the British Museum to try and trace an earlier Sexton Blake story than the one known at present, without any success. During my search I found so many new boys publications that many of the C.D. Circle had never heard of before, that I thought it would be of great interest and perhaps use to record these discoveries for the benefit of all C.D. members.

Readers who are desirous of leaving their papers to the museum when they pass on will perhaps be interested to know that the British Museum, like most of us, have gaps in their collections, due no doubt to some light-fingered gentlemen, or absent-minded collectors, who have walked out with them. One very, very rare old blood entitled "May Turpin Queen of the Road" has been missing since 1891; evidently people collected or were interested in Old Boys Papers in those days.

Some of the papers which the Museum require to complete collections are as follows:- Magnet No. 1. Gem No. 1. Boys Life No. 1. Boys Friend Library No.1, 2, 6, 27, 59, 72, 74, 75, 103, 107, 108, 110, 111, 112, 127, 148, 152, 255, 453, (1st series). Empire Library No. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Boys of the Empire (Melrose) No. 154, 155. Lion Library No. 1.

The Museum has no trace whatsoever of the following boys publications:- At Home and Abroad; Bad Boys Paper; Boys and Girls Companion; Boys Book of Romance; Boys (1875); Boys Friend (Monthly) (1864/67 H. Lea; Boys Herald (1877-78); Boys Jubilee Journal; Boys Library; Boys Novelist; Boys of Britian (1870) W. Williams; Boys of Britian (1871) Ritchie; Boys of the Empire (1888-93); Boys of the Empire (1900-6); Boys of the Isles; Boys Own Reader; Boys Stories; Boys World (1879-86) Ralph Rollington; Bullseye ($\frac{1}{2}$) (1898-9); Ching-Chings Own; Excelsior Library (1894); Every Boys Favourite Journal; Garfield Boys Journal; Halfpanney Monarch; The Garland; Lads and Lassies; Lads of the Village (1874/75) Hogarth house; Pluck $\frac{1}{2}$ d (1894-1904) A.P.; Rovers Log; Rovers of the Sea; School and Playground; Sons of Albion; Sons of Britannia; Sons of Old England; Up-to-date Boys; Young Briton (1869-77); Young Englishman; Young Englishman's Journal.

Many people have asked me if I have seen any of the late Barry Ono's collection of old books which he has left to the British Museum, but unfortunately none of them have been catalogued yet. No doubt many readers have read in the newspapers some months ago, of the thousands of books lying in the Museum vaults waiting to be catalogued; the paper mentioned that the Museum was about 10 years behind with their work, but I should say it's more like 20 years.

One of the biggest drawbacks in checking the earlier type of publications was that sometimes no dates or numbers were given. One case for instance was "The Boys Star" 1902. This I have solved by giving the date as printed in the catalogue. Most publications announced either their end, or their amalgamation and incorporation with another paper, whilst others, although they announced next week's stories, just did not appear any more. As, of course, I haven't the space to give details of every correction, I will give a brief review of some of the most important ones. It must be remembered, though, that many of the earlier types of papers are very difficult to give data on, as even the Museum have not the complete copies. In that case I have given the last copy as in the Museum. Should any readers have later copies of papers listed here, I should be very pleased to hear from them.

BOYS AND GIRLS PENNY MAGAZINE 1832/33: One of the earliest papers of which a few collectors have copies. The Museum has only Nos. 9, 17 and 18, but Mr. A.W. Lawson, who has the largest collection of Victorial Periodicals in Britain, has numbers up to No. 23, so this will have to be the last number known, at present.

BOYS REALM FOOTBALL AND SPORTS LIBRARY (1909/15): Most certainly ran for a year less than given in last year's Annual. Towards the end of its run, its title was changed to "Sports Library". In No. 299 it announced that from next week it would be replaced by "The Nelson Lee Library".

BOYS WELCOME 1891: Aldine's poor attempt to start a new paper, had one complete story entitled "Gwenneths Choice" a very dull dreary story. Only one issue appeared! Issued at the same time as "Our Boys" which also ran for one issue (Details given later in my List).

BRAVE AND TRUE 1893: Described as a paper for the sons and daughters of the Church. On the back cover of No. 38, it had printed in a square "With this number the issue of "Brave and True" is ended. So at least this is certain of the last issue of this Victorian Paper.

CHUMS: One of the biggest mysteries to me has been when CHUMS did actually finish as a weekly, monthly, and finally as an Annual, as nearly all

collectors have only the monthly or weekly issues bound in Annual form. My friend Anthony Baker, and also the very popular Bill Gander, have written many letters to each other on the subject. But a letter received from Percy Kent of the Back Number and Binding Dept. A.P. clears the whole situation. Here it is with the kind permission of A. Baker. -

"I would like to inform you that this company acquired "CHUMS" from Messrs. Cassells in January 1927 and it ceased as a weekly publication with No. 2077 dated July 2nd, 1932. But it carried on as a monthly, and finally ended with the July No. in 1934. During the time the monthly was running, it had been our practice to print a surplus quantity of each issue for annual requirements, so that after the July number was available, this, together with the previous 11 issues were collated and bound into a book called "CHUMS ANNUAL" ready for sale in September. Your 1934/35 Annual, therefore, contained issues dated August 1933 to July 1934 and was on sale in September 1934. The date 1934/5 is perhaps a little confusing, but when you consider these annuals were chiefly bought at Christmas time, purchasers would be led to suppose that a book dated 1934 was out of date and technically 1934/5 was correct as the period of sale extended to September 1935 when the next annual was published. The 1935/6 annual was the first ever specially compiled by the editor."

EMPIRE LIBRARY 1910/11: The paper with stories by the mysterious Prosper Howard of Gordon Gay and Co. of Rylcombe School. Charles Hamilton has been thought to have written many of them, but this he denies. If the younger Hook wrote them, he did a very good job. Ran for 36 issues Magnet size, then started No. 1 again and size increased to that of the "BOYS FRIEND". After No. 28, it was amalgamated with "BOYS FRIEND FOOTBALL AND SPORTS LIBRARY". The title of the new series was "EMPIRE ENLARGED LIBRARY" but it reverted to its old title after several issues.

EVERY BOYS JOURNAL 1884: Another attempt to start a Boys Paper on the Goody-Goody- lines, which had a short lived run. Here is the Editors Chat as given in No. 1.

"Another Boys Journal, Yes, and "Every Boys Journal our title is a bold one, our venture is a bold one, and to suggest it we appeal to every boy. Much has been said for and against literature for the young, and we have our eyes open to the fact that years ago a great deal of pernicious rubbish was printed and sold, and that a few remnants of the same still struggle for existence. But right must conquer in the end, and for our boys part, we are perfectly willing to allow boys to use their common sense, and pick the sterling metal from the spurious. The Tyranical Baron who slew his peasants for sport, and died conscious stricken to slow music, has had his day, and now sleeps. Boys now know that Dick Turpin was but a blustering scoundrel of the lowest type and will have no more of him, or the host of bogies that trampled on his heels."

Alas, after ten issues, its title was changed to "EVERY BOYS PAPER", then after another 10 issues it was finished. Can I hear Dick Turpin laughing?

GREYFRIARS HERALD (2nd SERIES) 1919/22: It gave me quite a surpriseto read in No. 62, a story entitled "How Jack Drake came to Greyfriars" by Owen Conquest. I feel sure quite a few boys suspected that there was some connection between the two authors in those days. Drake, of course, in later years was to become assistant to the famous Ferrers Locke detective. About half way through the series the title was changed to "Boys Herald". In No. 126 it announced that

from next week it would be amalgamated with the "Marvel".

HALFPENNY SURPRISE: Ran for only 600 issues, then was started at No. 1 again. Price increased to 1d and title changed to "Surprise". I expect it was a real 'surprise' to the boys of that period, who went to their local paper shop with a halfpenny and found that the price had been doubled. No announcement was given in No. 600 of the increase in price - for the following week. The new series could not have been very successful as after only 20 issues it was discontinued. The serials which had not finished being continued in "Boys of England".

OUR BOYS 1897: One of the many papers with this title, a complete flop as only one issue published, no wonder why, one long complete story entitled "Our Persis" similar style as "Gwenneth's Choice" published in "Boys Welcome".

SPORTS BUDGET 1923/39: Only the second series was given in last year's Annual, the first series started in 1923, when the stories and articles dealt mostly with football. When the new series started in 1935 the title was changed to "The New Sports Budget", but after only two issues it reverted back to the old title again. Towards the end of the second series, it began to include more general stories and articles for boys. The last issue No. 241 contained a story of Sexton Blake by Charles Malcolm. It was then amalgamated with Detective Weekly.

THRILLER 1929/40: The brilliant paper which was very successful, until the war brought its end. It has been said that its editor broke his heart when the paper finished. Its authors were of world renown, and one of the biggest mysteries is why the A.P. kept the Champion on, whilst the Thriller had more circulation. After No. 578 its title was changed to War Thriller, when it ran up to 589. Although it advertised a story for No. 590 by Berkeley Gray (E.S. Brooks) this story did not appear in print, like many other A.P. publications at the same time.

VANGUARD 1907/10: Published by Trapps, Holmes & Co. in which Charles Hamilton wrote several stories, also in which Billy Bunter of Blackminster School appeared, written by H. Phillpott Wright. Commenced with a green cover Magnet size but in No. 137 it announced that it would have a new editor and that its title would be changed to "Vanguard Library of Football, Sport and Adventure".

YOUNG FOLKS 1871/96: Here is the paper which had Robert Louis Stevenson's immortal story "Treasure Island" in serial form. Its title was continually changed during its run like that of the comic "Wonder". For readers who are interested in full details, here they are:-

Our Young Folks Weekly Budget	Nos. 1-288	2/1/1871 to 24/6/1876
Young Folks Weekly Budget	Nos. 289-431	1/7/1876 to 8/3/1879
Young Folks Budget	Nos. 432-447	15/3/1879 to 28/6/1879
Young Folks	Nos. 448-733	5/7/1879 to 20/12/1879
Young Folks Paper	Nos. 734-1074	27/12/1879 to 27/6/1891
Old and Young	Nos. 1075-1353	4/6/1891 to 31/10/1896

After No. 1353 the title was changed again and called "Folks at Home" reverting to No. 1 again. This could not have been very successful as after 27 issues it was discontinued altogether. I would not class this last issue strictly as a youths publication as it was more of a family paper, but I have included it for interest.

All these corrections should be amended to those as given in the Annual last year. If any reader requires any more information about a various publication, I shall be only too pleased to give it to them.

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ADDITIONAL BOYS PUBLICATIONS

NOTES

Amongst the many well known publications which were in error missing from last year's Annual were the "WIZARD" and "DETECTIVE WEEKLY". There was a very curious thing about the "Wizard". Eight weeks before the actual No. 1 Boys Paper commenced, it seemed to start as a type of woman's paper, with a white cover showing women's latest fashions of that period. These were classed as "Registration Copies" and it seemed to me very strange that no mention of these copies had been heard of before in the various Old Boys Book Collector Magazines. Mr. Swan of Paddington, who is a large collector of the Thompson Papers was amazed when I told him of this, and wrote to the Editor of the "Wizard" asking him for further information regarding these copies. He received the following reply:-

"The mystery of the "Wizard's" first eight numbers back in 1922 can be easily explained. These eight numbers were not on sale to the public, they were only produced for Registration purposes as required by law, and I've no doubt looked very strange as they would be made up from chunks of type and illustrated blocks already used for other purposes. This information may be useful to you as a collector of Old Magazines."

This did not seem quite clear to me, as I have never seen any Registration Copies of other boys periodicals in the Museum. Was it because Thompson's was a Scottish firm? So I wrote to the Managing Director for further information and received the following reply from Dundee:-

"The questions you ask about the Registration copies of some of our papers can be answered by the simple explanation that we have made a practice of registering a paper several weeks in advance of its first appearance. Naturally, we did not have an actual first number so far ahead, but the paper with its title was a Registered Publication as far as the British Museum was concerned, from the date of the Registered copy sent to them."

This seems to contradict the Editor of the "Wizard's" statement that it was required by law.

Amongst the new discoveries I have made regarding "new" Old Boys Periodicals is what I believe to be the first Boys or rather Juvenile publication ever to appear in Great Britain, "The Young Gentlemen and Ladies Magazine, 1799".

This is in fact nearly twenty-five years earlier than the previous one known "Youths Miscellany 1822/3". It must be remembered though, that many of the pre 1850 boys publications were of a semi-religious type or rather towards what one would call a religious instructional magazine today. Some of course were quite interesting to read, whilst others, I am afraid, would be hopelessly outdated or looked on with scorn by boys of today.

Some papers listed I have not seen, no copies of them are in the

Museum, and I would be very very interested to hear of any reader having a copy of papers such as "Excelsior Library", "Half Penny Monarch", etc. I have obtained the information that they have existed by perusing through the back numbers of S.P.C's. and Collectors Miscellanies. As I mentioned in my previous article, I haven't the space to give details of every additional publication. Whole articles could in fact be written about any one of them. If any reader does require further information about any publication, I will be only too pleased to give it to them.

BOY, 1891: A rather crude type of Boys Sporting Publication Price 1d.; it contained stories and articles on cycling, rowing, etc. Published by a small firm called "Illiffe and Son". Only one issue published.

BOYS OWN PICTURE GALLERY, 1872: What I believe to be the largest boys publication ever published being far larger than "Boys Friend". This shortlived paper failed I think because of its promises and dreadful mistakes in printing. They gave away free sketches each week, and the main story featured "Fred Blake of the Queen's Lancers". In No. 8, they announced that next week's tremendous story would be "BLAKE attacks the Spanish Armada", yet in No. 9, the main story featured Sir Francis Drake attacking it! Most boys I should imagine looked forward to seeing Fred Blake of the Queen's Lancers having a go, instead of reading a history yarn, which no doubt, they had already in their history books at school. Also in No. 9 it announced a tremendous free gift for next week, but in No. 10 they announced that it was not ready yet, also that they were changing their publishers. No. 11 never did appear.

BOYS MAGAZINE 1887: Another type of semi-religious boys publication which is still in fact running today! Published each month by the Scripture Union Ltd; containing stories and articles of interest, which although are of a religious flavour, are still nevertheless interesting.

BRITISH BOY, 1921: Edited by Michael Poole. Here is a paper which I think was of the highest class, it surprises me to know that no one in the C.D. Circle seems to have heard of it before. Its authors were of the highest class and they included T.C. Bridges, S. Clarke Hook, R.A.H. Goodyear and John Hunter. The latter wrote a serial story for the first twelve issues entitled, "The Secret of Spaniards Hope". A big mystery to me is why this paper failed. Published by United Newspapers Ltd., it had a companion paper running at the same time entitled "British Girl"; both finished after 24 issues, no reason or announcement was given of its sudden end.

BUZZER 1937/8: Another of George Newnes attempts at Boys publications claimed to be the biggest boys paper ever existed, although this was not quite correct, the "Boys Own Picture Gallery" 1872 being larger, quite a good paper containing eight complete stories every week, plus comic strips in the centre pages. Its most striking feature was its brilliant coloured cover which Newnes hoped, no doubt, would attract many thousands of boys. After only 36 issues it was discontinued. What a contrast to the most successful "Captain" which ran for 25 years.

DETECTIVE LIBRARY 1895: Published and edited by Richard Crompton who claimed that it was the only paper in existence which featured a different detective in a story each week. Similar size and colour as the "Detective Weekly" 1933, Price 1d. but after only 5 issues discontinued. No dates

on publication. Those copies in the Museum are in shocking condition. Dry as dust and falling to pieces.

EXCELSIOR LIBRARY AND HALFPENNY MONARCH 1894: I have failed to find any trace of these two publications in the Museum. First mention of them was given by the late Walter Dexter in the December, 1943 issue of "Chambers Journal" and in a later issue of Bill Gander's "Story Paper Collector". The "Excelsior Library" was published by Trapps Holmes and Co. whilst the "Halfpenny Monarch's" publishers are unknown. I shall have to record them as being in existence in 1894 until copies turn up from those "grandfathers" old chests when more information and details can be written about them.

GRIP 1883: Described as a weekly journal for British Boys. Main stories by W.W. Fenn. Its vivid red cover lived up to its title showing two hands clasped together. After No. 13 it was incorporated with "Our Boys". Never have two papers been so closely linked together as some weeks the main title was "Grip" sub-titled "Our Boys" and the other weeks vice-versa. No announcement was made in either paper of the coming incorporation.

JACK AND JILL 1885: Yes, this is the same title as the latest comic to be published in Great Britain. Described as an illustrated paper for boys and girls, very large size, which contained stories, jokes and cartoons. Towards its end it contained stories and articles for more adult tastes. In No. 114 it announced "When "Jack and Jill" was first launched, its intention was to cater for a somewhat juvenile public, but for some time past, a desire has been evinced by our readers for a more adult class of literature and illustration than has been given; so from next week to make the title more representative of the character of its contents, it has been decided that Jill's name shall disappear, and future issues will be called "Jack's Journal", an illustrated weekly miscellany for everybody. Alas! only seven issues of "Jack's Journal" did appear.

KIND WORDS FOR BOYS AND GIRLS: This paper certainly does not live up to its title, some of the stories and illustration were of quite a gruesome nature. Nevertheless, its most striking feature was the brilliant black and white drawings which appeared therein. Ran first as a weekly up to No. 261, then changed to a monthly for 108 issues. Its title was then changed to "Young England", sub-titled "Kind Words for Boys and Girls", but I will deal with this successor later.

NEW YOUTHS MAGAZINE 1824: Compiled from the most admired writers, issued each month stories and articles rather of an educational nature. Small pocket size. Its cover on No. 1 portrayed a monument similar design to that of Nelson's Column in the Desert, with three men climbing up it on a rope ladder, which I believe to be the famous Pompey's Pillar at Alexandria. Only 10 issues, although it may have gone on further.

OUR BOYS 1883: Edited by a Edward A. Morton, containing stories and articles of interest; after No. 12 incorporated with "Grip". A second series commenced after No. 26 when the size of the paper was smaller; this ran to only 13 issues. In No. 12 the paper announced that they had opened a new clothing shop called "Our Boys" at 149 Newington Causeway, London, S.E. with branches at Holborn Viaduct and Kings Cross, in which boys could buy clothing 20% cheaper than anywhere else, because it had come straight from

the manufacturer. Velvet suits, sailor suits, Eton suits, Norfolk suits, were amongst the many advertised. I wonder how long the shops lasted, longer no doubt than the run of the paper.

For curiosity, whilst at Elephant and Castle, I went to see what shop was now at Newington Causeway, but found where No. 149 used to be just a blank space, obviously bombed during the War, now used as a car park for patrons at the Trocadero Cinema.

OUR BOYS 1892: Only two pages, no stories or articles, just Editors long winded talk on how he hoped boys would buy his paper which would contain real manly stories and first class articles for the intelligent boys. No. 2 never did appear, so it seems if the boys still wanted to be boys.

OUR BOYS 1911: Quite the best of "Our Boys" titled publications. Containing pictures and stories of interest. Main story was written by Andrew Murray entitled "Pleasure Island". I can never understand why only one copy was issued as it was quite a very good paper.

PALS 1922/3: Edited and published by E. Hulton. Commenced "Boys Friend" size, when it contained stories and articles of interest. Main serial stories were by John Hunter, mostly serials. A new size commenced after 42 issues, this resulting in a great reduction in the size of the paper. After only 17 issues it was amalgamated with "Boys Own Magazine".

PLEASURE: Sub-titled "The Boys Halfholiday Journal". I first saw mention of this publication in Walter Webbs article at the bottom of page 271 in No. 45 C.D. According to Mr. Webb, the paper was sub-edited by William Clarke Russell, the famous writer of sea-stories in those days. Alas! the paper was a complete flop for only one issue was forthcoming. Large size paper with 16 pages. First story was called "The Adventures of a Young Stowaway" by Mrs. George Corbett. (I think this was Mr. Russell) and followed by articles of interest. An amusing cartoon was drawn on the bottom of the last page showing six monkeys with their tails hanging down with the words "All Ends" underneath. Yes, most certainly the end of ends, no more issues ever did appear.

ROVERING 1924/25: A weekly paper described as for "the young British Manhood". Edited by A.L. Hayden, Editor of the "Boys Own Paper". It had similar stories and articles to those as which appeared in "Scout". After 54 issues, a new series commenced in 1925, but after only six issues, it announced "OWING TO DECREASED CIRCULATION DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS, THE PUBLISHER HAS DECIDED TO SUSPEND PUBLICATION OF ANY FURTHER ISSUES OF "ROVERING". THE COMPETITION IN THIS NUMBER IS CANCELLED." The Editor was at least truthful, as the Editor of "The 1/2d. Vanguard".

SCHOLARS OWN: Edited by J. Macnamara. A penny magazine for Boys and Girls issued each month, Price 1d. Quite good stories which had a run for nine years. Published by the Educational Newspaper Ltd. Although it was advertised in the "Boys Life" (Newnes), it was later incorporated with a paper called "Work and Play", which in turn was incorporated with the "Scout".

UNION JACK LIBRARY 1888: Although this is a library, I have included it because of its interesting name. No connection with the other two publications with similar name. Small pocket size which portrayed on its cover a soldier on one side, a sailor on the other, with a Union Jack

spread across the top. Very bloodthirsty stories published. The numbering was very crude, as some copies were numbered one number on the cover and a different one inside. Here is a short extract from No. 10 entitled "The Giant Guardsman":-

"He was caught in angle of the barrier, was unhorsed, but slew three or four whilst pinned by a leg under his charger. A spear perforated his bosom and he sank into a glorious death."

Other titles were more bloodthirsty, such as No. 3 (Cover No. 6) "Sea Vampire" or "The Nondescript Pirate".

YOUNG ENGLAND 1880/1937: The continuation of "King Words for Boys and Girls". Sub-titled this commenced as a weekly but later as a monthly, finished up eventually as a yearly Annual, Vol. 58, 1937, the same as "Chatterbox" and "Chums".

YOUNG GENTLEMANS AND LADIES MAGAZINE 1799/1800: Although this is near the end of my list, it has the pride of place as being the first boys or juvenile publication ever known to exist. Published each month, price 1/- each. (How many boys could afford to buy it in those days?). Written in very old English, when it contained stories and articles of an educational flavour. Edited by a Dr. Mavor. There may have been more than the 12 issues as shown in the Museum. This incidentally is 23 years earlier than the previous earliest publication known, The Youths Miscellany, 1822.

YOUTHS MAGAZINE 1805/1867: This is, I believe, the first longest run Boys Magazine, it ran for 62 years. Its first issues were very dull dreary stories mostly of a religious or instructional nature. Small pocket size issued each month. In the last issue December, 1867, its contents were much better and the size increased.

ANSWERS to 20 QUESTIONS from MERSEYSIDE - page 51.

NELSON LEE CHARACTERS:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| 1. Church | 6. Morrow |
| 2. Forrest | 7. Snipe |
| 3. Little | 8. Watson |
| 4. Boots | 9. Pitt |
| 5. Grey | 10. Yorke |

SEXTON BLAKE CHARACTERS:

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 11. Kestrel | 16. Grant |
| 12. Kew | 17. Saul |
| 13. Plummer | 18. Quartz |
| 14. Tinker | 19. Champion |
| 15. Fade | 20. Graves |

(cont'd from page 51)...

the presence of the King who greeted him like an old friend. The detective asks him to contrive and be ill for a week so that the foundation stone laying ceremony can be postponed. The King looks surprised, but on being told of his peril agrees. No red tape when John Smith got to work apparently.

"Two minutes later" the story goes on "John Smith was out on the pavement. He moved off down the street looking for a cab."

Just like that, for all the world as if Buckingham Palace was just a house like yours or mine, surrounded by a lot of other houses. I wonder what 'street' Mark Darran had in mind - The Mall maybe! An hour or two later John Smith heard a newsboy crying "Illness of the King. Special 'dition" and John Smith smiled a satisfied smile.

(cont'd page 82).....

THOSE BEGUILING BLUE GEMS

by
Roger M. Jenkins

THE history of the blue Gem is really nothing more nor less than the story of Tom Merry. Tom - practically the only character whom Charles Hamilton referred to by his Christian name alone - was cast in a truly heroic mould. He was not only the central character like Harry Wharton in the red Magnet; he was also a thoroughly likeable personality. We read that he had a handsome face surmounted by curly hair, through which he would run his fingers in moments of perplexity; he had a laugh that was pleasant to hear; and his athletic prowess went without saying. The fags in the Lower Forms would have done anything for him. Could any reader of the Gem nearly half a century ago have asked for anyone better?

Harry Wharton, considered as a piece of characterisation, was far more successful than Tom Merry, even in those early days. For Harry had a temper and a streak of obstinacy that made him a completely credible character. And yet - well, one couldn't help preferring Tom Merry at first. As the reader grew older, Harry Wharton became more interesting to read about, but one never lost entirely the old affection for Tom Merry. Harry Wharton may have been captain of the junior eleven, but Tom Merry was all that and something more - he was the Hero of his Form. Not by any stretch of imagination could that epithet have been applied to Harry Wharton.

In those early days, the Gem was far superior to the Magnet; perhaps Tom Merry had something to do with this. At all events, let us turn back the clock and try to envisage what sort of impression the Gem must have made in those far off halcyon days when Edward VII was on the throne and the pound was worth its weight in gold.

1907 - Tom Merry Makes His Bow

Tom Merry had to share the Gem with adventure stories in the early days, and consequently it was not until No. 3 entitled "Tom Merry's Schooldays" dated 10/3/07 that he was introduced to the public. We first meet Tom on the train bound for Clavering College. He was dressed in a dark blue velvet suit and his nurse and guardian, Miss Priscilla Fawcett, was another anachronism wearing clothes which had been fashionable twenty years previously.

Tom Merry took the opportunity to give her the slip at Westholm, and was rather late in arriving at Clavering, having been misdirected by Manners and Lowther. Tom had a queer manner of speech in these early days, rather like the long-windedness later seen in Alonzo Todd. But Mr. Railton only smiled grimly

when the new boy remarked on going to bed "They seem to have overlooked the hot water bottle".

Quite a number of jokes were played on Tom Merry (who was nicknamed "Spooney") and he also suffered from the solicitous and persistent enquiries from his governess as to whether he had got his chest protector on and was regularly taking all his medicines, but he managed to live all of it down, and after a while he lost his quaint mannerisms.

Clavering College had but a short lease of life; it appeared in the Gem fortnightly until No. 11, when we learned that Mr. Railton, the Head, was under the thumb of a moneylender who was going to foreclose because there was a seam of coal under the school. Accordingly, the whole school was transferred to St. Jim's, where Mr. Railton later became housemaster in place of Mr. Kidd. Herr Schneider, the German master also went to St. Jim's, but Mr. Quelch, the master of the Shell, and Wingate, the captain of Clavering, disappeared from mortal ken.

With No. 11 the St. Jim's stories were transferred from Pluck to the Gem, and from this time onwards Tom Merry made regular weekly appearances. St. Jim's was, of course, not quite the same sort of place in those days, though it changed less than Greyfriars did. For instance, Dr. Holmes was known as the Principal, and there was a Remove form mentioned as well as the Fourth, and both forms then fagged for the Sixth.

No. 15 of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d Gem saw the advent into the stories of Mr. Dodds the curate of Huckleberry Heath. A cricket match with Greyfriars was worrying the juniors because Yorke, the Greyfriars captain, was proposing to play Ponsonby of the Fifth (it should be noted that this was before the Magnet began). Mr. Dodds secured undying popularity by playing for the St. Jim's team as a counterweight.

In No. 36 D'Arcy was in love with the Head's niece, Miss Ethel Courtney, while No. 38 related the amusing story of how the diablo craze swept through the school. In one chapter the juniors donned Guy Fawkes masks as a disguise when they searched Mr. Linton's room for their devils and whips. The master of the Shell was extremely surprised when he woke up to see such beings at his bedside, and he was by no means consoled when Mr. Lathom, who was of a spiritualistic turn of mind, forecast that it heralded Mr. Linton's impending demise.

No. 41 was probably the wittiest of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d Gems. In this number Skimpole became a convert to Socialism. He declared that D'Arcy was a bloated capitalist and aristocrat (Gussy objected most strongly to the adjective). Skimpole even went out of his way to assist tramps, as this extract beautifully illustrates:-

"There are some sacks which you can use to keep yourself warm," said Skimpole. "I am sorry that I can offer you no better covering, but really the sacks will suffer considerably by contact with your person. My poor fellow, you are a terrible example of the oppression of the lower classes. I have seldom seen a man so absolutely degraded and filthy. I must do everything I can for you."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said Honest Bill Bunter, through his gritting teeth.

"You are looking angry, and no wonder. I suppose my words have brought home to you for the first time the terrible wrongs you groan under. But take hope, my friend - take hope! Socialism is coming - like a burst of sunshine to lighten the darkness of the millions now enslaved - and when it comes you will be a clean, sober, hardworking man. Think of that, my poor fellow!"

In fairness, it should perhaps be added that it was made clear that it was Skimpole and not Socialism which was crackbrained: Dr. Holmes indeed remarked that Socialism was a subject worthy of deep consideration by intelligent people.

1907 ended on a comic note with No. 42 - "Figgins' Fig Pudding", into which was mixed an ingredient not specified in any cookery book - syrup of figs!

1908 - Tom Merry Consolidates His Success

In the week ending 15/2/08, less than a year after the Gem had commenced publication, it doubled its size and price, and began a new series. In the same week, the Magnet was launched as a halfpenny paper to cash in on the success of the Gem. Taken all in all, this is no mean tribute to the popularity of Tom Merry.

No. 1 of the new series was entitled "The Gathering of the Clans" and relates how Marmaduke Smythe and Arthur Digby returned to the school. Though the story was in no way outstanding, it contains a number of pleasant touches of characterisation. The St. Jim's characters were sorted out far more quickly than those at Greyfriars, and the circle of the chief characters was, as Gussy used to say, "select, not to say swaggah". These early tales were full of little touches which helped to build up the complete and detailed picture of St. Jim's, and many of them were very amusing. In No. 2, Miss Priscilla Fawcett's attempt to act as peacemaker was foredoomed to failure; in No. 5, Gussy was in love again with another Ethel - this time the music professor's daughter.

Skimpole was to the fore again in No. 7, in the guise of a detective, but strangely enough Dr. Holmes refused to engage him in place of Ferrers Locke, and when that worthy detective arrived he spurned Skimpole's offer of assistance. A fortnight later another detective appeared, this time a Mr. Joseph Link whom Gussy had invited down to solve the mystery of his missing gold watch. The watch eventually turned up in the pocket of one of Gussy's many waistcoats, but not before he had had some remarkable encounters with "The Bogus Detective".

The St. Jim's stories were cut by half in Nos. 11 to 16 and also in No. 18, when adventure stories about Alan Wayward intruded. The St. Jim's tales at this time seemed to run in pairs at first; so it would seem that full length stories by Charles Hamilton were cut in two by the editor. One of the famous institutions - the St. Jim's Parliament - was brought into being in No. 13. Skimpole failed to be elected as Socialist candidate, perhaps because of the candid manner in which he told the electors that the fact that they were all rude, ignorant, foolish, and brutal was the result of their early training in sordid surroundings with vicious and selfish parents. Skimpole's disappointment was assuaged by his latest ISM - Determinism. (It is a pity that, when the early Gem stories were reprinted in 1931, all references to Socialism were obliterated, and Skimpole was always referred to as a Determinist, which made nonsense of many of the jokes about him.) Skimpole was featured again in No. 18, when he had begun writing his famous work on Socialism. He brought a tramp into St. Jim's (a human document, as he called him), and nourished him with Gore's food, but nothing eventful occurred except some petty thefts.

The first real series in the Gem appeared in Nos. 28-32, when St. Jim's was spending the summer holidays on board the S.S. Condor. Mr. Ratcliff was acting as headmaster, and No. 30 contained a fine description of a clash between Tom Merry and the new Housemaster, which culminated in Tom Merry's jumping overboard. The summer cruise made good reading and was a happy augury of further

series to come.

Cousin Ethel made frequent appearances in these early days. Although she was D'Arcy's cousin, she seemed far more interested in Figgins. Even Tom Merry took second place here, and in No. 34, when he referred to Figgins in her presence as "that rotter", she paid him out in her own coin. The following week when they all went to the Zoo, she refused her cousin's offer to take a cab from Charing Cross on the grounds that they all ought to keep together, but, when Figgins suggested a hansom as they emerged from Regent's Park tube station, she accepted with alacrity, and poor Gussy could only remark in perplexity "There nevah is any understandin' girls!" Ethel Cleveland had a streak of playfulness which Marjorie Hazeldene never possessed at all, but Ethel became more sober as the years went by.

A fortnight later saw the arrival of Gussy's younger brother Wally, who soon became Mr. Selby's pet aversion. Cheeky and grubby (Gussy was always asking him when he had last changed his collar) Wally was a thoroughly likeable scamp from beginning to end.

Whereas the red Magnet always had a regular artist (first Hutton Mitchell, then Clarke, and finally C.H. Chapman), the Blue Gem at this time was illustrated by a panel of artists, including Macdonald*, Clarke, Briscoe, Hutton Mitchell, H.M. Lewis, P.J. Hayward, and of course the incomparable Warwick Reynolds.

Warwick Reynolds was not without faults; his perspective would sometimes offend the normal rules of vision, and occasionally his heads would seem too large for their bodies, but these defects could all be forgiven him on account of the magnificent sense of atmosphere afforded to the reader by his richly detailed, sombre drawings with the beautifully clear black lines. Whether it was Dr. Holmes in his panelled study or the class in an ancient form-room with a splendid vaulted ceiling, Warwick Reynolds could always be relied upon to fire the imagination of the reader at once with the beauty and charm of the ancient setting of the stories.

A drawing by Reynolds has been traced as early as No. 31, but his first really remarkable contribution was in Gem No. 41. Christmas double numbers often appeared in November, and No. 41 was no exception. It was one of many stories entitled "The Ghost of St. Jim's". The first fall of snow heralded the coming of the ghost of the blind monk Rufus who had been murdered by the Abbot Wolfram. The haunting on this occasion took the form of tapping, which eventually turned out to be Binks, the page, wandering around secret corridors, the exit from which was the famous secret panel in Study No. 6. Bink's mind had apparently been turned by reading cheap American comics, which seemed to have been a cause of juvenile delinquency earlier than might have been expected!

1909 - The Mixture as Before

Fresh fields and pastures new was the order of the day in Nos. 46-50 when Tom Merry and Co. made their American tour. It was the first foreign travel series ever, but not otherwise noteworthy, and it was pleasant to have them back again at St. Jim's with the new boy Buck Finn whom they had met in the wild and woolly west. A new boy of a different sort was Clyne in No. 56 who knew several novel ways of bullying fags, but he was only a bird of passage.

Skimpole was always hard up, and his fees were never paid on time. The Codicote scholarship in No. 58 was therefore a fine opportunity for him, and he

* With No. 121 Macdonald became the regular Gem artist, until he joined the Navy in the war.

managed to win it after most of the other candidates had had to withdraw after accidentally seeing the question papers beforehand.

Nos. 60 and 61 featured a trip to Liverpool, to meet Digby's uncle from Ireland. An unexpected companion for the return trip was 'Erbert, a waif from the slums who was befriended by the juniors and smuggled to school. Dr. Holmes was expecting a new boy called Bernard Glyn, and so it was some days before the deception was discovered. 'Erbert was permitted by the Head to remain at school though he soon faded into the background.

A strange transformation overcame Mr. Ratcliff in No. 66 - "The Form Master's Secret". He became almost pleasant for a while, and everyone was puzzled until it transpired that he was in love with Glyn's sister Edith, and even went so far as to take her some flowers in a box which, unbeknownst to him, had been filled instead with mouldy pastries. Even after his suit had been rejected, Mr. Ratcliff retained some traces of benevolence the following week when he allowed leave to Figgins and Co. for the week-end. Tom Merry and Co. had also obtained leave, and the six of them surprised Study No. 6 by arriving at Eastwood House as uninvited guests. Lord Eastwood's new butler, Jelf, was somewhat put out by this invasion, which rather scotched his plan to admit confederates to break open the safe.

1909 was a bumper year for new boys. Apart from Buck Finn, there was Clifton Dane, the Canadian hypnotist in No. 57 (written by a substitute writer) and Bernard Glyn the inventor in No. 63. The third member of the trio, Harry Noble from Australia, arrived in No. 69 appropriately entitled "A Son of the Empire".

Noble, or Kangaroo as he came to be called, had rather a chequered career when he first arrived, since all studies shewed the usual rooted objection to having a new boy. He was moved from Tom Merry's study to Figgins's in the New House (where he made the interesting discovery that Fatty Wynn talked in his sleep about frying food in lard) and from there to Blake's study in the School House, but not until he settled in the end study with Glyn and Dane did he find a permanent resting-place.

Another expedition took place a fortnight later in a tale entitled "Sent to Coventry". Gussy's elder brother, Lord Conway, was in that city buying bicycles for the Home Guard, and the juniors cycled there to see the sights, one of which was Hamilton's famous factory. No. 75 saw the arrival of "Gussy's Guest", the one and only W.G. Bunter. Gussy could not remember the invitation which Bunter assured him he had given him, but everyone played up, and Bunter was given a superb feed at which he outshone even Fatty Wynn.

Some of the tales in the early Gems were built around a number of unconnected incidents, like No. 76, in which Skimpole proclaimed his faith in the theory of mind over matter, Gore painted spots on Towser and Pongo, the juniors took a cycle ride with cousin Ethel, and a party was invited to Glyn House to see Glyn's model boats sail. Glyn was to the fore again in No. 80 when he made a life-sized model of Skimpole, which could walk - Skimpole II. This contraption had a short life, but more was to be heard of it in the future.

Stories came in pairs at this time. Nos. 82 and 83 saw the arrival of Tom Merry's cousin Herbert Dorrian from South Africa who left a box of diamonds in his care. Nos. 84 and 85 formed another dramatic pair, with Gore being expelled for forging Tom Merry's writing in an attempt to cause quarrels. Mr. Gore

was the typical Roman parent, who flogged his son himself and put him on a diet of bread and water, with the consequence that Gore returned to the school as a fugitive and camped out in the old tower until Dr. Holmes agreed he could re-enter the school. Nos. 86 and 87 saw Miss Priscilla Fawcett being threatened by an anonymous letter writer, and a surprising denouement at Huckleberry Heath.

The editor would occasionally take unwarrantable liberties with the stories. In No. 89 the juniors set off for Paris, but the editor altered the end of the story to bring them back to St. Jim's so that the scene would be right for a tale by a substitute writer in No. 90 which had nothing to do with the foreign travel series. They were allowed to resume their trip in No. 91, but it was not until the Christmas Double Number (No. 93 - another November issue) that anything memorable occurred; this was the thrilling episode in the haunted Chateau Cernay, one of the most exciting and dramatic incidents that the Gem had featured to date. Poor Skimpole was not able to accompany the holidaymakers, though the artist duly featured him in most of the illustrations - by way of compensation, perhaps.

At this time Charles Hamilton was writing a series of stories for "Pluck" revolving around Tomsonio's Circus, featuring Jack Talbot the boy tiger tamer. This circus was introduced into the Magnet and Gem on several occasions, some of the most notable of which were probably Nos. 96 and 97 of the Gem. In the first number, Dr. Holmes graciously permitted the circus to be pitched at St. Jim's. The clown, when performing a conjuring trick, took a bottle of brandy and pipe out of Gussy's pocket. Mr. Ratcliff did not appreciate that it was a trick, and duly reported Gussy to the Head. There followed a grand scene in which D'Arcy magnificently pointed out to Dr. Holmes that this was not the first time that Mr. Ratcliff had been impertinent. In No. 97 the juniors paid another trip to the circus which was then at Wayland, and Gussy (who was a superb rider) acted as substitute for Jack Talbot in a riding act with Clothilde.

1910 - The Old Order Changeth.....

The New Year saw a distinct change in the Gem stories. Hitherto, the plot had been only of secondary importance in most tales; the interesting point was the way in which the different incidents had served to display the various facets of the characters of Gussy, Tom Merry, Skimpole, etc.. There was an indefinable air of charm that lingered over the earliest stories, the plots of which were very thin indeed, judged by Charles Hamilton's later standards.

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis. At all events, the plot began to assume a greater importance at this time, and the characters were subordinated to the plot. No. 103 entitled "Skimpole the Third" is a good example of this. In No. 80 we had been introduced to Glyn's mechanical figure, Skimpole II, but the author had not made much use of the idea. No. 103 saw the idea revived; Glyn had put a gramophone record in the figure, which could now deliver a lecture on Determinism if a button were pressed on the back of its head. There were endless ramifications and diversions in this story, the final one being when Kerr (Skimpole the Third) dressed up in imitation of the figure and then ran amok, making everyone believe that the machinery had gone wrong. This story was undoubtedly one of the most polished and skilful which had been written by the author at that time, and stands comparison with the Magnets of the early 'thirties.

It was some time before another story on quite the same high level appeared, but there were some very good ones in 1910, nonetheless. A pair in Nos. 106 and 107 related how Gussy witnessed an ambush on Mr. Selby and refused to give the Head

the name of the assailant. Rather than be flogged for disobedience he "retired" from the school for a while, and sought employment at Tomsonio's circus, though he had a number of amusing adventures on the way, including falling in with a tramp who robbed him of everything while he slept. Another fine pair was Nos. 111 and 112, dealing with the famous trip to Nice and Monte Carlo where the juniors beguiled themselves with the carnival, and Figgins' cousin Archie Hilton stole money from Miss Fawcett to use in gambling at the casino. Their return to school was not published until No. 115, but as the intervening two stories were written by substitute writers they featured at the school all the juniors who were supposed to be away. The editor seemed untroubled by any considerations about preserving the continuity of the tales, and the readers of the time must have been hopelessly puzzled.

Dr. Holmes was very benevolent in early days, and the juniors were all owed constant leaves of absence. A pair of stories in Nos. 123 and 124 describe how they were allowed to visit Eastwood House for a cricket week - two pleasant stories which are so reminiscent of Charles Hamilton's serial "King Cricket".

A famous tale was No. 126 entitled "The Mystery of the Moat House" in which an inmate of a private lunatic asylum deceived the juniors into thinking he was falsely imprisoned, and persuaded them to rescue him. Even more famous was No. 127 - "D'Arcy's Bank Book". In order to teach Gussy to be more careful with money, Lord Eastwood opened a bank account for £50 in the name of his son. The experiment was hardly a success, and the account soon ran into debit. Gussy shewed a masterly disregard for the conventions of banking when he attempted to remedy this by a drawing a cheque in favour of himself to replenish the account and, when the Bank manager objected, Gussy asked him sternly if this meant that the Bank had no further assets.

With No. 129 began a sequence of tales that struck a new and somewhat disturbingly unpleasant note. It was a new boy from America, Jerrold Lumley-Lumley who effected this transformation. In the first few days he earned the nickname "The Outsider", but the Head was powerless to expel him, because he had signed an agreement to keep him at the school for at least three years. The following week, after they had broken up for the holidays, Lumley-Lumley was offensive to Cousin Ethel at Huckleberry Heath, but he received short shrift from Tom Merry & Co. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that with this number Cousin Ethel's character was developed into something more than the pleasant good-natured girl which she had hitherto been depicted to be.

In No. 131 (a story by a substitute writer) the juniors were back at school again, but the tale of their holidays was contained in No. 132 with a description of a trip to the Japanese exhibition at the White City which was enlivened by several encounters with Captain Punter, a pickpocket of considerable resource.

The saga of Lumley-Lumley was continued somewhat intermittently, a number of tales being written by substitute writers (and later being among the handful of stories not by Charles Hamilton which were chosen for reprinting in the 'thirties). A genuine story in No. 134 saw Lumley-Lumley at the Green Man, playing poker with Mr. Joliffe and Mr. Banks who intended to fleece him. The Outsider, however, was even more expert at cheating than they were, and he came away with £70 of their money, which Dr. Holmes later made him refund. A fine story appeared in No. 138, in which Lumley-Lumley drove off with Cousin Ethel in a trap against her will, to make her spend the afternoon with him. At one stage he

performed a brave deed, and Ethel began to hope that he might, after all, prove to be a decent fellow, but he spoilt it all by excessive familiarity. The story ended thus:--

He was thinking of the chance he had had that day of gaining the regard of Cousin Ethel - the chance he had had of winning her respect - and how he had, with the caddishness that seemed inherent in his nature, thrown that chance away. The girl had been growing to trust him, and he had lost her trust. The chance was gone! Would it ever recur?

No. 141 saw the beginning of a pair of most remarkable stories. Lumley-Lumley had reached the nadir of his infamous career in attempting to drug the Shell football team who were playing the Fourth. It was just after his treachery had been exposed that he was knocked down by a motor car, and the shock aggravated a peculiar malady from which he had always suffered, with the consequence that he died soon after. This tale was told with a depth of sympathy and sentiment that was unusual even for the early stories, and which was rather drastically pruned when it was reprinted in Gem No. 1385. The following week saw the arrival of Ernest Levison who had been expelled from Greyfriars some two years previously, and who seemed to have left all his few good qualities behind him. It was Levison who, having known the Outsider previously, correctly guessed that he was merely in a trance, and in a stirring scene he went down to the vaults in the night to bring Lumley-Lumley back to life. Needless to say, Lumley-Lumley then left the school for a while to recuperate.

Probably in case readers should be alarmed at the somewhat sombre nature of these stories, there followed a few more in the old vein. In No. 144 Gussy was in love again, and this time the recipient of his attentions allowed herself to become engaged to him, in order that he should begin to realise all it involved. The Christmas Double Number in No. 145 dealt with Binks the page and the fortune he had just inherited. Binks's father was too proud to work, and his mother was what D'Arcy called a "washerlady"; it was to these rather unusual parents that he returned on his accession to fortune. (The next week a story by E.S. Brooks featuring Binks still as the page was tactlessly printed by the editor.) Binks returned in No. 147 and asked to be allowed to become a pupil. Dr. Holmes agreed and after the possibilities of the subject had been exhausted it was given out that Binks had decided it would be better to go to another school. Binks's elevation was rather a pity, because Toby, his successor, was nothing like so good a piece of character drawing.

If anyone had begun to wonder whether Tom Merry was losing the limelight, the series which began in No. 148 would have re-assured him on this point. Croke's father was a financier, and one of his successful coups involved the ruination of Miss Fawcett. Cousin Ethel came to the rescue to look after his guardian, and Tom went to London to seek employment, but found things hard going. The year ended on a more cheerful note with Tom temporarily re-united with his old friends for Christmas at Eastwood House.

1911 -and Giveth Way to the New

The New Year saw more vicissitudes, Tom Merry playing for the Wayland Ramblers football team, and later (in No. 153) acting as Master of the Third while Mr. Selby was away. It was clear, however, that Tom was not the person to keep the fags in order, and the fortunate arrival of Mr. Poinsett, his millionaire uncle from Arizona, enabled Tom to return to the ranks of the Shell again.

A postscript to this series in Nos. 154 and 155 described how Joe Frayne, the waif from the London slum who had met Tom Merry during the period of his misfortune, was brought back to St. Jim's and entered the Third Form. Joe was not exactly welcomed by his form-fellows, but he managed to make a place for himself.

Lumley-Lumley returned in No. 158, apparently cured of his malady, but not otherwise changed. Tom Merry good-naturedly agreed to let him play in the team, against the wishes of everyone else, and this incident heralded the commencement of a rift in the lute, which was aggravated by Lumley-Lumley's efforts to get Tom Merry disgraced. This was a fine series, too short perhaps to compare with the later series about Harry Wharton's relapses, but nevertheless outstanding for its time. Only Wally D'Arcy and the fags remained loyal to Tom Merry, and it was poetic justice that it should be Wally who was instrumental in foiling the plot in No. 160. The next number was aptly entitled "By Order of the Head, or Lumley-Lumley's Last Chance"; in this Tom Merry and Co. were requested to try to reform the Boy from the Bowery. It was an uphill task, but not unsuccessful.

Joe Frayne claimed the limelight in No. 162 when he was driven from the school by Mr. Selby's harshness. The following week he became a temporary convert to Skimpole's Socialism, while a more serious pair of stories in Nos. 165 and 166 dealt with the embarrassing arrival at St. Jim's of some of his old acquaintances from the London slums.

Not all the Gem stories were original to the Library. Nos. 167 and 168 were reprint of Boys' Friend monthly library No. 38 entitled "Tom Merry's Conquest". The theme was one of a war with the Grammar School, in which each campaign was directed by a different leader whose name was drawn out of the hat. It need hardly be added that it was under Tom Merry's generalship that success was achieved. Another interesting pair of stories was in Nos. 170 and 171 when the school was cut off by floods when Dr. Holmes was ill. He left for a holiday in France with all the masters to see him off. Unfortunately they did not get off the boat in time, and St. Jim's was left in charge of Knox for a day or two.

A really famous trio of stories came with Nos. 173 to 175, dealing with a trip to a Treasure Island in the South Seas. There is a smack of Robert Louis Stevenson about the duel with the Spanish dwarf Lopez, and it must have been a popular series, for it was reprinted on several occasions.

There was a pleasant, old-fashioned ring about the titles of many of these early stories. No. 181 - "The Secret of the Sea", or the Manuscript in the Bottle" related how the juniors spent a holiday at Clovelly and rescued a shipwrecked mariner.

Levison was such an utter villain at this time that it makes some of the stories written about him a little too incredible, and the re-actions of Tom Merry & Co. were so strong that the old atmosphere of pleasantry would at times disappear, leaving rather more primitive passions exposed:-

"That chap's a cad!" Lowther remarked. "But don't be too warlike, Tommy, my son. You never used to fly out in this way".

Tom Merry flushed again.

"I can't stand that chap!" he exclaimed. "He's always got something to say with a beastly sting in it - he lets nobody off. He'd make out the whole human race is rotten at the core, I believe. I'm sick of it."

Levison played an ignoble part in No. 182 in which Glyn invented his

famous bowling machine. Glyn had sent the plans to the Patent Office, but Levison was - quite correctly - suspected of having intercepted them. There was an unpleasant scene in which the juniors had decided on suspicion alone to rag him until he handed them over, and were stopped only by Kildare's intervention. Episodes like this rebounded to the credit of none of the parties concerned, and one cannot help wondering why the author included such distasteful passages, where all the characters shewed up badly.

There were a number of single stories of merit at this time: No. 183 was a thoughtful study of Dick Brooke, the day-boy, and his broken down father; No. 184 was about Gerald Blane, who had tried to conceal his shady past until an old acquaintance returned; and No. 185 "The Black House on the Moor" in which Cousin Ethel was the intended victim of her relative Dr. Gadsby - a piece of sheer melodrama which shews the influence of Sherlock Holmes and "The Speckled Band".

A taste for foreign adventure must have been in their blood, for the juniors made a trip to the Congo in Nos. 190 to 192 (albeit unwittingly) and Tom Merry brought back to St. Jim's M'Pong, a cannibal, whose banishment was effected by Levison. Levison played another part in No. 194, a tale with some considerable atmosphere, in which he was assisting some gentlemen from the Bird in Hand to kidnap Lumley-Lumley. But perhaps the tale with the most carefully wrought atmosphere of all was the Christmas Double number in No. 197 - another "Ghost of St. Jim's". This time the ghost was Dr. Wynde, a brilliant surgeon and vivisectionist who was staying at the school as the guest of Mr. Selby. The doctor's mind had been turned by his cruel experiments, and in reading old books of the legends of the school he fancied that the spirits of the old phantoms were seeking possession of his body.

A thoughtful story of some merit was No. 201 in which Bishop of the Fourth, who had built up a legend of his father's wealth, saw his fantasies collapse when his poorly dressed sister paid a visit to the school. There were a number of subsequent stories about juniors who were ashamed of their relatives, but none were so fine as this.

1912 - The Blue Gem at its Zenith

1912 was a particularly successful year, and it is noteworthy that Charles Hamilton wrote every story but one that appeared in the Gem for that year (the odd one in No. 226 being the first of Pentelow's imitations).

The year opened in grand style in No. 204 with Gussy being elected captain of the school for a few days in Kildare's absence. The story was mainly comedy, but there was a fine dramatic sequel the following week which dealt with Monteith's feud with D'Arcy for having beaten him in the election. Levison also had a grudge against Monteith, and arranged a rope for him to trip over, and thoughtfully provided some broken glass to cushion his fall. This rather gruesome episode led to some fine reading when suspicion fell on D'Arcy. Levison was the culprit again in No. 207 when he tried to get his rival in the Southcote examination - Figgins - disqualified for cheating.

It was evidently thought time for some more new juniors to arrive, for No. 211 saw three scholarship boys - Lawrence, Refern, and Owen - who became known as the New Firm of the New House. The following week related the story of the first barring-out, after which Mr. Rateliff took a long holiday and the school was intrigued by the new temporary master, Mr. Wodyer.

Joe Frayne came into prominence again in No. 218 when he fell into disgrace as a result of being too loyal to Langton the prefect. Dick Brooke also had a large share of the limelight in a series from No. 220 to 222. He incurred the enmity of Levison, who concocted a forged note to Mr. Lathom, bearing insulting words in Levison's handwriting. Levison's guilt came to light unexpectedly, and he shammed illness to avoid expulsion. The juniors were so disgusted that they expelled him themselves and put him on the train to London. Dr. Holmes was therefore constrained to allow Levison to return, to show the school who was headmaster. After Levison had saved Cousin Ethel from a bull he was released from the sentence of Coventry which had been imposed on him. The reader was, for the first time, given a hint that perhaps Levison was not after all the unmitigated scoundrel he had hitherto seemed to be.

A most unusual tale by Charles Hamilton was "Figgy's Folly" in No. 223. Figgins impulsively jumped on the train that was bearing Cousin Ethel away to Paris, because he was afraid she might not be safe among foreigners. His resentment against the middle-aged Frenchman who engaged Ethel in conversation was convincingly narrated, but it was nevertheless an odd sort of tale to find in the Gem, and it is not surprising that the strangeness of its theme once led a famous collector to declare it was the work of a substitute writer.

Langton was to the fore again in No. 225, being blackmailed by a bookmaker to sell a match, whilst No. 229 saw Levison locked in the Head's safe, and the new games coach being forced to reveal himself as a cracksman in order to save the life of the boy who was plotting against him - a fine story, this, with a splendid character study of Mr. Selby. Levison was still convalescing the following week, and so Croke was brought forward to play the villain, with an ingenious scheme to get Monty Lowther suspected of theft. After the Fourth had suffered the pangs of a temporary form-mistress, Miss Ponsonby, in No. 232, Monty Lowther played a prominent part again in No. 237 entitled "Stage Struck", in which he ran away from school to join a seedy theatrical company touring third rate provincial theatres. How the scales gradually fell from his eyes and how he came to realise he was only the dupe of the manager who used his premium to spend on drink was related in a splendid story which is probably as true of stage life today as it was when it was written forty-two years ago.

Another fine tale appeared the following week - possibly the finest story to be published in this finest year - "Bought Honours". D'Arcy decided to learn Greek and enter for the Greek Medal (all in one week!), and he accepted Levison's offer to coach him. When D'Arcy began to realise what a poor chance he had got, Levison gradually persuaded him - in a veritable masterpiece of conversational writing - to let him take the exam disguised as D'Arcy (with a view to blackmailing him afterwards). Needless to say, although Levison won the prize for him, D'Arcy could not bear to enjoy his bought honours for long.

Tom Merry was in trouble in No. 239 when a secret entrusted to him by Kildare and Langton was spread about the school and he got the blame for it. Mr. Ratcliff was very much in the centre of things in No. 240; he became so intolerable that Kerr dressed up as a lady and pretended to be his abandoned wife, an episode which so upset him that he had to leave the school for another holiday. Tom Merry was in more trouble in No. 242 entitled "The Prefect's Plot" in which Bingham schemed to get him expelled. This was a queer sort of story which seemed to begin half way through; it had a fine dramatic start, and tailed off a little at the end.

Humour was the keynote in No. 244 "The Flooded School" in which Mr. Selby played an unworthy part. Drama was to the fore again, however, in Nos. 247 "Baffled" and 248 "Caught Red-Handed" which featured Ferrers Locke and a series of amazing burglaries by the Mysterious X at Glyn House and St. Jim's. There was a very ingenious solution to the mystery which was far less patent than many of Charles Hamilton's later stories about crime.

"Nobody's Study" in No. 250 was a very seasonable offering, in which Levison disappeared overnight (when locked in the punishment room) leaving only his clothes behind him, like the monk in the legend. Levison's trickery was discovered by the juniors earlier than he had intended, and the story never made clear what excuse Levison had intended to offer when he did re-appear.

The year ended on a note of mystery with Nos. 253-255 which present rather a puzzle to the reader. They are not in the style of the period, yet they are not imitations. The explanation is that they were adapted from early St. Jim's stories in Pluck. Since Tom Merry was not at St. Jim's in those days, Charles Hamilton duly obliged by writing in a part for the Terrible Three into his old stories, though most of the interpolation was directed to explaining why Tom Merry did not feature much in the story. Other amendments were necessary, Mr. Railton being substituted for Mr. Kidd - not a happy substitution, for their characters were not alike.

1913 - On Top of the World

Charles Hamilton must have been indisposed at this time, for the first five stories of the year were imitations, and No. 261 was another Pluck adaptation. He was back at the peak of his form, however, with No. 266 entitled "The Last Hope" in which Tom Merry rashly lent Cutts some Club Funds to pay pressing debts on the strength of Cutts's word that he would be able to return the money on Friday. Tom Merry was later aghast to discover that the repayment depended upon the prowess of another horse (which also lost), and he had some anxious moments before he could retrieve the situation.

Gussy provided some comic relief in No. 269 when he became an interpreter at a Wayland Hotel for a while, and again in No. 274 when he took up the cause of women's suffrage at Wayland where "Windows had been broken, pillar boxes had been raided, policemen had been scratched and even bitten - in fact there were all the signs of progress". More serious was No. 272 in which Tom Merry's double - Reggie Clavering - made his first appearance and caused a great deal of dissension.

After a trip to Italy seaching for buried treasure in Nos. 275 and 276, Levison came to the fore again in No. 278. His father expected to make a fortune on the Stock Exchange, but he was ruined instead, and Levison came back in disguise as a boot boy, maliciously setting to work to create trouble everywhere.

Mr. Ratcliff was the villain of the piece in No. 280, but he was successfully paid out by the Terrible Three. A fortnight later saw Tickey Tapp esconced in the old Manor House in charge of a casino, during which time Gore had a bad attack of gambling fever and the readers were treated to a fine description of how the croupier manipulated the wheel. This story was followed by "Taggles' Benefit" in No. 283, when the school porter's sixty-fifth birthday was suitably commemorated.

The only substitute story which need be considered in this article is No. 285 entitled "Misunderstood", the authorship of which has not been discovered.

In this tale Manners was unjustly suspected of being a coward and he redeemed his reputation later by saving a child from a fire at Wayland. Stories about saving lives do not perhaps rank very highly in the annals of literature; often they are merely a cheap and easy way for the author of resolving a difficult situation. But this story merits some note if only because of the skilful manner in which Manners' estrangement from his friends was portrayed. The story must have been read by Charles Hamilton, for he later made many references to the splendid camera which Manners was awarded for his courage.

Cutts of the Fifth was a well-drawn character around whom many first class stories were written. No. 287 was one such tale, in which he obtained a place in the first eleven by roguery in order to let the side down and so win a large bet. How he was foiled by Fatty Wynn made an intriguing story to be classed with "The Last Hope" earlier in the year.

Stories about Figgins' regard for Cousin Ethel always made fine reading. If "Figgy's Folly" had been a little too extravagant in theme and "The Black House on the Moor" too melodramatic for some readers, "Figgins' Foe" in No. 288 suffered from neither defect. In this tale Brooke aroused much ill-feeling by meeting Cousin Ethel out of school in rather mysterious circumstances, which Levison ferreted out and made known. Both D'Arcy and Figgins were shewn at their best - and worst - in this notable tale.

An excellent sequel to No. 287 appeared in No. 291 in which Cutts sought to blacken Digby's character in order to extricate himself from his debts to book-makers. A light topical story in a humorous vein was "The Rag-Time Schoolboys" in No. 293 which was, for obvious reasons, never reprinted.

There were a number of good humorous tales at this time, including No. 294 "Gussy's Guest" describing a visit by Fisher T. Fish, No. 295 "At the Eleventh Hour" in which Mr. Lathom and Skimpole took up geology and a prehistoric man was supplied for them to find, and No. 296 "Tom Merry's Minor" relating how a monkey caused no little disturbance at the school. All these stories had a serious topic included, but the humorous parts were none the less funny for that.

Undoubtedly the most famous of all Christmas numbers was "The Mystery of the Painted Room" in No. 302. In addition to the usual seasonable atmosphere of all the previous Christmas stories, this tale had a really well-knit and imaginative plot, revolving round an historic room at Eastwood House with a beautifully painted ceiling. The figure of Bacchus was, indeed, so lifelike that its eyes seemed at times to wink!

1914 - The Calm Before the Storm

Lord Eastwood was getting stingy with his "fivahs" again in No. 311, and Gussy was driven to the desperate expedient of seeking work, but neither as errand boy nor as barber's assistant could he manage to find a steady job. A fortnight later saw Figgins grinding away at Latin - as a result of a hint from Cousin Ethel - in order to win the Bishop's Medal. He was more successful than Gussy in attempting something unusual.

No. 315 was another Cutts story, this time featuring Monty Lowther, who had taken to gambling because his uncle had cut his allowance. This rather unbelievable circumstance tended, perhaps, to mar an otherwise good story.

A series of four stories commencing with No. 317 (broken by No. 319 - a

story by E.S. Brooks which did not relate to the series) brought Cutts and Tom Merry into prominence again. Kildare was obliged to leave the school for a while, and Cutts set about eliminating all rival candidates for the captaincy. Just when it seemed that he had succeeded, Tom Merry came forward and was elected by a large majority. His tenure of office was glorious, but brief, and then Cutts came to power for a fortnight until Kildare returned. It is interesting to note how self-contained each story in this series is; indeed, there are some inconsistencies, for No. 320 ends with Mr. Railton warning Cutts to mend his ways, and No. 321 begins by stating that Cutts enjoyed the housemaster's confidence. In later days, Charles Hamilton would not have regarded each story so much as a separate unit.

After Tom Merry's double had put in another appearance in Nos. 323 to 325, No. 328 saw Gussy taking up ventriloquism in a series of amusing episodes in which his progress was precisely nil. Another humorous story was No. 331 in which Algernon Blenkinsop, the fourteenth son of the Rev. Rabbits Blenkinsop, arrived from Huckleberry Heath endowed with a great capacity to sing hymns and pass on his father's tracts, and also - like Mrs. Jellyby in "Bleak House" - he had an absorbing interest in missionary work in far off islands. The following week saw Lowther "Playing a Part" on the stage again with his old friend Mr. Horatio Curll.

With No. 334 began a series of four stories dealing with the introduction of one of the most likeable characters to appear in the Gem - Reginald Talbot, "The Toff". Handsome, popular, splendid cricketer - he seemed to have the world at his beck and call; yet he was also a schoolboy cracksman and leader of a gang of criminals. (The same theme was later used most successfully for the Lancaster series in the Magnet.) The first two Talbot series were perhaps the finest series of all in the Blue Gems. How in this first series he was suspected by Levison and just managed to allay suspicion, how he tired of his life of hypocrisy, and how he had to give himself away in order to foil an attack by the gang on the school safe was related in first class manner in this really magnificent quartet of stories. He left the school in No. 337, but it was certain that St. Jim's had not heard the last of him.

Nos. 339 and 340 saw the last of all the pre-war summer holidays. Lumley-Lumley was inveigled into spending a few days with Cutts and Captain Punter, a gambling party that ended up with a fight for the winnings, after which Lumley-Lumley moved over to Eastwood House and Billy Bunter came along to exercise what he thought was his fatal attraction over Cousin Ethel. In No. 341 Monty Lowther evolved a wheeze to prolong their holidays, but when they returned to St. Jim's it was found that Study No. 6 had been bagged, and Monty had to think deeply before he could retire it for the Fourth-Formers.

Each Gem story was of course written many weeks before publication, and it was not therefore until No. 349 dated 17/10/14 that a hint of war was to be found. In that number the juniors had rather an amazing adventure which ended up with their being under guard in an Austrian hotel with a soldier outside the door with fixed bayonet - an obvious dramatisation of the author's own experiences.

The second excellent Talbot series commenced with No. 351, telling how Talbot won the King's Pardon for saving a troop train from being blown up by a German spy. Disdaining charity, he sought a job as boot-boy in the New House the following week, but Mr. Ratcliff was not the most considerate of employers, and he was glad when the governors offered him one of the old scholarships to enable

him to return to the Shell. This second series ended magnificently with No. 353 in which he did Levison a good turn, which was unexpectedly repaid when Levison contrived to overthrow the plot of Tresham to get Talbot expelled for robbing the Fifth Form Football Club funds (which Tresham had in fact appropriated for his own purposes). The curious friendship between Levison and Talbot was another step on the road to Levison's reformation.

None of the Talbot stories that followed could ever reach quite the same heights as those in the first two series. Many were very good, but the novelty was gone, and the old drama could never be resuscitated on such a high level again. No. 355 was one such "repeat" story; Hookey Walker, another member of the gang, escaped from prison, and was captured by Levison's quick-wittedness. No. 356 was only indirectly connected with Talbot, the main plot being the story of how the juniors mistakenly suspected Kildare of being a blackguard, but Talbot's past was re-opened in No. 358 in which John Rivers, "The Professor", arrived at St. Jim's under the alias of Mr. Packington. His stay was brief, but more was to be heard of him. "Talbot's Christmas" in No. 359 was spent at Huckleberry Heath with a German spy and a ghost to enliven the festivities.

1915 - The Blue Gem Carries On

The New Year saw another Talbot series. The Professor's daughter, Marie Rivers, came to St. Jim's as a nurse, and in No. 362 Talbot was kidnapped. A burglary was carefully staged to make it look like the work of the Toff, but all came right in No. 363 and Marie Rivers repented.

Talbot's reformation was quite convincing, though Marie Rivers' change of heart seemed rather sudden. When, however, in No. 364 the Professor himself decided to join the army to atone for his past, one is left with the feeling that this was perhaps too much of a good thing (though allowances should of course be made for the patriotic fervour which was sweeping the country at the time). But No. 364 had some interesting moments, especially when Mr. Railton went to Lantham to make a recruiting speech, and was pertinently asked by a heckler why he didn't join up himself:-

"I am a schoolmaster," said Mr. Railton, feeling that he was called upon to defend himself, for the mockery of the crowd stung him to the quick. "It would be very difficult for me to be replaced - "

In the end, Mr. Railton became Private Railton and the Hero of the school, and was in fact replaced quite easily by Mr. Carrington, an Australian. The new Housemaster soon incurred the dislike of Mr. Ratcliff in No. 368, in which Chumgum's circus came to Rylcombe.

It is a pity that nearly all the Talbot stories dealt with spectres from his past. No. 375, the Spring Double Number, entitled "Winning His Spurs", described how he helped Hookey Walker to emigrate. It was a rather disappointing tale, ending up with the capture of a German spy. Far better was the series in Nos. 376-378, in which Gore fell into the clutches of Tickey Tapp, and stole money from the Head's safe to pay his debts. Talbot was caught taking the money back, and naturally fell under suspicion. Talbot had a number of adventures at his job in Chumgum's Circus before Gore confessed and he was re-instated.

A novel sort of competition commenced with No. 380, the object being to see in which part of the Kingdom the greatest number of copies of the Gem was purchased. A quartet of stories specially written to accord with the competition

bore the titles "Kildare for St. Jim's", "A Son of Scotland", "A Hero of Wales", and "Tom Merry for England". Only the second story, which described Kerr's efforts to get Figgins cleared of an unjust suspicion, is in any way worthy of note. Incidentally, the competition was of course won by England.

A most remarkable story was "Levison's Last Card" in No. 385 (a sequel to No. 375). Levison borrowed £5 from Mr. Moses, the moneylender, in order to repay Talbot, and now he was faced with expulsion if he could not pay up. How he blackmailed Mr. Moses, how his cunning over-reached itself, and how Talbot came to the rescue is related in a most enthralling manner which nevertheless leaves the reader with the impression that Levison was definitely not such a rogue as he had been.

The Summer Double Number was "The Housemaster's Homecoming" in No. 393. Sergeant Railton, having been wounded at the front, returned to the school accompanied by his C.O., Colonel Lyndon, who was Crooke's uncle. The Colonel was also a governor of the school, and after Crooke had done his best to blacken Talbot's character in his eyes, it did not take the Colonel long to decide that Talbot was not a fit person to remain at the school. In the end it transpired that Talbot was in fact the Colonel's nephew, and so the last chapter was written in Talbot's history. It is not surprising that Charles Hamilton once rated "The Housemaster's Homecoming" with "The Boy Without a Name" as his finest stories. Both these (and the early ill-fated St. Kit's stories later) possessed one theme in common - that of the boy who was half-recognised by a governor of the school and falsely suspected of being dishonest. The theme had great potentialities, and "The Housemaster's Homecoming" utilised them to the full.

Dick Julian, the Jewish junior, was the new arrival in No. 394. Monty Lowther set out to pull his leg, but soon found that the joke recoiled upon his own head. Three weeks later saw Julian featured again when it became known that Mr. Moses, the moneylender, was his uncle. In No. 399 Corporal John Rivers was home on leave from the front, while No. 403 saw the re-appearance of another old friend, Mr. Horatio Curll. This time it was "The Call of the Cinema" for Monty Lowther, but he soon found that playing piano accompaniment for silent films was not so glamorous as it seemed.

The Christmas Double Number was "A Stolen Holiday" in No. 407. It was another spy story, but a great improvement on the previous year's, mainly because it was a battle of wits with Kerr as the chief protagonist.

1916 - Goodbye to the Blue Gem

The fat and fatuous Bagley Trimble arrived in No. 414. As Charles Hamilton says, "Baggy owed his existence to the fact that Bunter was such a 'draw' in the other paper: but though he was the work of my own hands, I never liked him much: the real truth being that an author should never imitate even himself. He had to be differentiated from Billy Bunter, and all the differences somehow seemed to turn out badly for him." Perhaps this judgment is a little harsh, but it is certain that Baggy never succeeded in capturing the sympathy of the reader in the way that Billy Bunter did.

"Finis" was written to the misadventures of John Rivers in No. 416, in which it became known that he had won the V.C., and Colonel Lyndon was obtaining a free pardon for him. Nos. 421 and 422 were a fine pair of stories dealing with the arrival of Manners minor. Reggie Manners was a spoilt petulant youngster, and his elder brother in the Shell received all the blame for Reggie's misdeeds. After Gussy had become imbroiled in hire purchase transactions in No. 426, and rescued

by the kindness of Mr. Moses, more was heard of Reggie Manners in No. 432 in which he was taken up by Cutts of the Fifth; he didn't require much leading.

The war was beginning to affect the size of the Gem. It was reduced at this time from 28 pages (excluding covers) to 24 and then 20. Charles Hamilton probably found the rapid reductions rather disconcerting. At all events, No. 431 "Grundy the Ventriloquist" seems to have been too short, for Pentelow interpolated parts into the story, while No. 434 "The Man from the Front" shows signs of considerable condensation.

The last Blue Gem was No. 436 dated 17/6/16. The Blue Gem had survived the Red Magnet by nearly a year, owing to the fact that the bluish green dye for the Gem was easier to obtain than the red dye for the Magnet. With No. 436 the Blue Gem ended with more of a bang than a whimper. Valentine Outram was the subject of the story, the strange new boy who was - quite incorrectly - adjudged a funk by everyone except Gussy (and Levison, who knew his secret). The tale was duly completed in No. 437, the first of the Blue and White Gems. And so began the era when the Magnet and Gem looked exactly alike on the bookstalls, and in appearance really lived up to the title of "The Companion Papers".

Conclusion

The Blue Cover days of the Gem undoubtedly constituted the hey-day of the paper. Finer stories appeared in the early 'twenties, which may be called its golden age, but there can be no doubt that it lost its ascendancy when it lost its blue cover. By May 1919, (Gem No. 590), the editor was complaining that the circulation of the Magnet had outstripped that of its older competitor. The new rumbustiousness of Bunter was apparently more suited to the post-war world than the old and leisurely humour of D'Arcy.

There is perhaps an impression that the St. Jim's stories were full of ragging and japing to the exclusion of more serious topics. Compared with the Greyfriars stories, this is true, though the number of such St. Jim's stories has probably been exaggerated. Tales of this nature have largely been omitted from the foregoing review, as have most tales of heroism (for reasons explained in connection with Gem No. 285), stories about Grundy, and tales about Tom Merry's Weekly, which usually revolved around some secret insertion at the last minute, to the dismay of the editors. Stories of all these types were undoubtedly popular with young readers, and may indeed be read with pleasure by older people now and again, but none of them can rank with such first-rate tales as "Bought Honours" in which interplay of character upon character is so masterfully related.

The stories in the Blue Gem were reprinted many times - in Populars, Holiday Annuals, and Schoolboys' Owns. Charles Hamilton might have foreseen a measure of this reprinting, but it is certain that no-one in those early days would have guessed that in 1931 would commence the reprinting of 404 grand old stories from the Gem, the great majority of which being taken from the blue cover period, and that the reprints would appear this time in the Gem itself.

There are mixed feelings about these reprints. On the adverse side it is said that they were too abridged, they lacked the old atmosphere, and they stopped Charles Hamilton from writing new stories for the Gem. On the other hand, it may be said quite definitely that they saved the Gem from extinction - a danger threatened by the publication of hundreds of stories by substitute writers. Further, they introduced a new generation of readers to a first class set of stories. The

collecting world owes, therefore, a debt of gratitude to Eric Fayne for persuading the Amalgamated Press to take the step of issuing these reprints.

The list in the 1949 C.D. Annual is a useful guide for the reader who wishes to obtain the reprinted issue of any particular story, but for the true collector there is no substitute for the complete and original Blue Gem itself. The Blue Gem period is the only period in which attention was given wholeheartedly to St. Jim's (for the following ten years Rookwood reigned supreme, and after that Greyfriars gained the author's almost undivided attention). St. Jim's was Charles Hamilton's first love, and even those who prefer to read about Greyfriars or Rookwood will always acknowledge that in the Blue Gem the Sussex school, with its wealth of detail and studied background, and its long and well-planned stories possessed attributes which were never quite reproduced elsewhere. It was the testing ground for many an idea which received fuller development elsewhere; in later Magnets such an idea would have formed the basis of a series of many numbers, whereas in the Blue Gem it would be presented concisely in some 15 to 20 chapters, and the following week would see another remarkable story in a totally different vein. What the Blue Gem lacked in development of treatment, therefore, it gained in variety of stories.

The days of the Blue Gem were largely halcyon days, days when Tom Merry and D'Arcy, Blake and Figgins reigned supreme. The sun shone ever brightly on the green sward of St. Jim's where cricket was played in a serene and untroubled world that had no fear for the future. Life as it was before the cataclysm seems even more attractive now. The Blue Gem echoed the faith and certainty of its time in a magnificent sequence of stories to which the Red Magnets, fine though some of them were, could never even hold a candle. The success of the Blue Gem was no mystery, as the foregoing review has attempted to prove. Unlike the Red Magnets, many of which are now only of historical interest, the Blue Gems contained fine stories in their own right which do not require to be popularised by the prop of subsequent achievement. For all collectors, nearly every Blue Gem is Beguiling.

(cont'd from page 64).....

A day or two passed and the detective learns that one of the anarchists, Nicholas Nikol, is attending a reception at the Duke of Brightwells, John Smith goes in, makes for the servants quarters, picks up some plates, assumes the role of a waiter, and finds his way to the anarchists table. He picks up a plate, puts down a fresh one and asks "Anything I can get for you, sir?" "No!" Nikol snapped, in perfect English.

Just fancy that now; N-o, in perfect English!

Then John Smith decides that the anarchists are residing at the Grand Central Hotel situated "in a side street off the Embankment." He goes on there, a palatial place, asks to see the owner, Alphonse Durier. He can also speak in perfect English, and after some conversation asks him how much he wants for the hotel as a working concern, staff and all.

The owner gasps, but after a little thought says "Two hundred thousand pounds." Without any quibble or demur John Smith brought out his cheque book and fountain pen, wrote out a cheque for the amount and handed it over with the remark "Give me a receipt, the legal part of the business can be gone into later."

And that was that. A Billy Butlin or a George Dawson of a later day couldn't have brought off a deal more quickly. (cont'd page 84).....

- A T R I B U T E by ERNEST C. CARTER, KINGSFORD, AUSTRALIA

(EDITORS NOTE: I hesitated a long time before I agreed to let this go in, for I am not sure if it's quite the thing for an editor to publish a bouquet to himself. However, Ernie Carter and other Australian friends threatened me with all sorts of penalties if I didn't, so I gave way, for it does give some facts about myself and it won't take up a lot of room. I don't think though it's exactly true when it says I'm sometimes forgotten, for in my years of 'retirement' I shall certainly have more friends then ever before.)

To collect Old Boys' Books, to read them and enjoy the fascinating stories of the past may be a delight to all of us who are no longer so young. We can still admire the genius of Charles Hamilton, Edwy Searles Brooks, Gwyn Evans, G.H. Teed and many others, but we are apt to forget one, who has made this hobby more interesting to collectors all over the world - one, who has given us hours of delight with his Collector's Digest, monthly and annually for seven years. He has supplied much information by obtaining articles and by devoting his time to produce these books for the guidance of collectors and in so doing has made them all the more happy.

All this he has done for the mere love of the hobby! And yet, we are apt to forget him. Herbert Leckenby! What memories that name conjures for us over the last seven years.

We all must realise that to prepare the Digest month after month, practically on his own, is no mean feat. The anxiety of obtaining articles, getting to press on time is, I should imagine, very trying, especially when things go wrong. Anyone who has had anything to do with papers of this nature can appreciate the difficulties that arise. We all remember the time he lost the services of the duplicating agency and for a while he did not know which way to turn. This is one of the set-backs that we know occurred - but what of the others? And there must have been many others!

I, for one, have never met Herbert, but have corresponded with him quite often in the last seven years. Through his letters, I could picture him in far away York, often at night, preparing articles and getting items for the Digest without any thought of remuneration. Between the lines of his strange miniature writing, I perceived the friendly man whose life is devoted to this fine hobby.

Herbert Leckenby was born at York in July 1889. It was at the early age of seven when he started to read Chips and Comic Cuts. He has vivid recollections of his mother giving a home to an old lady, who had been a nurse in the Crimean War with Florence Nightingale. Every now and again this old lady would produce a copper and ask him to buy one or maybe two of three comic papers. Usually, Herbert got her Chips and Comic Cuts and she used to chuckle over Weary Willie and Tired Tim and the rest of the comic section. Then she would hand them over to Herbert. He remembers how he grew interested in a serial called "The Fatal Seven" - a serial so interesting that it remained fixed in his mind during the 60 years that were to follow.

Last year, Herbert managed to get hold of a few instalments. I wonder if any of our older collectors remember this story?

All his ensuing life he has had the urge to collect. Thousands of papers have passed through his hands. As the years passed by he came to realise that others were interested in this hobby, and gradually he built up a band of pen friends. Then came the idea of trying to get them together and the Collectors' Digest was born in 1947. And in this way, Herbert helped to found the Old Boys Book Club and was mainly responsible for the starting of the Northern Section.

Harry Dowler was one of the first to correspond with Herbert, and then came others, such as Alfred Horsey, Bill Gander, Reg Cox and those veterans who have passed on - Frank Wearing, Henry Steele, and John Medcraft.

Although Herbert's collection went awry (like many others of us) from boyhood to manhood, in 1941 he started to collect again. He obtained, sometimes, several parcels a week containing papers which he never expected to see again! Boys Friends, Boys Realms, Boys Herald, Aldines, Dick Turpins, Claude Duvals, Gems, Magnets, Union Jacks, Plucks and Marvels.

These days, Herbert's books come and go. He will readily assist a collector even at the loss of his own books.

As most of us will be reading this little tribute about Xmas time and, we overseas collectors, about five weeks later, I think it would be fitting to remember Herbert Leckenby once again, as the man responsible for giving us this fine Annual.

I know that at this festive time, his wish is also ours, that he may be spared to produce that wonderful book of his for many years to come - The Collectors' Digest Annual!

So let us raise our glasses and drink a toast to Herbert Leckenby! The greatest and most sincere of all Old Boys Book Collectors.

(cont'd from page 82).....

Another incident reads quaintly today, but its no reflection on the long dead author. John Smith, after some hectic moments, finds he has lost his hat. Though it's late at night he goes off in search of a shop where he can buy a new one - because his bare-headed condition is attracting attention! Fancy that now.

Of course all comes right in the end. John Smith deliberately engages someone to set the Grand Central Hotel on fire (all the inhabitants being got out in safety), the route of the procession is diverted, and the King gets to his destination in safety. "Of course" the reader was told, "John Smith did not claim the insurance money for the loss of his hotel." He was no loser, though, for his loyalty, King Edward saw to that.

Well, well, writers of whodunit stories of today go in fear and trembling lest they choose the wrong kind of poison or bullet in dispatching their victims; so much so that they have now an organisation of experts to advise them on such matters.

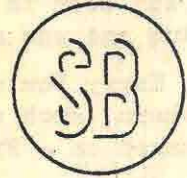
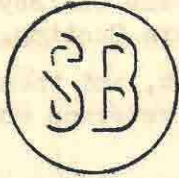
The happy-go-lucky writers of stories for boys of yesteryear worried not about such details.

WANTED: Original Aldine Robin Hoods and Jack Sheppards. Will pay cash or exchange Aldines. E.R. LANDY, 4 NUNEATON ROAD, DAGENHAM, ESSEX.

More of the Man from Baker Street

THE SEXTON BLAKE CIRCLE CONTINUES RESEARCH INTO BLAKIANA

* * * * *



THE THIRD ANNUAL FEATURE

Compiled and Contributed

by the

MEMBERS OF THE SEXTON BLAKE CIRCLE

CONTENTS

A FEW NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN by Harry Homer

SUMMARY OF THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED TO DATE to help the newcomer

SEXTON BLAKE STORIES OF :-

LEWIS JACKSON

ANDREW MURRAY

Note: The above-mentioned lists include all the authors' work in 'The Union Jack' and the first two series of the 'Sexton Blake Library', the titles being especially annotated when the stories contain the exploits of such characters as, Carlac and Kew, the Hon. John Lawless, Leon Kestrel and many more. The whole is presented as a combined effort on the parts of Charlie Wright, Len Packman, Josie Packman, Ben Whiter, Bill Lofts and Harry Homer.

SEXTON BLAKE AND SPORT by Ben Whiter

CAPTAIN DACK & CO. An Appreciation by Bill Lofts

SOME LOOSE ENDS :-

Sexton Blake versus A.J. Raffles.

The start of Dirk Dolland and Mr. Reece.

Sir Richard Losely and Lobangu by Rex Hardinge.

Compiled and commented on by Harry Homer

THE CORRIGENDA COLUMN Complete to date (We hope!)

* * *

A FEW NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Despite absence, illness and defection amongst our ranks, I am very happy indeed once again to edit a joint contribution to the 'Annual' from our Sexton Blake Circle.

From all that I hear and read, our sign at the top of a feature or on the back of an envelope is now recognised far and wide among collectors and all who love the Man From Baker Street as the hallmark of good, honest work as true and

reliable as hard work and minute attention to detail can make it.

Such was our object at the start and so it will be in the future.

It is now almost a year since I sat down in my Bilbao room to write a few words on the completion of the editing of last term's annual Sexton Blake Circle feature. Back now in Sussex for a spell, the message this year is being penned on English soil.

This is the third of our joint efforts and all the credit must go this year to my Vice-Chairman and good friend, Len Packman, together with the little band of loyalists who have done so much to keep the work in hand during my long absence.

It is regretted that owing to illness Norton Price was unable to participate in this year's Circle Feature. At the time of writing I believe him to be progressing favourably, and I am sure that all who know him will join me in wishing him a complete return to good health in the near future.

As is usual amongst delvers in the past of any subject, there are a few problems to which we have yet to find the answer. One of the most intriguing to my mind being the meeting of Sexton Blake and Dr. Huxton Rymer.

Now the first story in 'The Union Jack' by G.H. Teed would seem likely to be No. 477 'Dead Man's Shoes' which was published just before Christmas in 1912 and featured no characters apart from Blake and Tinker although only seven weeks later came the first Yvonne story in No. 485, 'Beyond Reach of the Law'. And in the second Yvonne story, No. 488, 'When Greek Meets Greek', Rymer not only makes his bow to 'U.J.' readers but is already known to Sexton Blake and Tinker. On the very first page we read that 'Rymer was decidedly up against it. A little affair in New York had caused him to seek a more hospitable climate, especially after one Sexton Blake had arrived in the great American city.'

Of course it is possible, as Bill Lofts reveals in the case of John Hunter with the introduction of Captain Dack, that Teed 'cheated' and there exists no record of the meeting between the two but if this is so then I think it is about the only case of G.H. Teed using this very unsatisfactory method of bringing a new and important character to the notice of the public.

So the mystery remains . . .

There are others too but one by one we probe and solve them.

To Walter Webb I would like to offer our sincere thanks for much invaluable information as to the sources of authorship in many cases as well as correction of error in not a few instances where the origin of a tale was in doubt. Few knew that the first Plummer story was by Lewis Carlton nor that he was the author who introduced Sir Richard Losely into an exploit against that master criminal - 'U.J.' No. 302 - 'In Deadly Grip'.

So thanks again to all those who helped and to all who read these lines the ancient and lovely wish of a Very Merry Christmas and a Most Happy New Year!

HARRY HOMER, Chairman,
The Sexton Blake Circle,
Heathfield, Sussex.

September 1954.

COMPLETE INDEX OF WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE CIRCLE TO DATE

	<u>Annual No.</u>	<u>Year</u>
The Criminals' Confederation Series by Robert Murray	4	1950
The Saga of Yvonne Cartier by G.H. Teed	5	1951
Sexton Blake versus Zenith the Albino and other tales by Anthony Skene	6	1952
Sexton Blake versus George Marsden Plummer by various authors	6	1952
Sexton Blake versus Leon Kestrel, the Master Mummer by Lewis Jackson	6	1952
Short Monograph on Robert Murray's Paul Cynos.	6	1952
Sexton Blake Work of Edwy Searles Brooks	6	1952
Sexton Blake Work of G.H. Teed	6	1952
Sexton Blake Work of Gwyn Evans	7	1953
Sexton Blake Work of Pierre Quiroule	7	1953
Sexton Blake Work of Cecil Hayter	7	1953
Sexton Blake Work of Allan Blair	7	1953
Sexton Blake Work of John G. Brandon	7	1953
Sexton Blake Work of Coutts Brisbane (Reid Whitley)	7	1953

(The above lists contain full details of characters and series.)

Please note that the work for this year is detailed on the Contents page.

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THE SEXTON BLAKE WORK OF LEWIS JACKSON

Ninety-nine collectors out of a hundred would say that the most important contribution made by Lewis Jackson to Sexton Blake lore was his creation of Leon Kestrel, The Master Mummer or Prince Pretence. Also of course the gallery of bizarre characters with which he filled the ranks of the infamous Kestrel Syndicate in the latter half of the series.

With this view I have no quarrel although I often think that Lewis Jackson receives far too little credit for two of the most original pieces of work of the whole long list of trends and fashions in Sexton Blake writing.

I refer to the Olga Nasmyth series ('U.J.'s 1269, 1270 and 1271 published in February, 1928) and the Nigel Blake series which formed Nos. 1, 2 and 4 of 'The Detective Weekly' (published in January, 1933.)

Although the above-mentioned two series were published five years apart yet they have several points in common :-

1. Both were efforts at a more adult style both of writing the stories and presenting the character of Sexton Blake.
2. Both had The Man From Baker Street known to certain people by the name of 'Tony'.
3. Both seem to have been failures. For example Olga Nasmyth never again appeared in the pages of 'The Union Jack' and Nigel Blake was killed off with the third story leaving Leon Kestrel and his associates as the main interest for any continuation of the series.

And the only other work of this fine author to appear in 'The Detective Weekly' after No. 13 was No. 73 'The Panic Liner Plot' about which I have no information - this by the way takes us up to No. 124 of the 'D.W.' which is surely far enough to all those who knew that ill-fated paper.

It may also be worthy of note that Leon Kestrel was on two occasions taken over by Anthony Skene in two really poor stories which also featured Yvonne Cartier and Wu Ling. I refer to :- 'U.J.' No. 956 - Threatened by Three; 969 - In League Against Him.

The Master Mummer dropped out of the pages of the old 'U.J.' for two years - from No. 711 (May 1917) to No. 815 (May 1919) but he had a wonderful run on the whole and was honoured in October 1920, in No. 886 with the first coloured cover and the first twopenny issue.

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(H.H.)

WORK OF LEWIS JACKSON IN THE 'UNION JACK LIBRARY'

(All feature Leon Kestrel unless otherwise stated.)

641. The Case of the Chinese Mascot. Introducing Leon Kestrel; 646. The Case of the Missing Airman; 651. The Case of the Aniline Formula; 655. The Affair of the Dutch Merchant; 662. The Mystery of Martin Esher; 668. The Amazing Affair of the Blind Fiddler; 673. The Case of the White Fugitive; 677. The Fools' Highway; 684. The Poison Fumes; 689. The Great Hoax; 711. The Great Office Mystery; 815. The Strange Case of the Naval Lieutenant; 825. The Case of the Decoy; 833. The Riddle of the Rector's Wife; 836. The Case of the Four Detectives; 843. The Isle of Revenge; 848. Kestrel's Great Bluff; 864. The Dance of Disaster; 886. The Case of the Bogus Judge; 890. The Mist of Sleep; 891. The Case of the Paralysed Man. 897. A Price on His Head; 913. The Kestrel's Prey; 922. Kestrel's Intrigue; 929. Prince Pretence; 934. The Money Flood. (Not a Kestrel story); 944. In The Midst of Famine. (Not a Kestrel story); 947. His Cousin's Decoy. (Not a Kestrel story); 958. The Convict Millionaire; 961. The White Sentinel; 967. The Case of the Gold-Maker's Secret; 983. Double Crossed!; 1024. The Return of Beaudelaire; 1053. The Shadow of the Past; 1055. The Scarab of Ament-Oba; 1058. The Medium of Portman Square. (Not a Kestrel story); 1076. The Syndicate for Sale; 1084. The Strange Case of the Runaway Surgeon; 1099. The Law of the Claw; 1169. The Case of the Sexton Blake Bust. (Not a Kestrel story); 1204. The Mysterious Affair of the Vanishing Stones; 1205. The Problem of the Gardener's Cottage; 1269. The Mystery of Manor Green. (Introducing Olga Nasmyth); 1270. The Girl of Destiny. (Olga Nasmyth); 1271. The Captive of the Catacombs. (Olga Nasmyth); 1457. The Black Boomerang. (Not a Kestrel story); (Serial 1231 to 1235 The Fox of Pennyfields).

'Detective Weekly'

1. Sexton Blake's Secret. (introducing Nigel Blake); 2. Sexton Blake At Bay! (Nigel Blake); 4. Sexton Blake's Triumph. (Nigel Blake); 13. The Monster of Paris (re-introducing Leon Kestrel).

THE WORK OF LEWIS JACKSON IN THE 'SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY'

Editor's Note: All fifteen stories in the First Series feature Leon Kestrel and/or The Kestrel Syndicate.

There were no stories by Lewis Jackson in the Second Series and I have

only recorded those in the first hundred of the Third Series as I cannot imagine that this work has any possible interest for the true collector. Perhaps we may put on record one paragraph from page 25 of No. 224 - The Man From Persia as the epitaph of The Master Mummer :-

"This morning Blake spent some time over his toilet. He had never been theatrical in his methods but disguise in its subtler forms was an art he had learned, long since, to respect. The inimitable Leon Kestrel had taught him that; Kestrel, the actor, and perhaps the greatest protean exponent of all time."

FIRST SERIES:

86. The Red Heart of the Incas; 90. The Case of the Transatlantic Flyer; 95. The Kestrel Syndicate.; 106. The Chink in the Armour; 111. The Jewels of Wu Ling; 115. The Affair of the World's Champion; 127. The Affair of the Oriental Doctor; 139. The Kestrel's Claw; 147. The Mystery of the X O 4; 155. The False Alibi; 160. Kestrel's Conspiracy; 172. The Lady of Ravensedge; 218. The Case of the Bendigo Heirlooms; 238. The Fallen Star; 296. The House of Fear.

SECOND SERIES:

NIL

THIRD SERIES: (Up to No. 100 only)

25. The Case of the Missing Stoker; 33. The Case of John Muir of the Merchant Navy; 45. The Case of the Suspect Watchmaker; 65. The Case of the Biscay Pirate; 69. The Riddle of the Ruins; 77. The Case of the Five Fugitives; 95. The Tally Man's Fate; 97. The Man from Arnheim.

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THE SEXTON BLAKE WORK OF ANDREW MURRAY

After Andrew Murray's first nine "U.J.'s", commencing in March 1911, came the start of a run of twelve stories featuring a new character by the name of Count Ivor Carlac - obviously his answer to the very popular George Marsden Plummer featured by Lewis Carlton and then Mark Osborne in a long run of tales. This first was in 'U.J.' 388 and it was in 511 that he introduced that great but perverted surgeon, Professor Francis Kew. It was long after that, in the pages of the Sexton Blake Library that he paired the two rogues into the 'Carlac and Kew' combination which is now as well-known as whisky and soda or eggs and bacon.

Then came too the Honourable John Lawliss (later 'Lawless'), and 'Trouble' Nantucket, the American detective forerunner of Gwyn Evans' Ruff Hanson; Adrian Steele the Fleet Street man and many others.

Towards the end there still exists doubts as to authorship in a few cases - as for example what was the first Carlac or Kew story by Gilbert Chester?

Yes, Andrew Murray not only created a fine gallery but also achieved a wonderful output and samples of his work are a credit to any collection.

(H.H.)

THE WORK OF ANDREW MURRAY IN 'THE UNION JACK'

388. Sexton Blake, Boxing Trainer; 409. The Mystery of the Green Palanquin; 425. The Wandering Heir; 429. The Bullion Special; 434. The Shipyard Mystery; 438. The Strike Pay Swindle; 458. The King's Prizeman; 461. The Case of the Colonial Cricketeer; 463. In the Shadow of Siberia; 468. The Regent Street Robbery (introducing Count Ivor Carlac); 470. The Case of the Borgia Bronze (Carlac); 472. The

Opium Smugglers (Carlac); 474. Carlac, Gun Runner (Carlac); 478. The Mad Millionaire (Carlac); 483. The Great Boxing Fraud (Carlac); 486. The Ten Millionaires (Carlac); 489. The Case of the Emigrant Slaves (Carlac); 494. A Rogue at Large (Carlac); 497. The Wandering Baronet (Carlac); 500. The Sugar Planter's Secret (Carlac); 503. The Case of the Suffragette Raid (Carlac); 511. The Aylesbury Square Mystery (introducing Professor Francis Kew); 514. Foiled by Sexton Blake (Kew); 520. The Case of the Motor Cyclist (Kew); 525. Tinker's Terrible Test (Kew); 531. The Blackmailer's Secret (Kew); 535. The Mystery of the Monastery (Kew); 544. The Death Cylinder (Kew); 550. A Bid for a Battleship (introducing the Hon. John Lawliss); 554. The Boundary Raiders (Lawliss); 561. Arms for Ulster (Lawliss); 563. The Bogus Prince (Lawliss); 569. The Mystery of 'Shamrock IV' (introducing Sir Thomas Lipton and the Hon. John Lawliss); 570. The Case of the German Admiral (Lawliss); 575. Made in Germany (Lawliss); 578. Business as Usual (Lawliss); 581. The Blood Brothers; 585. The White Feather; 595. Abdulla the Horse Dealer; 602. The Case of the Canadian Brothers; 603. The £10,000 Insurance Case; 608. The Mob Leader; 610. The Clue of the Khaki Cloth; 624. At Four-o-Clock (introducing Humble Begge, M.A., 'The Man of Peace'); 626. The Death Sleep (Humble Begge); 629. Self-Accused (Humble Begge); 636. The Case of the African Missionary (Humble Begge); 640. A Marked Man (Humble Begge); 647. The Affair of the Allendon Plate (Humble Begge); 657. The House in the Willows (introducing Cranston Bliss, M.A.); 661. Besieged in Kut; 665. Seaplane X 4; 676. The Food Profiteer (Hon. John Lawless); 678. Who Was the Thief?; 683. The Wheat Ring (Lawless); 699. The Stolen Factory (Lawless); 705. The Mystery of Fallowside Farm; 708. The Grimsdale Abbey Affair (Humble Begge); 717. Twice Charged; 725. When Greek Meets Greek (Humble Begge); 739. The Case of the £10,000 Fee (Lawless); 746. His Lordship's Valet; 755. Absent Without Leave; 762. In Sheep's Clothing; 770. The Stolen Negative (Lawless, Kew and Carlac); 785. The Ten-Mile Champion; 809. The Castle Warden; 814. Behind the Curtain (introducing 'Trouble' Nantucket); 821. The Mystery of Oag Island (Lawless and Nantucket); 822. The Smoke Signal (Lawless); 823. The Case of the Car Copers (Carlac); 827. The World Tour Swindle (Nantucket); 834. The Great House-Purchase Fraud; 835. The Case of the Mormon Son; 839. The Case of the Missing Goalkeeper (Carlac); 852. Double-Crossed (Nantucket); 863. The Cargo Stealers (introducing Count Bonalli, 'The Owl'); 877. The Jewel of Muralpoor (The Owl); 880. The Man in the Smoked Glasses (The Owl); 884. The Case of the Cotton Syndicate Fraud; 885. The Heir to Chiverton; 899. The Turkish Bath Mystery (Lawless and Kew); 941. Cross Trails (Lawless); 955. The Mystery of the 'Dereland Castle' (Lawless and Kew); 995. Eyes in the Dark (Lawless and 'The Owl'); 1007. The Temple of the Blind (Lawless and 'The Owl'); 1009. The Case of the Bamboo Rods (Humble Begge); 1010. The Secret of the Mine (Lawless and 'The Owl'); 1019. The Valley of Flies (Adrian Steele); 1030. The Case of the Professional Tennis Player (Lawless); 1039. The Gargoyle's Secret (Kew and 'The Owl'); 1063. The Sign of the Yellow Dragon (Adrian Steele and 'The Owl').

Editor's Note: For those collectors who prefer their lists to be complete as regards the characters featured in the stories rather than as regards the work of an author, it should be noted that the following by Gilbert Chester are needed to complete the Lawless, Carlac and Kew sagas :-

'U.J.' 975. The Case of the Mystery Plantation (Kew); 979. The Case of the Bond Street Dentist (Lawless, Carlac and Kew); 987. The Case of the Great St. Ledger Fraud (Lawless and Kew); 1181. The Return of Professor Kew (Carlac and Kew); 1186. The Case of the Phantom Ferry (Carlac and Kew); 1189. The Adventure of the Railway Raiders (Kew); 1195. 200 Fathoms Down! (Carlac and Kew).

THE WORK OF ANDREW MURRAY IN THE 'SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY'FIRST SERIES:

2. Illgotten Gains (Carlac & Kew); 4. The Rajah's Revenge (Carlac & Kew); 8. Victims of Villainy (Carlac & Kew); 15. The Black Chrysanthemum; 19. His Excellency's Secret (Carlac & Kew); 21. The Golden Belts; 25. The Secret of Draker's Folly (Carlac & Kew); 29. The Catspaw (Carlac, Kew & Lawless); 35. The Half-Caste; 36. The Perils of Petrograd; 38. Vengeance (Lawless); 42. The Black Rat; 45. The Barrier Reef Mystery; 49. The Case of the Two Brothers; 52. The Mosque of the Mahdi (Lawless); 55. The Missing Ships (Lawless, Kew and Carlac); 60. The Luck of the Darrells; 63. The Secret of the Hulk; 64. The First-Born Son (Carlac & Kew); 68. The Broken Trail (Lawless); 70. The Station-Master's Secret; 72. Outcasts (Carlac & Kew); 76. A Convict by Proxy (Lawless); 80. The Bath-Chair Mystery (introducing Nelson Lee); 84. Settler or Slaver (Lawless, Kew and Carlac); 88. The Mandarin's Seal (Lawless); 91. The Red Crescent; 93. The Case of the Seaside Crooks (Lawless); 98. The Ex-Soldiers Employment Swindle (Carlac & Kew); 102. The Clue of the Burmese Dagger ('Trouble' Nantucket); 104. Loot! (Carlac & Kew); 108. The Head-Hunter's Secret; 112. The Changeling (Lawless); 116. Blood Brotherhood (Lawless); 120. The Admiral's Secret; 124. The Mystery of the Thousand Peaks (Lawless); 128. The Palzer Experiment (Lawless); 132. The Man From Jura Jura (Lawless); 136. The Sheik's Son (Lawless); 140. The Beachcomber (Lawless); 144. The Secret of the Hunger Desert (Lawless); 148. In the Midnight Express (Lawless & Kew); 153. The Secret of the Glacier (Nantucket); 158. The Case of the Undischarged Bankrupt (Lawless); 161. The Black Opal Mine (Lawless); 165. The Hidden Message; 168. The Case of the Cinema Star (Lawless); 174. The Man in the Grey Cowl (Nantucket); 179. The Case of the Mystery Millionaire (Carlac & Kew); 180. Thirty Years After (Nantucket); 184. The City of Apes (Lawless); 189. The Mystery of the Hundred Chests (Lawless); 194. Marooned (Jules Vedette); 199. Tinker's Lone Hand; 203. Ambergris! (Jules Vedette); 210. The Motor Coach Mystery (Carlac & Kew); 214. The Feud Beyond the Law; 222. The Case of the Unnamed Film (Lawless); 225. The Great Explosion (Lawless); 230. The Case of the Uncut Diamonds (Lawless, Kew & Carlac); 236. The Prisoner of the Kremlin (Lawless and Adrian Steele); 242. The Case of the Paralysed Man (Lawless and Adrian Steele); 252. The Mystery of the Clock (Steele, Kew & Carlac); 259. The Case of the Woman in Black; 267. The Case of the Amber Crown (Steele); 273. North of 55° (Lawless); 277. The Oyster-Bed Mystery (Steele); 279. The Case of the Cotton Beetle (Lawless and Nantucket); 291. The Man Behind the Curtain (Steele); 299. The Crook's Double (Lawless); 308. The Case of the Master Organiser (introducing Boss Walmer Stone).

SECOND SERIES:

142. The Adventure of the Speed-Mad Camden; 167. The Secret of the Green Lagoon; 180. The Vanishing Death; 181. The Sixth Victim; 656. The Fatal Fortune (Carlac and Kew); 675. The Burmese Dagger (Reprint of First Series No. 102); 708. Reprint of First Series No. 63; Same title only by Donald Stuart).

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S E X T O N B L A K E A N D S P O R T

by BEN WHITER

Sport plays a very great part in the British Commonwealth of Nation's way of living and it is largely to our credit that sport and sporting instincts have now

spread almost all over the globe.

On the other hand it is perhaps natural that with the great financial side of present-day sport participants who cannot play the game start swindling.

Only recently, to the discredit of the British turf, we have the Bath doping affair and so when the writing of this article was mooted our chairman, Harry Homer, known for so long in the realms of association football and particularly at the home of Arsenal F.C., and the rest of the S.B.C. members voted it a good idea.

And so on with the story of the famous Baker Street sleuth and his cases where sport and crooks were intermixed.

Sexton Blake, according to our official lists, had cases to solve which brought him into close contact with Association football as well as both horse and dog racing; these seeming to be the three favourite sports of crooks and criminals. (No comment! Editor.)

Dealing with Association football it will be noticed that Arthur S. Hardy (Was he related, I wonder, to Sam Hardy, the famous Aston Villa goalkeeper?) wrote most of the stories. Hardy, with his wealth of experience as the creator of the famous Blue Crusaders F.C. stories in 'The Boys' Realm' and 'The Boys' Friend Library' must be considered an expert.

Walter Tyrer's Third Series S.B.L. story, 'The Mystery of the Rio Star' was topical a few years back at the time when English footballers were being lured to Bogota, Colombia, by promises of high rates of pay. It was a popular story if not a good one and featured the Albigo Bull Fighting and Sports Association which I am assured is as likely as a Tottenham Hotspur Cricket and Football Club by Harry Homer, a keen fan also of the bulls when in Spain. Eric Parker had a good cover to it showing a match in progress with two swarthy South American gentlemen exhibiting a thick wad of paper currency!

The sport of kings, horse-racing, saw many authors writing of turf mysteries and crimes including Hardy, Allan Blair and Mark Osborne. 'The Stables Crime', (S.B.L. 2nd. Series 378) even had our Blake owning a horse called Grey Phantom and the same author, Mark Osborne, introduced Tinker as a jockey in one of his stories.

More recently John Hunter gave us (S.B.L. 3rd. Series 263) a Derby story, 'The Case of the Doped Favourite', which had an exciting account of Son of Suzanne winning the race to discomfort the crooks to please all readers who are fond of a horse-racing yarn.

Greyhound racing also has enlisted the services of Blake. Mark Osborne gave us 'The Dog-Track Murder', (S.B.L. 2nd. Series 454) which featured Inspector Martin with Blake as a bookmaker and Tinker as his clerk. Osborne too gave us 'The Kennels Crime'.

Another sport that must be mentioned is boxing wherein the crooks have used all the tricks of their trade - doped champions, kidnapped fighters or boxers who were made or paid to lose the big fight. W.J. Passingham recently gave us a story about the roped square entitled 'The World Championship Mystery' but perhaps the most thrilling of all was Mark Osborne's 'Plummer's White Hope' which ended with Blake himself taking the ring in Plummer's place to defeat the French champion after a terrific battle.

Cricket also has its place in crime as witness Andrew Murray's 'The Case of

the Colonial Cricketer', ('U.J.' 461), although the familiar expression 'That's not cricket!' has often been uttered by him when some of the more unscrupulous crooks have violated the 'Honour among thieves' code.

Although 'The Union Jack' has long since joined the ranks of those old boys' papers which are no more, the 'Sexton Blake Library' is still with us and allows plenty of scope for the present authors to write on some of the newer sports.

Imagine the stories that could be woven around the up-to-date spectacle of stock car racing with the old cars careering round the track and the crook trying to smash up the victim of his hate under the guise of a fellow competitor.

This would also be possible on the cinder track of speed racing. Again what mysteries could be woven around the table tennis championships that are played in all the capital cities of the world. The periodical Olympic, British Commonwealth, European and other athletic meetings offer a wealth of material for adventures in crime.

Alas! The authors of the past who gave us such good stories of Sexton Blake in Sport are either no longer with us or have given up writing and so enthusiasts of the Baker Street Sleuth will have to be content with the stories of yester-year that featured him versus crooks who planned to make money out of sport instead of 'playing the game'.

As a matter of interest I append a list of 'U.J.' numbers and titles which speak for themselves:-

96. Champion of the Channel; 110. The Jockey Detective; 169. A Football Mystery; 224. Sexton Blake's Championship; 230. Sexton Blake, Wrestler; 295. The Affair of the Royal Hunt Cup; 311. The Racing World; 326. Warned Off!; 343. Sexton Blake, Trainer; 360. Sexton Blake, Tick-Tacker; 388. Sexton Blake, Boxing Trainer; 391. The Affair of the Billiard Championship. 398. The Derby Winner; 417. The Weighing Room Mystery; 433. The Football Swindlers; 451. The Case of the Calcutta Sweep; 457. The Case of the Olympic Champion; 461. The Case of the Colonial Cricketer; 476. The Great Turf Mystery; 483. The Great Boxing Fraud; 499. The Welsher; 541. Plummer's White Hope; 569. The Mystery of Shamrock IV; 785. The Ten-Mile Champion; 839. The Case of the Missing Goalkeeper; 935. The Case of the Channel Swimmer; 980. The Winfield Handicap Case; 987. The Case of the Great St. Leger Fraud; 998. The Case of the Doped Favourite; 1029. The Battle of Brooklands; 1030. The Case of the Professional Tennis Player; 1078. The Great Wembley Mystery; 1089. The Case of the Missing Athlete; 1129. The Man Who Won 'The Calcutta'; 1135. The Great Stadium Sensation; 1151. The Million-Pound 'Double'; 1241. The Great Yachting Week Mystery.

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CAPTAIN DACK & CO.

(The Very Popular Creations of John Hunter)

An Appreciation

by W. O. G. Lofts

Sexton Blake Library (Second Series): 549. Crook Cargo; 578. The Prisoner of Lost Island; 585. The Crime on the Promenade; 614. The Secret of the Hold; 662. The Riddle of the Lost Ship.

(Third Series): 1. Raiders Past; 15. The Case of the French Raiders; 249. The Case of the Crooked Skipper; 301. The Thieves of Alexandria.

Sexton Blake Annual: In one of these undated and unnamed volumes is a Captain Dack story entitled "Under Sexton Blake's Orders" but I am not able to say if it is a reprint or an original story. The cover of the Annual shows Blake and Captain Dack in action against the crew of a German submarine - the U-23.

It was only recently, when discussing Captain Dack's latest adventure, that somebody turned round to me and said :-

"I am surprised to find that John Hunter is still writing for the Amalgamated Press. Why, I remember his stories in 'Chums' nearly forty years ago; he must be getting on in years now."

But despite his advancing years, it is a fact that John Hunter is still turning out stories for the various A.P. publications - and some, like wine, improve with age!

Commencing in 'Chums' in 1916 John Hunter has since poured out a continuous flow of stories for such papers as 'Pals', 'The Thriller', 'The Boys' Magazine', 'Detective Weekly', 'British Boys' Paper', 'The Boys' Friend Library' and many other publications as his stories of Sport, Adventure and Detection have always been much in demand.

But it was in 1936 that his greatest success came - one which was to bring him more fame, especially among Sexton Blake enthusiasts, than any of the rest of his creations. This was of course the fabulous Captain Dack which he created for the Sexton Blake Library.

The Editor of the S.B.L. at that time printed the following in his 'Consulting Room Chat', a pleasant and useful feature which appeared in the middle of the long run of the Second Series about 1933 to 1939:-

'The Trial of the Dope Chief' which appeared in No. 541 of the Sexton Blake Library in September (1936), met with such overwhelming approval that the author, John Hunter, naturally finds himself in this month's set of stories. Mr. Hunter has created a new character to readers of the Sexton Blake Library. Captain Dack, of the 'Mary Ann Trinder', is a big, breezy, tough skipper who doesn't care what task he undertakes or whom he comes up against. He is as hard as nails and a man I know you will all like."

The truth of this statement is proved by the fact that whilst other characters of the past have long since ceased to appear, (although they are by no means forgotten by the faithful), Captain Dack still appears from time to time in the present series of the 'Sexton Blake Library'.

What made John Hunter create Captain Dack?

Was it because of his own experience at sea in his early days or because of his love of the water which lies only a stone's throw away from where he lives? One day we may know the answer.

What sort of a man is Captain James Dack, to give him his full name? He has been described as " . . . a towering figure of a man, aged about forty, as tall and wide as an average room door (6'9") with a heavy square face lit up by eyes in which saturnine laughter and considerable cunning share the honours; giant hands attached to monstrous wrists and a voice which is like a foghorn."

Is he honest? Yes, but only to a point. He will in fact turn his hand to anything and a blind eye to the law provided that the pay is big enough.

Although nothing has been written of his early life, I should imagine that Dack is a Londoner, probably from the East End. I can certainly conceive his upbringing being in the tough Dockland area on the lower reaches of the Thames. A clue was given in one Sexton Blake story when he said, looking wistfully at the captain on the bridge of a large and luxurious liner :- "If I'd been different, if I'd been educated properly, if I'd run different - I might have been one of them . . . "

This would seem to suggest that he had had a hard life in his early days. However despite these setbacks in appearance and character, he is at bottom a most likeable and lovable man. He is of course unmarried as no wife could take the place of his great pride and joy - his ship, the 'Mary Ann Trinder'.

She is certainly not a new ship and not a very big one. In fact she is a small and dirty old tramp steamer of about 900 tons burden with her name at bows and stern and London given as her home port. She carries her engines aft and her bridge amidships. But she is no stay-at-home, and has been round the world several times and covered many, many thousands of miles around the British coastline.

To Dack the 'Mary Ann Trinder' is like a child and when he often remarks that 'to lose her would break my heart', he does not exaggerate in the slightest.

Many people would like to know how he acquired her in the first place but the only information we have is that a certain gentleman in the Argentine almost cries his eyes out at the mention of her name and vows to break Dack in two if he ever lays hands on him!

The second member of the 'Co' is Sam Tench, Dack's First Officer or Chief Mate. Tench is a short man with thick tattooed wrists. He has shared in all Dack's adventures and is his staunch confederate. There has never been any clue as to Tench's native town nor as to what part of these isles he hails from.

The third of the 'Co' is Abe Gunson, owner of the wharf where the 'Mary Ann Trinder' almost always ties up when in London.

This wharf fronts on to the London River somewhere beyond Blackwall and consists of nothing more than a huge wooden platform on piles. On top of this is a shacklike structure bearing a board with the inscription 'A. Gunson's Wharf.'

Abe himself is a little round-shouldered man with a wizened face and two very bright eyes which seem like a pair of very black needles. His nationality is uncertain but I strongly suspect him to be of Eastern European origin as are so many Jewish families in East London. How much Dack owes him in wharfage fees must now be almost impossible to compute for as far as I can make out, Dack has never paid any!

Captain Dack first appeared in the Sexton Blake Library (Second Series) No. 549 'Crook Cargo'. In this story it was stated that he had had adventures with Blake before but I have been unable to find any record of them so maybe they were left to the reader's imagination!

I make no apology for mentioning Blake last as to my mind Dack has such a striking personality that he quite pushes Blake into the background of the stories wherein they appear together.

To record all their adventures together would be quite a task and the curious reader must be satisfied with those recorded in the list at the head of this article. Enough to say that Blake has helped him to a large hand in an honest reward, a new rigout for all the ship's crew as well as a complete refit and painting for the 'Mary Ann Trinder'. For himself Blake gets the credit for solving the cases.

Let us all hope that this fine author will continue to write stories of Blake and Captain Dack and fly his lonely flag as the only man writing of Sexton Blake today that puts into his stories a whiff of imagination and glamour such as gave such power and appeal to those giants of bygone days. Good luck to you, Mr. Hunter!

John Hunter has been criticised by some readers who consider his stories are too tough and too brutal but all his characters are true to life and at times we must face up to its realities however unpleasant they might be to us.

Certain of the stories have been reprinted and published as bound books with all mention of Blake and Tinker expurgated and the author under the name of Peter Meriton. Three of them are :-

'Captain Dack'; 'Plunder'; 'Conspiracy'.

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L O O S E E N D S

A Harry Homer Featurette

To tidy up after doing a good job is an important part of that job to any real craftsman and so it is with us of the Sexton Blake Circle.

It is always a moot point in Blakian research whether lists should follow authors or characters but with either manner confusion is apt to lurk around the corner. For example one will list 'The Mystery of the Moving Mountain' as a Teed job, another as a Plummer story, a third as a Rymer tale.

All three are right.

Then again a character will change authors - Plummer moves from Carlton to Osborne, later from Osborne to Teed or somewhere along the long line Gilbert Chester takes over Carlac and Kew from Andrew Murray.

Occasionally, very occasionally thank goodness, an Anthcry Skene will throw a real spanner into the works by pitching Yvonne and Wu Ling (from Teed) with Kestrel and Lessing (from Jackson) plus his own Zenith into a couple of quite stupid stories which are worthy of Brooks at his most flamboyant.

But for the historian-cum-librarian it is all or nothing and the motto must be :- "Find and include and check and check again - and explain if you can!"

In our last feature the work of Cecil Hayter was dealt with but not that of Rex Hardinge so those whose main interest is a full list of Losely-Lobangu stories did not get it.

A loose end, in fact.

Now 'U.J.' 1052 'The Devil Woman of the Makali' (Dec. 1923), was the last of the Hayter gems although many also credit him with the authorship of 'U.J.'

1080 'The Case of the Lost Lobangu' (June 1924) but Len Packman is assured by Walter Webb that this tale was written by J.W. Whewey.

In any case it was more than seven years later, in December 1931, that Rex Hardinge had a story called 'The Land Grabbers' published in 'U.J.' 1468 which introduced a quaint negro character called Sixpence and an American female crook by the name of Mexican Rose.

It was in the third yarn of the series that Blake brought her career of crime to a halt and this story is important in that it saw the re-introduction of Sir Richard Losely and Lobangu.

Thenceforward Hardinge wrote three more tales about them including the very last 'U.J.' of all.

Of course the discerning could perceive changes but the delineation of the characters had not remained constant under the pen of Hayter. As our Hayter expert, W.T. Thurbon, wrote to me in Spain last year:-

"The first Lobangu tales owed much to Rider Haggard. 'The Long Trail' and 'The Forest of Ghosts' were after the style of Conan Doyle's 'The Lost World'. It always seemed to me that the later tales such as 'The Terms of the Wager' owed a good deal to Edgar Wallace and his 'Sanders of the River' series; in other words, Lobangu began as a re-creation of Umslopogaas but later became more like Bosambo."

Here is the list of Hardinge titles :-

'U.J.' 1468 - The Land Grabbers. (Mexican Rose and Sixpence); 1473 - Death over Africa. (Mexican Rose and Sixpence); 1475 - The Tree of Evil (The last of Mexican Rose and the re-introduction of Losely and Lobangu); 1491 - The Monkey Men (Losely, Lobangu and Sixpence); 1511 - The Ghost Hole (Losely, Lobangu and Sixpence); 1531 - The Land of Lost Men (Losely, Lobangu and Sixpence).

Rex Hardinge also wrote many of the early 'Detective Weeklies' but there seems to have been no effort to continue the use of his privilege to introduce into his work two such charming and outstanding personalities.

It may have been the fault of the Editor but what a pity!

Indeed the bad new days had come at last!

---ooOoo---

Another loose end stems from my own 'Monograph on the Criminals' Confederation' in the 1950 Annual and that is the start of the relations between Sexton Blake and Dirk Dolland, 'The Bat', to say nothing of the coming of The Mysterious Mr. Reece.

Now I have noticed a parallel in Blakiana to Roger Jenkins' most excellent dissertation on the Honourable Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and the duties and responsibilities of the upper classes as set forth in the current number of 'The Story Paper Collector'.

In the early days of Blakiana we find Sir Richard Losely, next the Hon. John Lawless, then the aristocratic Dirk Dolland later to be followed by the equally-aristocratic A.J. Raffles and of course the Hon. Ronald Purvale - with or against the law, and generally with it at the finish if not actually always

abiding by it, the aristocracy played an important part in Blakiana even as it did in Hamiltonia.

Now the Circle has already dealt quite fully with Sir Richard, the Honourable John and the Honourable Ronald as well as the later days of The Bat.

Suppose we look at the exploits of 'A.J.' in opposition to The Man From Baker Street - they are but few but of fine quality :-

S.B.L. (Second Series) No. 577 - Raffles Versus Sexton Blake
601 - Raffles' Crime in Gibraltar
669 - The A.R.P. Mystery

Perhaps the best of them all was a full-length novel in three long episodes which appeared in the first 'Sexton Blake Annual' under the title of 'Scuttlers' Cache' - All these by Barry Perowne.

As for Dirk Dolland and how and why he turned from a society crook called 'The Bat' into a great personal friend of Blake and a major aid in the long and bitter campaign against 'The Criminals' Confederation' - one day mayhap we shall do some deep delving and analysis but time and space forbid for the present so we must fall back on that good old standby - The List :-

'U.J.' 680 - The Hidden Hand; 698 - A Case of Arson; 704 - The Mystery of Cell Six (John Venn but NOT The Bat); 709 - The Two Impersonators (John Venn AND The Bat) *747 - The Vanished Man; 751 - The Bogus 'Bat'; 753 - The Mystery of the Vlach Vase; **763 - A Mid-Ocean Mystery (with Mr. Reece); 767 - The Lost Letter (with Mr. Reece); 775 - The Case of the Club-Footed Man; 778 - The Vanished Police (Mr. Reece but NOT 'The Bat'); 779 - Suspended From Duty; 780 - The Only Clue; 782 - The Steel Claw (with Mr. Reece); 787 - The Silent Partner; 790 - The Amazing Affair at Clammere Mansions (Mr. Reece); 791 - Dirk Dolland's Redemption (with Mr. Reece); 797 - The Clue of the Cuff-Link; 802 - The Case of the Black Feather (with Mr. Reece).

* 747 - This story follows Sexton Blake Library (First Series) No. 41 'The Mysterious Mr. Reece' so far as Dirk Dolland is concerned as does **763 - in the case of Mr. Reece.

N.B. Dirk Dolland also appeared in Sexton Blake Library, (First Series) No. 85 'The Masquerader'.

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T H E C O R R I G E N D A C O L U M N

Complete Revision To Date
(I hope!)

b y

HARRY HOMER

* * * * *

Now before you start reading this column you should really have a ballpen and the last three or four Annuals ready to hand.

Right?

Here we go then :-

Yvonne Cartier in the Sexton Blake Library - First Series

ADD: 37. The Diamond Sunburst (with Jim Potter, The Black Rat and Camille).

307. The Crimson Belt (with Wu Ling and The Brotherhood of the Yellow Beetle) (Reprinted in the Second Series No. 463); 325 The Great Ivory Swindle (with Hammerton Palmer); Second Series: 35. The Case of the Mummified Hand (with many other characters).

Here we come back to a perennial problem:-

The complete characterisation and authorship of S.B.L. (First Series) No. 208. The Case of the Cultured Pearls; 227. In the Grip of the Tong; 228. The Hooded Riders; 229. The Spirit Smugglers.

Unfortunately I have but one of these at present (227) so had better offer no opinion but it boils down to the exact number when G.H. Teed took over Plummer from Mark Osborne and did the latter use Yvonne Cartier in 208? Over to you.

NEXT PROBLEM:

Who wrote 'U.J.' 1068 'The Mystery of the Mask of Mirth'? I always thought it was the first Gwyn Evans story but a strong body of opinion puts it down to Mark Osborne.

A PROBLEM SOLVED:

S.B.L. (Second Series) No. 607 'The Three Leper's Heads' is Not a reprint or a rewrite of 'U.J.' 1059 'On the Right Hand Wall'.

The first Losely-Lobangu story in the 'U.J.' by Rex Hardinge was 1475 'The Tree of Evil' and NOT 1053.

The following were omitted from the list of Losely-Lobangu stories by Cecil Hayter:-

'U.J.' 201 Sleeping Sickness; 605 The Abbey Mystery; 866 The Marley Farm Mystery; 1080 The Case of the Lost Lobangu.
Boys' Friend Library (First Series) No. 88 The Mammoth Hunters.

ADD to G.H. Teed's work in 'The Union Jack' :-

'U.J.' No. 623 - The Case of the Frisco Leper (A Dr. Huxton Rymer story).

to the Leon Kestrel list :-

'U.J.' No. 836 - The Case of the Four Detectives.

to the George Marsden Plummer list :-

'U.J.' No. 302 - In Deadly Grip with Sir Richard Losely and by Lewis Carlton, as was the first story in 'U.J.' No. 222.

401 - The Kidnapped Inspector - By Mark Osborne as were all from No. 313.

462 - The Great Charity Swindle.

465 - The Secret Slaves.

FOR SALE: Odd numbers Union Jack, years 1926-29, 1/3d. each.

WANTED: Populars for years 1925 until the end. Also Chatterbox Annuals for years 1915-1928. Odd copies "Wonderland Tales".

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THE Magnet stories were written primarily for boys and girls of twelve to sixteen years, so that it was rarely suggested that the friendships of the boy and girl characters were other than purely platonic and, indeed, when the attachment exceeded this limit, it was customary to poke gentle fun at it, as in Magnet No. 342 "Coker's Conquests", which told of Horace James Coker's adventures in pursuit of his cousin Amy Blaine, daughter of his Aunt Sophonisba, who grimly forbade the pair to meet; and again, in Magnet No. 386 "Mauly's Flirations". This kind of story appeared only in the earlier Magnets.

There were, in addition, two stories: Magnet No. 162 "Wingate's Chum" in which the captain of Greyfriars befriended the circus-girl Mlle Rosina and rescued her from the clutches of Felix Lasalle, to find that she was actually the long-lost elder daughter of Dr. Locke and Magnet No. 200 "Wingate's Folly" in which Wingate did actually fall in love with Paula Bell, the Principal Girl in a pantomime at the Theatre Royal, Courtfield. This was a very well-written story, told sympathetically, which related how he neglected school-work, games, and his school-duties, to be in her company, and it contained several fine passages, notably Dr. Locke's advice, which enabled Wingate to regain his balance. The story ended with a touching leave-taking on the platform of Courtfield Station.

The love-affair between Arthur Courtney of the Sixth and Violet Valence,

BOB CHERRY'S ROMANCE

by J. Breeze Bentley

sister of the spineless Rupert Valence, was mentioned in two stories: Magnets No. 186 "The Only Way" and No. 520 "A Very Gallant Gentleman". In the later story, Courtney died.

These stories of Sixthformers were well-written, but seemed out of keeping with the general run of Magnet yarns.

But there was one friendship that began in the earliest days of the Magnet, that warmed almost imperceptibly as time went on and became a steadily-burning flame of intense loyalty that persisted to the last days of the Magnet, and exerted a powerful influence on the moulding of the stories. This was the friendship of Bob Cherry and Marjorie Hazeldene.

Bob Cherry arrived as a new boy in Magnet No. 2 - "a finely-built, nimble lad, with shoulders well set back and head well poised. His flaxen hair was thick and curly and he wore his cap stuck on the back of it. His face would not be called exactly handsome, but it was so pleasant and cheerful that it did you good to look at it." Bob Cherry was destined to become a great favourite with Magnet readers - probably THE favourite. He was not clever - learning came to him with difficulty, and it must be admitted that he quickly tired of the classroom and books - but he was adept at games, a good footballer and cricketer, a competent swimmer, and became the champion boxer in the Remove.* Further, there was no

* Magnet No. 185, when, after intensive training, he outboxed Bolsover major.

flaw in his character; he was blessed with an even temper, irrepressible good humour, intense loyalty to his friends, and was a practical joker of no mean ability. Was there any wonder that he was popular?

Marjorie Hazeldene was first mentioned in Magnet No. 5 / when she came to see her brother, Peter. She was a very pretty girl, with brown curly hair and brown eyes, a sweet smile and charming manner. On first seeing her, Frank Nugent was impelled to remark "What a nice girl! Curious thing that she should be Hazeldene's sister, isn't it?" To which Harry Wharton replied "Yes; he doesn't give you the impression of being a chap who has such a stunning sister."

In Magnet No. 14, Marjorie came again and Bob Cherry helped her to alight from the trap. She had tea in Study No. 1 (then shared by Wharton, Nugent, Cherry, Hurree Singh and Billy Bunter) and after it said "It's very jolly to have tea in a study. I wish I lived at Greyfriars," which made Bob respond "By jove, that would be ripping" with such heartiness that Marjorie coloured, and laughed.

When they had seen her off, Bob Cherry asked with half a sigh, "I say, Hazeldene, when is your sister coming down again?"

He had not long to wait, for in the next story Marjorie⁺ came to sing with the Remove Operatic Society, and took the lead with Harry Wharton.

In Magnet No. 17, a party of juniors spent Whitsuntide at Wharton Lodge, and the Hazeldenes joined them en route. At the junction, waiting for the connexion, Marjorie walked between her brother and Wharton, while Nugent and Bob Cherry walked behind. The more favoured position of Harry Wharton made Bob gloomy with jealousy, so much so that Frank asked "...what's the matter, old chap?" to receive a tart "Oh! rats" in reply.

In the train, seated away from her, Bob alone was strangely silent.

His jealousy was, in point of fact, unfounded, as Wharton's feelings were quite different from his. Thus, on the morrow, when Wharton and Marjorie had met by chance before breakfast, and were about to board a skiff, Bob turned up, and Harry at once asked him to accompany them.

Bob hesitated.

"Oh, do come" asked Marjorie.

"Shall I, Harry?" asked Bob, in a low voice, obviously unwilling to intrude.

Wharton looked at him in astonishment, and answered "Of course, Bob. What are you so jolly mysterious about?"

So the three went together.

Afterwards, Harry's eyes were opened.

When Marjorie had gone in, Bob was rather moody and snapped at Billy Bunter, quite unnecessarily, and was taken to task by Harry Wharton, who said "Nothing wrong, is there, Bob?"

Bob Cherry had his hands in his pockets and was staring away across the sunny river. He did not meet Harry's eyes.

"No," he said, after a pause. "Nothing; except that I am a confounded fool."

+ Magnet No. 15. In the opera 'Carmen', Wharton sang Don Jose, Marjorie Micaela, Bob Escamillo. The episode where Micaela kisses Don Jose was carefully "cut". / "Kidnapped". On the road to Greyfriars, Marjorie was assailed and robbed by the gypsies: Melchior, Barenegro and Nadesha.

"What the dickens do you mean?"

"Nothing."

Harry laid his hand lightly on Bob's shoulder.

"I say, old fellow, if there is anything up, why can't you tell a fellow?"

Bob Cherry laughed shortly.

"I am an ass, Harry. But what a ripping girl she is, isn't she?"

Harry Wharton looked astonished.

"She? Who?"

"Marjorie."

"I - I - what do you mean? I know she's a ripping girl - one of the best, Bob - but that's nothing to grouse about, is it?"

"No. I suppose not."

Harry stared at him blankly. Something of the truth came to his mind, and he was strongly inclined to laugh; but the look on Bob Cherry's face banished that inclination. Bob's face was quite white.

"Bob, old chap, you're right; you are an ass," he said. "Why, you're *younger than I am, and I'm only fifteen. Bob, you are an ass, old chap."

"I know I am. Of course it's all rot," said Bob hastily. "Only - only she doesn't seem to have eyes for a fellow at all; when you're around, at all events."

"My dear Bob..."

"Oh! don't say any more. I know I'm an ass. But not a word, for goodness sake; if I were chipped about it, I should go mad."

"You may be sure I shan't say a word," said Harry quietly. "But I'll give you a word of advice. Fellows of our age must be silly asses to think of falling in love; and I suppose that's what's the matter. Brace yourself up and keep it right out of your mind. Remember, if Marjorie got a hint of any nonsense of that sort, she could never be chummy with you. Bear that in mind. Now let's go in to breakfast."

But, sage though his advice usually was, Harry Wharton was wrong on this occasion and in time to come Bob was destined to be the recipient of much gentle banter over his regard for Marjorie.

Back at school, in Magnet No. 19, a party of juniors was on the point of setting out for the railway station when Hazeldene came up and mentioned that he was going home, to meet his sister.

"Oh, are you?" exclaimed Bob Cherry, shewing a sudden interest... "Going on your bike?"

"Yes."

"It's rather a lonely ride," said Bob.

"I don't know," said Hazeldene, looking at Bob with a rather puzzled expression. "I've ridden home most half-holidays since my people came to live near Greyfriars and I've not noticed that the lane is particularly lonely."

"What I mean is, it's rather rotten riding alone," explained Bob Cherry. "If you'll wait for me a few minutes, I'll get my jigger and come for a spin with you."

"Certainly, if you like."

"I say, Bob, you're coming down to the station, aren't you?" exclaimed Harry Wharton.

"'Nother engagement," said Bob Cherry, and dashed off to the cycle-shed. Nugent gave a chuckle. He knew who was the attraction.

* Their respective ages were: Harry Wharton, 15y. 4m; Bob Cherry, 15y. 2m; Marjorie Hazeldene (if the twin sister of Peter) 15y. 1m.

Shortly afterwards,* the chums spent a day at Winklegate-on-sea, and ventured on the sea. Bob Cherry steering, caught sight of Marjorie, and let go the rudder-lines, to wave! The result was a near disaster for the chums and caused Wharton to exclaim "Take the lines, Nugent, and put a chain on that champion ass," but it was a complete disaster for Bob, as the aunt accompanying Marjorie caused their boat to sheer off and not be seen again, that day!

There was now an interval before Marjorie appeared in a story, and when she did, she still seemed to prefer Harry Wharton's company. Magnet No. 47 described Christmas at Wharton Lodge. When the friends met, 'there was a general handshaking. Bob Cherry took Marjorie's hand as if it were a delicate piece of china, and he was afraid of breaking it. His cheeks were very red, and his eyes downcast. A curious change had come over the sturdy junior... Harry Wharton and Peter Hazeldene walked off with Marjorie Hazeldene, Bob Cherry coming on behind, sorrowfully silent at being cut out.'

Bunter noticed that Bob's usually sunny face wore a slight cloud, and dug him in the ribs.

"I say, Cherry, it's rotten, isn't it?"

"Eh? What? What do you mean?" said Bob, turning red.

"It's rotten. I'm in the same case myself, so I know how it is" said Billy Bunter, with a pathetic look.

Bob Cherry stared at him.

"It's beastly" said Bunter. "I suppose nothing can be done but to grin and bear it.

Bob Cherry took the fat junior by his ear, much to Bunter's amazement.

"You're a funny beast, Bunter" said Bob Cherry quietly, "and you amuse us sometimes, but if you start being funny on that topic, it will mean a licking for you. Do you understand?"

Bunter fairly gasped in his astonishment.

"I say, Cherry, I don't understand you. I'm not being funny. I'm speaking seriously. It's a serious subject."

"I know it is, ass; and so you can let it alone."

"But I feel as bad as you do, Cherry."

"Oh! Shut up."

"Haven't you got an inward pain?"

"Will you shut up?" growled Bob Cherry, savagely.

"Hullo? What's the matter there?" said Nugent, looking round.

"I - I don't know," said Billy Bunter, bewildered. "I was just telling Cherry that I feel hungry after a long walk, the same as he does, and he's flying into a temper about it. He knows I get hungry."

"You - you - you were talking about getting hungry?" stammered Bob Cherry. "You - you utter young idiot. I - I thought you were speaking about - about something else."

"What else should I be speaking about?"

"Oh, nothing. Shut up."

And Bob Cherry quickened his pace, and went ahead.

The time now arrived when Bob received some kindly consideration and help.

At the beginning of the new term,^{*} when Marjorie called, Heracles Ionides annoyed Bob by detailing him to go to the village with a message so that, when Bob came into Hall, 'his grumpy look attracted attention' but little Wun Lung sportingly offered to take it, and so enabled Bob to accompany Harry Wharton and Co. when they saw Marjorie off.

Then, in Magnet No. 59, at the opening of Cliff House School, the Remove were invited to a masked fancy dress ball. Bob Cherry, alas, was no dancer, but the fact that he was recognised and well-liked, secured him partners, and Harry Wharton thoughtfully arranged it that Bob should dance with Marjorie just before the interval, which pleased him immensely.

A succession of twelve⁺ stories now followed, in all of which Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn appeared, culminating in a three weeks' stay at Greyfriars when the foundations of Cliff House were erroneously believed to be unsafe. They departed in Magnet No. 70, but in No. 71 Marjorie came again, and called on Study No. 1.

'Bob Cherry knew that gentle tap. He jumped up in such a hurry that his knees caught the table and made that jump, too; and rushed to the door. He was careless of the fact that his cup of tea had been upset by the shock into Billy Bunter's plate of toast and sardines.

When Marjorie was ready to go, Bob dashed off for her bicycle and arrived at the gates with another to ride himself. He had no pass, and Wingate was not for letting him go; but ... 'the distress in Bob Cherry's face was so keen that the Greyfriars captain melted. He wrote on a leaf of his pocket-book, and tore it out. So Bob rode off with Marjorie and her brother, to Cliff House - and made the outward journey take as long as possible. On his return, Frank Nugent asked with gentle humour "Did Marjorie get home all right?" To this, the cock-a-hoop Bob replied "Of course she did. It was a lovely ride. I had to scorch back from Cliff House and nearly fagged Hazeldene off his bike!"

Magnet No. 74 contained an amusing episode in which, on a caravan tour, Bob Cherry got wet through and had to dress up in odds and ends, so that he looked like a tramp. Then Marjorie and Clara called, and Bob had to shew himself. Charles Hamilton wrote in comment "as a rule, Bob Cherry was willing to take a great deal of trouble to meet Marjorie Hazeldene, but the present was not one of these occasions."

But in No. 78, he came into his own. The chums visited the Crystal Palace, and Bob Cherry as the "one who knew the grounds, assumed the responsibility as leader and, as leader, he naturally took possession of Marjorie."

There were, however, set-backs to come.

In Magnet No. 93 it was Wharton who guided Marjorie through the crowd at the circus, and when Billy Bunter stupidly released a lion from its cage, Harry took the lead.

In No. 96, roller skating became popular and in the gym Harry partnered Marjorie while Frank Nugent partnered Clara.

But in No. 98, on the ice at Wharton Lodge, Harry got the brunt of Bunter's antics and Bob glided away with Marjorie on his arm.

Magnet No. 101 contained a plain statement of how Bob's feelings were arousing a response. There was another party at Cliff House. 'Marjorie Hazeldene

* Magnet No. 49. / 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70.

was looking her best. Her sweet face was lighted up with animation and the Chums of the Remove thought they had never seen her look so charming. Hazeldene gave her a brotherly grin of appreciation.

"You look stunning, Sis," he exclaimed.

Marjorie laughed.

"Thank you," she said. "I suppose if you notice it, I must."

"Well, look at Bob Cherry, then. He's looking at you as if he couldn't take his eyes off you and he's got his mouth open like a codfish."

The girl smiled. Hazeldene's unflattering description of Bob Cherry was not quite just; but certainly Bob was gazing in great admiration at the vision of girlish beauty. Bob Cherry had an immense admiration for Marjorie which he shewed - boyishly - by being silent and awkward as a rule when he was with her, and by doing clumsy things. Marjorie would sometimes take the trouble to draw him out of his shell, so to speak, and make him transcendently happy, which she effected by being not at all shy herself - though, girl-like, she was shy enough when the boy was not shy.

Magnet No. 122 "The Remove Eight" shewed the demon of jealousy at work.

Peter Hazeldene was, once again, in difficulties, and Marjorie wrote asking Wharton to meet her. To keep the appointment, Harry set off alone, hedging when asked his reason for doing so, and by chance, the letter fell out of his pocket. Bob Cherry picked it up and the last sentence caught his eye - "... come alone, and do not mention it to anyone, please. Marjorie."

'Bob Cherry stood for some seconds as if petrified, the colour wavering in his cheeks, and a strange pang in his breast. He hardly knew what the feeling was, but he knew that he was the most miserable fellow in Greyfriars. He picked up the letter and... thrust it into his pocket.

'He moved away from the spot, his brain in a whirl... Bob, in his big, rough, simple way, worshipped the ground that Marjorie walked on, but there was nothing flighty or morbid about him; he had never fancied that he was in love: the thought never crossed his mind. He thought that Marjorie was a splendid chum.

'Marjorie met the chums frequently enough, in the frankest way in the world; there had never been anything secret about it. Bob knew that Harry was handsomer and cleverer than he was, and he had never envied him. It was only natural that Harry should please Marjorie more than he did. But...

'But the thought of a secret meeting between them struck like an arrow to Bob's heart. That was not playing the game on Harry's part. It was not like Marjorie, either. And Bob Cherry for the first time in his life understood what jealousy was - that terrible self-torture which can be more cruel than the tortures of the Inquisition.' *

Bob was completely bowled over. He answered Frank Nugent in a hazy way, and rushed off to seek seclusion.

Billy Bunter overheard part of the interview between Marjorie and Harry, tattled as usual in the Remove, and got the chums completely at loggerheads: Bob Cherry wouldn't explain why he was bad-tempered, and the rest of the Famous Four left him, in despair.

Later, he tackled Wharton. He blurted out that they should not have met

* This passage does not, of course, square up with the episode in Magnet No. 17
(p. 101)

in secret, saying "I think it was a reckless thing for Marjorie to write that letter and make a secret appointment with you, and I blame you for it. A chap's business is to look after a girl and not lead her to do things she may be sorry for afterwards." - I think that all of us would endorse this opinion.

Harry Wharton explained how matters stood and the breach was healed. Bob admitted that he ought to have known Wharton better, but he did not explain - he could not explain - that bitter pang of jealousy that had shot through him like a burning iron at the mere thought that Marjorie might be something more than a friend to anyone. Probably Harry Wharton understood, in a dim way, the feelings of his chum.

In Magnet No. 127, Bob Cherry's bicycle was wrecked by a bull that had got loose on the highway. This landed him in a fix, as cash was short. Then by chance, Harry Wharton happened to meet Marjorie, and asked her for suggestions. She suggested some kind of performance for Bob's 'benefit' and on his return, Wharton quickly secured the approval of Nugent and Hurree Singh and things began to move.

But Bob was dead against it, and said so in emphatic tones.

"I won't have this rotten benefit. What silly, frabjous cuckoo first thought of the idea?"

The chums laughed.

"Tell me, and I'll wipe the floor with the duffer."

Still more laughter - louder than before, and Nugent complained "Don't Bob! My ribs won't stand any more!"

Bob seized his chum and shook him. "Who was it?"

"Marjorie."

"Who?" - thunderstruck.

"Marjorie."

Bob Cherry let go Nugent's shoulder. The juniors shrieked at the expression on his face.

"Marjorie!" he stammered at last.

They continued to laugh at him.

"Oh!" stuttered Bob "I didn't know".

"What a pitty Marjorie isn't here" gurgled Tom Browne. "Lemme see, you're going to wipe the floor with her and..."

"Was it really Marjorie?" asked Bob Cherry, with an appealing glance at Wharton...

"Honour bright" said Harry, laughing.

"Oh well, if it's Marjorie's idea, it's all right, and I don't mind," mumbled Bob. "Of course, when I come to think of it, it's a really good idea! And..."

A fresh roar of laughter interrupted him and Bob Cherry, with a face the hue of a beetroot, strode from the room.

The 'benefit' was a great success and the fact that Marjorie came to it made it all the better - in Bob's estimation.

* He had been sent over to Cliff House with a note for Miss Primrose.

In Magnet No. 135 Bob was for a short time, cricket captain, and when selecting the team, did not put Hazeldene in. Marjorie came to see the game and Bob, anxious to say the right thing and not offend her, said "I'm sorry about Hazel's not being in the team."

Marjorie nodded.

"You see, he wasn't fit," explained Bob, going very red. "If he had been fit, I'd have played him like a shot."

Marjorie smiled.

"You surely wouldn't think of me, in such a matter as selecting players for your team?" she said.

Bob looked relieved.

"Exactly" he said "I wouldn't."

Which made Clara Trevlyn nearly burst, but left Bob still somewhat worried.

In Magnet No. 146, Miss Primrose started "deportment classes" at Cliff House, and the juniors called just as the first lesson was ending.

"She's going to start a class for boys, too" remarked Marjorie.

"Hurrah," said Bob Cherry.

"You like the idea?"

Bob Cherry blushed.

"Well, we shall come over if the Head accepts" he said. "We can stand the deportment, I dare say." - which left her in no doubt about the real attraction for him.

No. 163 contained the following flash.

The two girls entered the gates of Greyfriars. Bob saw them, and hurried off.

"Here, where are you going?" shouted Harry Wharton.

"It's Marjorie."

"Yes, but you're wanted... The Upper Fourth are waiting for us."

"Let 'em wait" said Bob, and rushed to the gates.

Magnet No. 175 recorded a Coronation picnic, held in honour of the coronation of King George V.

Bob Cherry, determined to look his best, wore a white waistcoat and a wonderfully gaudy tie - green with pink spots and crimson bars on it. Needless to say, the effect was spoiled by Bunter's grubby fingers, and the whole outfit had to be changed, so that the chums were late. Bob was blamed, but reassured by Marjorie's "It doesn't matter at all."

They began to move off.

"Come on Marjorie," said Hazel. "You can carry this bag, if you like."

"Oh, bosh" said Bob Cherry. "I'll carry it."

"But you're carrying a basket already."

"Well, I've got two hands," said Bob. "I can carry two things, can't I? Give it to me."

"I'll carry it" said Marjorie.

Bob shook his head.

"You can't" he said, "it's heavy."

Marjorie laughed. As a matter of fact she was a strong and healthy girl and quite as well able to carry the bag as Bob himself. But Bob's firm conviction was that Marjorie was as delicate as a piece of porcelain and must be treated with as much care.

He manfully caught up both bags.....

Then, of course, his hat blew off, and he dropped one of the bags in the attempt to catch it. The others ragged him over this, but Marjorie would not hear a word against him, and blamed Hazel for not doing his whack.

Charles Hamilton wrote: 'Marjorie was very kind to Bob, and as Marjorie was the only person there for whose opinion Bob cared two straws, he was soon put at his ease. If Marjorie regarded him with an approving eye, all was evidently all right. That was the way Bob Cherry looked at it. As a matter of fact, Marjorie was much kinder to him than usual, and Bob began to think that a Coronation picnic was the best idea that had ever been thought of.'

Magnet No. 177 found Bob at the wicket, expecting Marjorie to arrive at any minute. 'Bob Cherry began to bat, with one eye on the bowler and the other on the distant gates. He was wondering whether Marjorie Hazeldene would arrive in time to see him bat.

Harry Wharton called to him along the pitch.

"Bob!"

"Hello?"

"Going to sleep?"

Bob Cherry turned red.

The first ball was a wide, fortunately so for Bob. He put a little more attention into the game, and hit the next ball into the slips... At the beginning of the next over, Marjorie arrived. Bob turned his head - and just missed being bowled. There was a roar from Greyfriars "Look out, Cherry". He dropped his bat on the crease just in time to avoid being stumped... Then he tried to concentrate, but Vernon-Smith (who was on bad terms with Bob, and whom Marjorie disliked because of his influence on her brother) would talk to her, and this upset Bob so much that he got run out.

He was greeted with derision as he approached the onlookers.

"I - I couldn't help it" said Bob, feebly.

"Couldn't help it?" roared Johnny Bull. "Why..."

"Bob was taken off his guard," said Mark Linley.

"Yes, and I know what he was looking at," growled Johnny Bull.

Bob walked over to Marjorie who gave him a sympathetic glance.

"I'm so sorry," she said.

"Oh! It's all right," said Bob, with an effort. "Chaps have bad luck, sometimes."

Miss Clara's eyes danced.

"You weren't looking at the ball," she said.

"No, I - I had my eyes off the field for a moment."

"What were you looking at?"

Bob Cherry coloured like a beetroot.

"It was bad luck," said Marjorie, replying before Bob could find his tongue. "Please don't tease Bob, Clara. Sit down here, Bob."

And that was that.

From now on, it was generally acknowledged that Bob Cherry had a special claim on Marjorie Hazeldene's company, and throughout the Magnet this was never challenged. Further, that strong attachment was proof against all stresses and strains. Even in the Cliff House Feud stories (Magnet Nos. 1572-4) Marjorie's faith in Bob, though tried was never really shaken.

Cecil Ponsonby, the worst cad of the Highcliffe Fourth, stranded Marjorie Hazeldene, Clara Trevlyn and Bessie Bunter on Popper's Island, and planted Bob Cherry's cap there, to stir up trouble. When it was discovered, the impulsive Clara was quick to blame Bob, but Marjorie was unconvinced and stated firmly "It couldn't be Bob."

Later, when the girls were taken off by Horace Coker, Marjorie still refused to condemn him saying "We don't know who it was."

"Rubbish," snapped Clara. "It was Bob Cherry, Coker."

"I - I think, if it was Bob, he would have come back..."

"Rot," said Clara, elegantly.

At Greyfriars Bob was, of course, blamed.

Now, it happened that the Famous Five had taken the boat from Ponsonby and Co. so that when the Cliff House girls - against Marjorie's wish - investigated the affair, they discovered that Harry Wharton & Co. had returned the boat to the landing stage, and so they decided not to speak to the Greyfriars chums any more. The pressure of public opinion made Marjorie fall into line.

So, when Bob went over to Cliff House, Marjorie was "not at home" to him, and he came back in abject misery.

"I - I don't mind so much about their being offended," he said to the others, "but Marjorie would be HURT - that's the worst of it."

"We'll have to sort it out," said Johnny Bull. "All those fatheads in the Rag will think only one thing when they hear that Marjorie won't speak to Bob any more."

They therefore tried to get Hazel to go over, but he would not do so, and the crowning blow fell when the girls cut them in the street.

Their reactions were characteristic.

"Well," said Frank with a deep breath.

Grunt from Johnny Bull. "That does it. I'm fed up."

"I think," said Harry quietly "that we shall have to leave it at that. I'm not going through anything of that kind again."

"The samefulness is terrific," said Huree Singh.

Bob did not speak.

They walked back to Greyfriars in silence. Four of the Co. were feeling angry and resentful. But there was no room for anger in Bob's heart... To his friends, it was the end - but to Bob there was only one thing to do: to sort out the tangle.

In the next story (1529) Clara Trevlyn contrived to get Bob stranded on the island. On hearing of this, Marjorie was thunderstruck. Whereas Clara thought it a case of 'tit for tat', Marjorie's sole thought was of his plight and she telephoned for the boatman to go and collect him, which he did - very sourly, because he thought that Bob had stranded the girls. On his return to school, Bob was accused of having been out of bounds at the Three Fishers, and to save trouble for the girls, refused to divulge where he had been. Eventually, Hazel, (the guilty party) went over to Cliff House to try to establish a false alibi and this caused Clara Trevlyn to hurry over to Greyfriars to save Bob from the birch.

Then in Magnot No. 1530, Lord Mauleverer took a hand in the matter, and managed to point out to the girls that the sole evidence against Bob was the finding of his cap, which he asserted had been planted there by Ponsonby. Clara Trevlyn, Dolly Jobling and Bessie Bunter were not impressed but Marjorie said "Tell Bob that if there's been a mistake, I'm awfully sorry" and she went away troubled and distressed.

Finally, Mauly managed to straighten it out by getting Ponsonby to talk within earshot of the girls, and Marjorie made amends by saying to Bob "I am sorry," whereat Clara chipped in "You needn't be. You never really believed it, all the time. I did."

The story ended on a merry note. 'Bob joined Hazel and the Cliff House girls in the boat to go down the river. The brightness of his face was like that of the summer sun at noonday. When the boat pushed off, Lord Mauleverer walked away with the other four members of the Co. And if the walk tired his lazy lordship... he found comfort in the reflection that Bob was going to see Marjorie as far as the gates of Cliff House and that that made Bob the happiest boy in the county of Kent.'

Three stories later (1533) the Famous Five were just going to set off on a cycle spin when 'Bob Cherry's face suddenly brightened and his friends looked at him in surprised inquiry... The next moment, they knew (the reason) and they grinned as they followed Bob's eyes - directed towards the gates. A graceful figure entered, wheeling a bicycle.

'Johnny Bull bestowed a wink on Jurree Janset Ram Singh and the nabob grinned a dusky grin.

"Look here," said Bob, "you fellows cut off on the bikes. I'd just as soon knock up a few at the nets."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Any old thing," he said, "I fancy I know just how many you're going to knock up at the nets, you old ass. Come on, you fellows."

Now, it happened that Peter Hazeldene, in trouble once again by injudicious plunging on "gee-gees", had removed a banknote from a book of Mauly's, that had been confiscated by Mr. Quelch. Vernon-Smith, who had guessed what had happened, butted in before Hazel could pay away the note, and Hazel - in blue funk - beseeched Marjorie to replace the note when she went to Dr. Locke's study with a message - the reason for her unexpected arrival. But she was interrupted and had to get rid of the note by dropping it out of the study window.

Bob Cherry, hanging about outside, witnessed this act, and picked the note up. Unable to believe Marjorie capable of any mean action, and jealous for her good reputation, Bob ran into trouble in trying to keep her from suspicion. This sorely tried his temper, so that Harry Wharton asked "What on earth's happened to you?"

"Nothing."

"You haven't rowed with Hazel?"

"No."

"You can't possibly have rowed with Marjorie."

"Don't be a fool."

Wharton gave it up, and matters went from bad to worse.

The Bounder - thinking that Bob had been playing the goat as he did - interfered, and became involved in a fight, which Marjorie and Clara witnessed from a boat. Their conversation was revealing.

Clara observed "Bob looks in a fearfully bad temper."

"Bob isn't quarrelsome," replied Marjorie, rather sharply. "It must be Vernon-Smith who is to blame."

To which Clara replied - imperturbably, "That goes without saying. Is Bob ever to blame for anything?"

More complications followed, and Marjorie was mortified to learn from her brother that Bob had seen her drop the note from the window, but in the end Vernon-Smith got to the root of the matter and the affair was settled to the entire satisfaction of Bob and his girl-friend.

When they met again, Marjorie said, "You must have had a lot of faith in me."

"Well, so I have - lots," grinned Bob.

Marjorie smiled - and held out her hand. It disappeared in Bob's, which was about twice as large.

.....
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T. LAMBERT

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* * * * *

Some Comic Characters



Airy Alf & Bouncing Billy

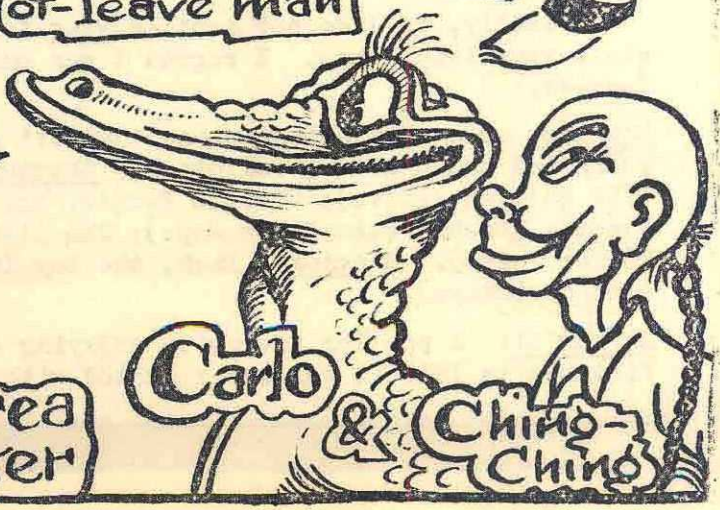


Weary Willie & Tired Tim

Tom, the ticket-of-leave man



Chokee Bill & The Area Sneaker



Carlo & Chino-Chino

COMIC CHARACTERS

by

LEONARD PACKMAN

In the course of the past twenty years or more I have corresponded with a great number of collectors - many of whom I have since had the pleasure of meeting - throughout which the subject of comic papers has played a very prominent part. From this, one fact becomes quite clear: the vast majority of our fraternity made their debut in the Realm of Juvenile Literature through the medium of the comic papers. Furthermore, of the remainder almost all have read 'comics' at one time or another.

That there is nothing surprising in this I quite agree - from the chrysalis emerges the butterfly, the comic paper being the chrysalis stage. The late John Medcraft, in one of his excellent articles, once confessed that his 'first love' was the comic paper. As for myself, the very first juvenile publication I ever saw was CHIPS.

A complete history of comic papers would fill the pages of several 'Annuals' (if such a herculean task could be accomplished), and that cannot be compressed into a few pages! There is of course only one solution - to dissect the whole subject and select that part which, within reasonable limitations, fits the amount of space at one's disposal. In this particular case 'comic characters' would appear to be appropriate.

We all had our favourite characters and papers, some of which still remain fresh in our minds whilst others are but a dim and hazy memory. We are of varying ages, so that the period which interests us most also varies accordingly. I will therefore endeavour to make mention of as many of the 'fixed' characters (and some featured stories) as possible, covering various years in the life of each paper. For the same reason of space I must also keep within a limited period of years, which will embrace from 1900 to the 1930's.

I have selected those papers which I consider to be true comics (the definition of a comic paper is very debatable), but I have made an exception in the case of Film Fun and Kinema Comic which, although not of the same format and general appearance, must be mentioned.

Finally, if I do not mention your favourite comic paper or character, I claim your indulgence. I regret I can only work on such material as I actually possess.

BUBBLES: One of the best class 'junior' coloured comics. Ran for a number of years and had a good circulation. Characters: (year 1934) The Bunty Boys; Peter (the Paleface Brave); Georgie Porgie; Mr. Croc's School; Bubbles (the Boy Clown); Nippi & Rosebud (the Happy Japs); The Little Piccaninnies; Piggy & Wiggy (the Porker Twins). Stories: Dick, the Boy Inventor; Chums at School; Jack & Jill (the Castaways).

BUTTERFLY: A popular favourite enjoying a very long run. When the 'Firefly' finished in 1918 it was incorporated with the 'Butterfly'. Thus, from then

onward the 'Firefly's chief characters appeared in the 'Butterfly and Firefly'. Characters: (year 1916) Portland Bill; Dicky Doenut; Beatrix Buttercup (the Cheerful Charlady); Flossie; Gussy Goosgog; Inspector Spot (Always on the Spot); The Brothers Eggbert & Philbert. (Year 1918) Butterfly Bill; Tommy Dodd (the Tricky Traveller); Andy (the 'Andy Man'); T.E. Dunville; Maisie (the Messenger Girl). (Year 1919) Alfred & 'Erb (Ad Agents); Bertie & Babs; Tilly, Tom & Tinker Topnote (the Tricky Trio) Percy Pickle (the Pavement Artist). (Year 1922) Roland Butter & Hammond Deggs; Obadiah Priceless; Buckshee Bunce (the Balmy Bard); Marmaduke Marzipan (the Merry Major). (Year 1933) Molly & Mick (the Terrors of Little Tittering); Vic the Ventriloquist; May & Milly (the Merry Twins); Our Horace; Allsorts Stores; Smiler & Smudge (at Carraway College). Stories: (year 1916) The Doings of Dr. Dread; Daring & Co; Cheerful Charlie Brown (the Original Boy Ventriloquist.) (year 1922) Crackers & Co (Detectives). (year 1933) The Green Man (Robin Hood); A Prince in Peril (Ray Keen, detective and his assistant Jimmy Smith).

CHIPS: Probably the most well-known comic of all. Weary Willie and Tired Tim are undoubtedly literally 'World-famous' Tramps. Created by the late Tom Browne, R.A. they appeared almost from the very beginning. A really magnificent record. (2,997 issues!) Characters: (to include the above-mentioned): (years 1911, 1915) Casey Court Nibs; Sunbeam (Our Innocent Little Imp); Homeless Hector (the Tail of a Lost Dog); Tom Bowline (Our Jolly Jack Tar); Toddles (the Big-Booted Comedian). (Year 1922) Pa Perkins (and his son Percy); Our Artful Eskimos; Dr. Canem's College. (Year 1935) Laurie & Trailer (the Secret Service Lads); Milly (the Military Mascot); Winnie & Skinny. Stories: (year 1911) The Flying Detective (George Gale of Scotland Yard). (Year 1915) The School Bell; The Blue Lamp (Tug Wilson 'ted and P.C. Harry Screams); The Silver Queen (Sylvia Royal, Woman of Mystery). (Year 1922) Catch-as-Catch-Can (Marshall Hawke, detective). (Year 1935) The Tolling Bell (Clive Markham and Dane, the Dog Detective). (Dane, the Dog Detective was one of the stories in the last issue.) Mi Kollum, by Philpot Bottles, was also a popular feature for many years. Much of his free time was spent with his two pals, Horatio Pimple and Sebastian Ginger (of Funny Wonder and Comic Cuts fame) in 'Mrs. Slapcabbidge's ot drink shop', or with his girl 'Miss Sharlot Skroggins'.

CHUCKLES. Rightly considered to be one of the best produced of all the halfpenny comics. The coloured front page is of the highest possible standard. Incidentally, the first hundred or so issues are much sought and hard to find today. Characters: (year 1915) Breezy Ben and Dismal Dutchy; Boxo (the Muscular Marvel; Mustard Keen (and his Terrible Terrier); Little Tommy Treddles (and his Toy Aeroplane); Little Loo Lumme (and his Lucky Lamp); Chuckles Coloured Cinema; Dozey David. (Year 1920) Pongo the Monkey; Milly the Mermaid; Playland Flats; Sally (the Sunshine of Our Alley). Stories: (year 1915) The Adventures of Captain Custard (and his nephew The Nib); Teddy Baxter & Co (at St. Jim's and Claremont Schools, by Prosper Howard); A Trip to the Stars. (Year 1920) Chums of the Sea.

St. Jim's enthusiasts may be interested to know (and some will probably remember) that during the period from September to December 1920 a sectional 'cut out' model of this school, in colour, was printed on the back page. When completed and assembled it looked really good.

COMIC CUPS: Another great favourite. Ran for 3,006 issues. Characters: (year 1908) The Mulberry Flatites (Frowsy Freddie, Batchelorboy, Miss Olemaid and Oofbird Esq.); Sammy Salt; Fun on Board the Mary Ann; Our Merry Mannikins; Chuckles the Clown; Gertie, the Regimental Pet. (Year 1918) Tom (the Menagerie

Man); Waddles (our Whimsical Waiter); Pansy Pancake (the Comical Cook); The Comic Cuts Colonists. (Chuckles the Clown and the Mulberry Flatites were still going strong at this date). Stories: (year 1908) Martin Steel (and his 12 Lady Detectives); The Aeroplane Girl (Stella Falconer). (Year 1917) The Red Rovers; The Shadow Man.

'Mi Wurd' by Sebastian Ginger, contemporary with 'Mi Kollum' in 'Chips', ran for many years.

COMIC LIFE: One of Henderson's best comics with the front page in colour. Ran for many years. Characters: (year 1915) Butterball and Tall Thomas; Pyjama Percy and Balmy Bill; P.C. Neverwait; The Red Lion Scouts; Scientific Silas. (Year 1919) Tot and Ted; Topsy & Tommy (and their Jungle Pets). Stories: (Year 1915) Peter Flint, detective (and his assistant Jack Nugget); The Fighting Footballers. (Year 1919) The Sporting Pierrots; Tim the Cheapjack (by Derwent Miall).

CRACKERS: Another of the 'junior' coloured comics. Only ran for a few years. A 2d twelve page publication that deserves to be on the market today. Characters: (year 1932) Wildflower and Little Elf; Absent-minded Annie; Professor Noodle; Terry and Trixie (the Stars of the Circus); Little Sunshine; Kitty Clare's Schooldays; Crackers (our Funny Pup). Stories: A Prince of Britain; The Orphans of 'K' Ranch; Little Dick Nobody.

FAVOURITE: Companion paper to the 'Butterfly' and 'Merry & Bright'. A good paper and hard to get hold of today. Characters: (Year 1916) K.N. Pepper (King of the K-nuts); Tommy Tippit (the Terror of the Town); Ragtime Rex; Flossie & Phyllis; Sally Cinders (the Slavey). Stories: London; In the Shadows; Victor Brand (detective).

FILM FUN: Still running, but compared to No. 1 the difference is as chalk is to cheese. To those of us who remember the old screen stars, the following names bring back many happy memories. Characters: 'Winkle'; Larry Semon; Baby Marie Osborne; Mack Swain; Earle Montgomery & Joseph Rock; Ben Turpin; James Aubrey; Slim Summerville. Stories: 'Fatty' Arbuckle's Schooldays; Screen Struck. (All the above are featured in number 1, dated 17 Jan. 1920).

FIREFLY: Companion to and later amalgamated with the 'Butterfly'. One of the unfortunate First World War casualties. Characters: (Year 1916) T.E. Dunville; Lazy Leonard & Lively Laurence; Grabbem and Pinch (the Comical Coppers); Professor Pipp (and his Marvellous Hat); Rushing Rupert (the Reckless Reporter); Tommy Dodd (the Tricky Traveller). Stories: Friendless; The Convict Heir; Abel Daunt (the King of Detectives).

FUNNY CUTS: A Trapps, Holmes & Co publication. Did not have many 'fixed' characters. Mainly illustrated jokes. Characters: (year 1915) Josser & Co; Bounderby Bouncer; Benjamin Bodger (Benefactor to Mankind); Woozy William & Artful Alf. Stories: The Adventures of Harley Staines (detective).

FUNNY WONDER: Ranks with 'Chips' and 'Comic Cuts' as the 'big three'. Finished (as 'Wonder') Sept. 12th 1953. 1,760 issues. Characters: (year 1915) Charlie Chaplin; Uncle Poppem's Pop-Shop; Willie & Wally (our Funny Wonder Boys); Ned (the Navy); Denny O'Dowd. (year 1919) Annie Seed (the Belle of Bullseye Buildings); Punch & Judy (our Perky Piccaninnies); Idle Jack (the Lazy Apprentice); Jingle's Circus; I. Mitt; Our Kinema Couple. Milly (the Merry Maid of All Word); Ben & Bert (the Kid Cops); Daft Dan (the Prairie Piecan). (year 1937). Little Elf; Marmy (and his Ma). Stories: (year 1915) The Golden Fang (Paul Sleuth,

detective); All On His Own. (Year 1919) Pat O'Keene (Ventriloquist detective). (Year 1933) The Black Glove (Derek Lawson, detective). (Year 1937) The Three Film Clues; Brigands of the Black Tents. 'Ho, I Say!' by Horatio Pimple, contemporary with 'Mi Kollum' and 'Mi Wurd' (Chips and Comic Cuts) ran for many years.

Horatio Pimple had a column right up to the final issue ('My Story'), by which time he had learned to spell correctly!

GOLDEN: One of the more 'modern' comics (1922) with a relatively short life. Well produced on good paper, with good stories and authors, this paper deserved a better fate. For those who are interested in the artists, Eric Parker illustrated some of the stories. (See MONSTER COMIC, companion to the 'Golden').

Characters: (year 1923) Daniel Dole & Oscar Outofwork; Happy Harold (the Van Boy); Bingo & Bones (the Dud Detectives); Cyril Sirloin; Katie (the Cat); Micky the Middy & Gussy the Goat; Nathaniel Nodd (the Dozy Nightwatchman); Oswald (the Odd Job Man). (year 1926) Spaghetti (and his Monk Jacko); Harry Weldon; Randolph Rendall (the Railway Porter); The Smith Family. Stories: (year 1923) The 'Ghost' of Fenton House (Bertram Baynes, detective); The Great Circus Mystery. (year 1926) The Mystery Man (Pelham Bond, the Scientific Detective).

JESTER (and Wonder): This fine paper is a 'borderline comic', for it was more a story-paper than a comic. Being awkward I treat it as a comic paper, but whatever your personal opinion may be I am sure you will all agree it was a rattling good paper. I only wish it was published today! Characters: (year 1902) Mr. Hubbub; The Bunsey Boys; Cholly and Gawge. (year 1904) Chokey Bill and Area Sneaker; Ching-Ching the Chinaman & Carlo the Croc. (year 1910) Constable Cuddles-cook; Racketty Row; Lottie Looksharp (the Merry Messenger Girl); Moonlight Moggie (the Mouser); Peter Parsnips (the Park-keeper); Spencer Sparrowgrass (the Sport); Nibby Nugget the Newsboy (and Pimple the Pup). (year 1913) Jessie Jolly (the General's Daughter); Smiler and Smirk (Mirth Merchants). (year 1918) 'Appy Ann (the Lady Tramp); Unlucky 'Erbert. Stories: (year 1902) In Defiance of Duty (by A.S. Hardy); Twice Round the Globe; London Life. (year 1904) Vidocq (the Police Spy); The Red Barn (or The Mystery of Maria Martin); Guilty. (year 1910) Captain Eagle (The Bird Man); Hawkshaw (Detective); Daddy; The Lights of Home; Alone in London. (year 1913) Springheel Jack; Five Years After; Queen of Hearts. (year 1918) Dr. Duval - Detective; Into the Unknown.

JINGLES: A 'junior' comic. Commenced 13 January 1934. Not particularly outstanding but was quite popular for a number of years. Characters: (year 1934) The Tiddleywink Family; Jolliboy's School. Stories: Smugglers of Wreckers Rock; Val and his Pal.

KINEMA COMIC: Companion to Film Fun and every bit as good, but for some unknown reason it did not 'stay the course'. More happy memories of early Screen Stars. Characters: Ford Sterling; Fatty Arbuckle; Louise Fazenda; Chester Conklin; Mabel Normand; Polly Moran. Stories: The Amazing Exploits of Houdini (written by Harry Houdini); Peg of the Pictures.

(All the above are featured in No. 1 dated 24 April 1920)

LARKS: (Trapps, Holmes & Co.) In later years incorporated with WORLD'S COMIC. Mainly cartoon jokes. Did not enjoy a long life as a paper of its own. Characters: (year 1902) Mr. & Mrs. Bumchowder (and 'Nice Little Horatio'.) Stories: The Heart of Africa; The Perils of the Pampas (by Charles Hamilton).

LOT-O-FUN: Another of Henderson's best comic papers, probably even more popular

than Comic Life. Much sought today, but copies are very scarce. Characters: (year 1917) Dreamy Daniel; Patriotic Paul; Shipwrecked Sam & Marooned Mike; Lionel the Lion Tamer (and Lollops the Lively Lion); Tarpot and Tickler. (year 1919) Winkle and Binkle; Professor Potash; P.C. 49. (year 1921) Harry Weldon; Plum Duff (Our Wee Waiter); Dickie and Darkie; Willie Evergrow (the Merry Midget). Stories: (year 1917) The Isle of Gold; Sons of the Sea; Jimmy Speed - Taxi Driver. (year 1919) The Island of Wonders; The Scarlet Sign; Three in Thrillingland. (year 1921) Tuckaway Jack; The Fighting 'T's (Tom King & Ted Bright).

MERRY & BRIGHT: A good old favourite. Originally a bluey-green paper but later changed to pinky-mauve. Every bit as good as its companion the 'Butterfly'. Characters: (year 1911) Curly Kelly; Touchwood & Whistle (the Tricky Twins); The Boys of Coffdrop College; Pa Petrol (and his son Sebastian); Percy Pickle (the Pavement Artist); Gussy I. Dontthink (the Terrible Toff); The Shirkwork Brothers; The Merry & Bright Entertainers; Harry Hothouse and Archie Iceberg. (year 1915) Cyril Slapdab (the Champion Billposter); Larky Mark (the Merry Mirthmonger). (year 1916) Phil Ray; Little Tich; Will Evans; George Robey; Harry Tate; T.E. Dunville; Fred Kitchen. (year 1919) Sleepy Sidney; Percy Popit (the Punch & Judy Person); Bounding Billy; Sheerluck Bones (the Dud Detective). Stories: (year 1911) Gentleman Joe (and his Four Urchin Detectives); Jolly Jack Johnson (the Boy Mesmerist); Ragged Jack (the Tramp Detective). (year 1919) Clues Ltd; The Man with the Rubber Face; Sylvia Power (the Girl in the Iron Muzzle).

MERRY MIDGET: One of the lesser known comic papers, published by Provincial Comics Ltd. Quite a good paper but, like most of the 'outsiders' had a short life. Characters: (year 1932) Micky Midge; Wurzel Farm; Sammy Spry; Horace Hawkeye (Super Sleuth); Corney Beef and Percy Pickles; Saucy Sue. Stories: Renald the Smith; Peril (or The Food of the Giants).

MERRY MOMENTS: A 'junior' comic published by Newnes. How long it ran I cannot say, but my copy of No. 1 dated 12 April 1919 is quite good. Characters: Cyril & Gladys (the Happy Twins) and Professor Crazy Klew (the Dud Detective); Dick and Daisy in Lollipop Land; The Zoo-Zoo Folk; Ho Ping & Foo Ling; Jimmy and Joan; The Adventures of Johnny Stout. Stories: Dick Dare of St. Dunstan's; The Richest Boy in the World; The Adventures of the Kinema Kids.

MONSTER: Companion to the 'Golden' comic, and as equally well-produced. Excellent stories and, as with the 'Golden', some illustrated by Eric Parker. I rather feel that the cartoon characters did not 'catch on'. I cannot think of any other reason why this paper and the 'Golden' should not have been a commercial success. Characters: (year 1923) Wireless Willie & Bertie Broadcast; Ferdinand (the Firefighter); Clara (the Cleaner); Tishy (the Twister) and Steve (his Pal); Bertie Bright (the Bootblack); Basil the Beaver; (year 1926) Jerry (the Jester); The Kids of Cushy Court; Felix and Bozo (the Terrible Twins); Happy Snapps, his Daughter Gretchen and their Dog Poloni; Sir Horace Horserafish (and his horse Hector). Stories: (year 1923) Ned and Ted Twain (the Twin 'Tecs); The Mystery of Convict 69; Mystery House; Doped to Win; The Sleuth of the Seas Harvey Grayton, detective). (year 1926) Billy Buttons (Assistant Resident Detective).

MY FAVOURITE: A 'junior' coloured paper (A. Press). Very well-produced. Its comparatively short life may be due to the fact that 2d was a lot for a comic paper at that time. Others have gone 'on the rocks' for the same reason, however good they may have been. In my opinion it was good value - even for those days. Characters: (year 1928) Aboard the Jolly Roger (Captain Hearty and his

pretty daughter Molly); I. Knowall; Winnie (the Waitress); Dreamy Dick (the Perfect Office Boy); Cheery Charlie (the Comical Cowboy); Cole & Coke (the Merry Nigs); Ali Baa-Baa (the Bey of Biscay) Strongheart the Wonder Dog (Picture Story entitled 'The Rustlers'). Stories: Paul Daring, Detective; Mystery Manor; Cowboy Joe; Mick of the Motor Works.

MY FUNNYBONE: It may have been funny but I don't think much of it. Thin paper, poorly produced, it was mainly confined to cartoon jokes(?). Characters: (year 1912) The Good Ship Funnybone; Bowrie Bill (the Broncho Buster).

PUCK: One of the best comic papers of all time. The 1d issues as far back as the year 1908 (No. 200 May 23rd) are superb value. I have some mint copies for this period and the coloured front page of every one is, in itself, a treat to behold. Unfortunately, it deteriorated greatly in later years, the issues for the year 1918 being of thin paper, few pages and poor characters and stories. A good deal of this is obviously due to the war, but even so, other papers at that time were much better value - at half the cost. Nevertheless 'Puck' is a grand comic paper, particularly the earlier issues. The late John Medcraft had a long run of this paper and I am glad to find they are now getting into circulation, for they are very scarce - and have been for years, so far as good copies are concerned. Characters: (year 1908) The Casey Court Boys (Willie Wagstaff & Co) Professor Radium; Billy Smiff; The Newlyweds; Percy the Page; Dr. Stork's Academy; Monty the Merry Middy; (year 1918) Angel (and her Merry Playmates); Jack & Jill; The Merry Mischiefs; Billy Bunny; Dr. Jolliboy's School; Sammy Smiles (and his Scooter); Tommy Traddles; Jungle Land. Stories: (year 1908) The Puck Pierrots; Paul Dane's Detective Academy; Britain in Peril; The Prisoner of the Forest; The Boys of St. Kitt's; Three Chums in a Car; France v Germany; Paying the Piper. (year 1918) Val Fox (and his Pets); Charlie Prince.

It is interesting to note that 'Britain in Peril' (or The Invasion of England) is not a story with Germany as the enemy, as is mostly the case. This time it is - Russia!

RAINBOW: I think everyone will agree that this may be called 'The King of Junior Comic Papers'. Still running, it is the only remaining publication of its kind dating back to the early years of this century. It is also interesting to note that, with the exception of 'Sing Hi & Sing Lo' (probably deleted lest we give offence to Communist China!) all the old 'star' characters are still going strong. Even 'Bonny Bluebell' is still a young girl, bless her! Characters. (year 1919) The Bruin Boys; The Two Pickles (and Fluff, the Dog); Susie (and her Pet Poms); The Dolliwogs; Marzipan the Magician (and his Magic Wand); Sing Hi and Sing Lo. Feature Story: Bonny Bluebell.

The only difference in the current issues is as follows:- Susie (and her Funny Pets) Marzipan the Magician (No mention of his Magic Wand in the caption, although he still uses it each week).

SPARKS: Although only running for a few years, to my mind this was one of Henderson's best comic papers. Characters: (year 1916) Lemon and Dash; Ram and Rod (the Enterprising Tommies); Pushful Perkins; Larkheeled Jack (the Coughdrop); Economical 'Enery; Algernon and Horace (the Pals of Pie Court). Stories: The Terror of the Crimson Cloud; The Treasure of the Deep; The Isle of Surprises.

SUNBEAM: A 'junior' coloured comic paper, very similar to 'My Favourite' but to my way of thinking not such a good production. No. 1 dated 7 October 1922 is of good appearance, but I rather feel that in view of the number of similar A. Press

going strong at that time this one was superfluous. Characters: Fun in Funny Folks Forest; Mrs. Blossom (and the Little Blossoms); Funland Farm; Marvo (the Magician); Jenny and Jacko; the Troublesom Tots (and their Pets). Stories: Harry Norton's Schooldays; Waifs of the Wild.

TIGER TIM'S WEEKLY: If 'Rainbow' is the King of coloured 'junior' comic papers, this one is the Prince. No. 1 (New Series) dated 19 November 1921 is delightful in every way. Obviously the A. Press found all their 'junior' comics were a commercial success - for a time at least, but with the exception of 'Tiny Tots', for the very little folk, I think this paper and 'Rainbow' filled all the 'junior's' needs admirably. Characters: (year 1921) The Bumpy Boys & Cinderella; Mrs. Bruin's School; The Tiny Toy Boys; Jimmy and Jane; The Merry Mice of Squeaky Town; Goldilocks (and the Three Bears); Pinkie and Patsy; Tales of Tinkle-Bell Tree. Stories: Jackie (A story of Merrie England in the days of Good Queen Bess); Nobody's Boy.

TINY TOTS: An excellent coloured paper all for the little folks themselves - and rightly so. First published round about September 1927, I am pleased to see it is still running and very nicely produced. Characters: (year 1930) Tiny and Tot; the Funny Bunny Boys; Peter and Peggy; The Piggywigs; Little Snowdrop; The Ten Little Nigger Boys. Stories: Toy Shop Tales; Little Tom Thumb.

Twenty-four years later it is nice to find that, with the sole exception of 'The Piggywigs', all the above characters and stories are still going strong!

TIP TOP: This is really another 'borderline' case. One might almost call it a 'modernised Jester'. It had a fair run but lacked the backing of good authors and stories. I have an idea the A. Press used this paper as a medium for trying out the Picture Story. Characters: (year 1938) Dinkum, the Dog Detective. Stories: The Council Estate Mystery (Donovan Lyle, detective; Never Say Neigh. Picture Stories: In Search of New Lands (Ken Maynard); The Adventures of Jerry, Jenny and Joe; Singapore Jim, and Billy; The Call of Adventure.

WORLD'S COMIC: (Incorporating 'Larks'). An early Trapps, Holmes publication, and ideal for those who like cartoon jokes. Somewhat crude in comparison with contemporary comic papers published by other firms, but had a great popularity and long life for all that. Characters: (year 1908) Birdie and Napoleon. Stories: Dead-Shot Dick; Through the Poles in a Submarine.

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I would like to have included several more papers, but the details are not available. However, to make the record a little more complete, here are those I have in mind: LARKS (A. Press); SPARKLER; SMILES; SUNNY; COMIC HOME JOURNAL; BIG BUDGET (? another 'borderline' case) and JOKER.

As I find that my allotted space allows for a few more words, perhaps the following may be of interest.

At least two collectors have written stories in the past for such comic papers as FAVOURITE, MERRY & BRIGHT, MONSTER and GOLDEN. I regret that one of the names must - by request - be withheld, but I am permitted to reveal the other. The fact that he is also a member of the O.B.B. Club (Merseyside Branch) is most pleasing. He is Sir Frederick Bowman, K.S.W.

Sir Frederick is the happy possessor of a very fine collection of various of the old papers, some of which I must admit I covet!

One of the finest serials of its kind I have ever read is 'The School Bell' (see CHIPS). The author, 'John Edmund Fordwych' (Harold J. Garish) gave each one of his youthful characters - Arthur, Percy, Elsie, Edie, Joe and Harold a distinctive personality. We all know that children live in a world of their own, so that the story is best summed up in the caption which heads the first instalment: 'A story of the little things that matter in the lives of young people'.

Incidentally, this story was reprinted in the Boy's Friend (2d), commencing 25 June 1927. I have the first two instalments (Nos. 1358 & 1359), and if anyone can supply me with any of the succeeding issues I would be most grateful. (Thanks, Herbert, for the free advert!)

Finally, I wish to express my thanks to Mr. Tom Lambert and Mr. Bill Martin for their help in supplying many of the comic papers which form part of my now sizable collection. I must confess that until I received certain papers from these two good friends, not only had I never seen a copy before but had never even heard of the title!

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N.B. Such comment and criticism as is expressed throughout this article is entirely and solely in accordance with my own personal opinion.

LEONARD PACKMAN.

Several papers have come into my possession since the original manuscript left my hands, but thanks to our editor the details are added, as follows:-

BIG BUDGET: Another 'borderline' case, and one of the finest of the earlier papers. Characters: (year 1901) Airy Alf and Bouncing Billy; Topsy Turvey Land. Stories: The Rivals of Ranthorpe School; The Serpent's Coil.

CHICKS' OWN: (No. 1 dated 29.9.1920) Another of the 'junior' papers, comparable with TINY TOTS and similarly still running. Characters: Betty & Billy; The Jolly Jumbos; Billy Pot & Percy Pan; Dickie Duck; Mr. Golliwog; Phillip Fly; Robert Rabbit. (Robert Rabbit is the only original character still featured.)

JOKER: One of the A. Press lesser known and yet best comics. Characters: (year 1936) Alfie (the Air Tramp); Bert & Daisy; Midge & Moocher; Buck Tupp (and Flannelfoot); Spot & Speedy (the River Cops); Dickie Duffer (the Dunce).

JOLLY: Another A. Press 'good value' comic. Very well produced. Characters: (year 1939) Johnny Green & Alec Smart; Will Hay (the Master of Mirth); Binky & Gran'pop; Professor P. Nutts (and his Marvellous Mixtures); Dusky Dinah; Jolly Joe (and his Fun Show). Stories: The Mystery of Marshpoint Manor (Frank Harker & Spike, the Fighting Tecs); The Fearless Three; The Boy who Bought the School.

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(cont'd from page 146).

WILSON, ROBERT, 100 Broomfield Road, Glasgow, N. (Age 56). Registered Medical Practitioner. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 6 (a); 8 (Thriller).

WOOD, JOHN PETER, "Nostaw," 328, Stockton Lane, Stockton-on-Forest, York. (Age 40). Journalist. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a); 6 (a), (b).

IN actual fact no foreign armies have, of course, in modern times gained a footing on Britain's shores, but in the realms of fiction they did so often. In the first decade of the century story followed story especially in the papers associated with Alfred Harmsworth, later Lord Northcliffe. Generally the enemy was Germany and when in grim reality the Kaiser came out in his true colours his lordship declaimed from the house-tops "I told you so - I warned you of the peril to come." He had been right, of course, but there were cynics who reminded him that some years earlier, round about the time of the Boer War, he had named France as the enemy, and threatened to roll that country in mud and blood. "So" declared his critics "one prophesy cancelled the other out."

However, whether Lord Northcliffe was right or wrong he certainly kept many authors busy telling, by way of serial stories, usually in papers written for boys, of the horrors in store for us if ever it came to "fighting in the streets and in the hills of our native land." Lord Northcliffe's first newspaper the "Daily Mail" itself ran a serial which caused a sensation, written by Wm. Le Queux round about 1906, and entitled "The Invasion of 1910." But it is of the stories which appeared in the boys papers of the day I'll attempt to describe here, for there's a sort of grim fascination in dwelling on world war as those

BRITAIN INVADED-OFTEN

By HERBERT LECKENBY and PEARD SUTHERLAND

authors foresaw it and what it was in actual fact.

Foremost among the authors whose pens were busy was Sidney Gowing, better known as David Goodwin, but for this purpose writing as John Tregellis. Before August 1914, he alone had written six serials of considerable length for the "Boys Friend", or to be strictly correct, the sixth was actually running when that fateful fourth of August dawned. They were remarkably clever yarns, gripping and exciting, but whether they acted as a warning to the youth of the day I have my doubts.

However, as many of us have lived through two world wars there's a kind of grim fascination in recalling how these prophets visualised invasion when all the wars they had known had been fought far away from our shores. There may be no strict chronological order and some of the stories may be dealt with rather sketchily, through lack of material

"Britain in Arms" - Boys Friend ($\frac{1}{2}$ d) No. 113-148; 23-3-1897 to 2-12-1897.

"The Russian Foe" - No. 149 - 183; 9-12-1897 to 30-8-1898.

Author - Hamilton Edwards

In his book "Boys Will Be Boys", E.S. Turner makes some interesting comments on a story "Britain in Arms" which he says appeared in the "Boys Friend Library" in 1910. It did, it was No. 81 (1st series) but he rather gives the impression that it was its first appearance. This was not so by any means,

however, for it appeared originally in the $\frac{1}{2}$ d Boys Friend several years before (as stated above) and its first reprint was in $\frac{1}{2}$ d Pluck in 1900.

In those days France was usually looked upon as the enemy and here Russia was added, in fact the reader was told in heavy type, with some exaggeration that "Britain in Arms" was the story of how Great Britain fought the world in 1902 showing what Britons can do for the Queen and Country in the hour of need - a tale of loyalty and devotion to the Old Flag."

Hamilton Edwards rather fancied himself as an author, but truth to tell, he was a much better editor. His style when writing a story was inclined to be melodramatic and those patriotic flourishes read rather quaintly today when we express our loyalty a little more quietly.

Nevertheless, this story had its points. No one had thought of tanks and rockets, battles were affairs of hand to hand fighting with every man for himself; picturesque cavalry charges with thrusting lancer and sword gleaming in the sunlight, to the accompanying thunder of hundreds of horses hooves.

Interesting was the introduction of famous regiments of the day. The hero, Jack Hinton, and his chum, Bob Fitzgerald, were in the 17th Lancers, the Death-or-Glory Boys. And the infantry were not forgotten, for in an instalment before me the York and Lancs, the Loyal North Lancs and the Oxford Light Infantry were doing doughty deeds of valour.

Here's our hero in the midst of the battle:

"Now, my boys, for the name of the old regiment!" cried Jack Hinton; and then he found himself cutting, parrying and thrusting amid a whirling cloud of sword-blades. And assuredly the gallant captain would have been chopped into pieces by the infuriated and savage Russians had it not been for Bob Fitzgerald, who had been close to Jack when the charge was made, cut his way with several troopers to the point where Jack was fighting like a man possessed, seeming to care nothing whether he lived or died, so long as living or dying he served his country's cause."

Then:

"They heard later that the colonel, brave old Neill had died from a stray bullet and as he died in the arms of a lieutenant, he murmured: "Thank Heaven! The old regiment wins, I can die happily now." "

General Buller was in command of the victorious forces. Hamilton Edwards could not foresee that by 1902 that old warrior had been sent home from the real war in South Africa because the powers that be had thought he was not quite so successful.

In one way, however, Hamilton Edwards did appear to see almost fifty years into the future for after the invaders had been beaten Britain in turn invaded France, and that story of 1897 described the landing thus:

"As they steamed in towards shore the soldiers were astonished to find that a landing stage had been erected for them, and everything was ready for the ships to run alongside and the British troops to land.

The move of Lord Roberts had been well calculated. A detachment of Royal Engineers had constructed a floating wharf made to fit this particular point in the shore. The wharf had been towed across the Channel and fixed while the British Fleet was bombarding Havre.

Britain had commenced to take her revenge."

Quipped Mr. Turner in "Boys Will Be Boys" on that bit of prophecy, "Here's a revelation which the 'inventors' of the Mulberry Harbour might care to hear about."

Anyway the landing was very successful, for in quick time the French begged for peace, and agreed to pay an indemnity of £100,000,000. On hundred million! Pooh! mere chickenfeed. It wouldn't keep a modern war going for a week.

* * * * *

A NATION'S PERIL!

Written Anonymously

This story appeared in 'Chips' in the early months of 1900, and again the villain of the piece was France. Under the title appeared the warning "An account of the Great French Invasion of 1900" so apparently the nation had not long to get ready.

The country across the Channel were made out to be a treacherous lot in those days for the introduction before me says "The British Army being engaged in South Africa, the French nation smuggle gangs of armed men into our great cities, while their Navy prepared for an invasion of our seaports."

Jack Steerforth, a volunteer, is the hero, and early in the story he manages to get control of a French gunboat and with its own guns blows a cruiser out of the water. Slick work for a soldier!

On returning to London he finds war has broken out in real earnest.

Then from the city and the plough rises a citizen army, the Victorian Home Guard! The invaders met with a stronger resistance than they ever expected, so much so that we find them lamenting.

"So this was the invasion of England - a country where there were no soldiers left, where all their means of defence had been sent across the sea, and which was going to be at their mercy in less than a week! There was something distinctly unfair in citizens taking upon themselves the duties of soldiers. The impudent citizens should suffer for their temerity. The soldiers of France should avenge."

My information about this story is rather meagre, actually I was quite unaware of its existence until a few months ago when a few copies of 'Chips' came my way. I don't think it ran very long. It has the appearance of being brought to a hurried finish; maybe it hadn't caught on or the author got himself tied up in knots.

Anyway in the last three or four short instalments the Channel Fleet was rushed home from the Mediterranean and the French Fleet wiped out in double quick time.

On land the citizen army fought desperately with the invaders. Tonbridge was in flames, and Dorking and Sevenoaks knew something of the horrors of war.

Then Pretoria having fallen, Tommy Atkins came marching home again to fight shoulder to shoulder with their fathers. Soon the treacherous French gave up the fight and the old country was at peace once more.

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"Britain Invaded" (Boys' Friend No. 259 - 284)
 "Britain at Bay" (" " No. 285 - 327)
 "Britain's Revenge" (" " No. 327 - 357)

Starting May 26th, 1906.

Author - John Tregellis

E.S. Turner in "Boys Will Be Boys" in reviewing some of the invasion stories comments: "Britain Invaded" and "Britain at Bay", which formed a continuous story, ran as end-of-the-book serials, in very short instalments. The impression given, perhaps wrongly, was that here was something which the editor was printing only because he had to. Pride of place went to A.S. Hardy's boxing stories and the interminable adventures of Jack, Sam and Pete. "

Now Mr. Turner slipped up here. What he was looking at were the reprints very much abridged, which appeared in the 'Marvel'. He seems to have been unaware that "Britain Invaded", "Britain at Bay" and in addition "Britain's Revenge", appeared originally in the "Boys Friend" some years earlier. What is more, during that first run the instalments were of considerable length and far from being at 'the end of the book' they invariably were given the most prominent position, with a graphic illustration by 'Val' extending over almost the whole of the Boys Friend's large size page. In fact the data concerning these three stories (really one, in three parts) is so remarkable that some figures are well worthy of being put on record.

Above you will see I have given the run of each story. Seeing "Britain at Bay" finished in the same number as "Britain's Revenge" started, there were exactly 100 instalments altogether. On an average an instalment was spread over ten columns, possibly a dozen. The Boys Friend's page depth was just that of today's "Daily Mirror" which allowed 1,000 words almost, to a full column. Take into consideration, a picture, introduction and so on, and reduce it to seven columns. Thus, if my arithmetic is correct, the three stories combined ran to no less than 700,000 words! That, I honestly believe, is a conservative estimate. In other words about the length of the Bible or seven or eight modern novels. It would have been noteworthy if it had been an instance of an ordinary adventure story, but where the author had to let his imagination run riot, it was surely a stupendous feat on the part of the man we old-timers prefer to remember as David Goodwin.

The opening scenes of "Britain Invaded" were laid at Greyfriars School. This less famous Greyfriars was situated in Essex, two miles from Frinton Gap, with Clacton a little way to the south, and the hills round Colchester way out westward. It was a great day for the old school for Lord Roberts, (that famous General who was so convinced that war with Germany was coming) was inspecting the Cadet Corps.

The old warrior had some complimentary things to say about a maxim gun which had been presented to the school by Aubrey Harcourt Villiers, one of the seniors, usually known as "Sam Seick".

That gun was soon in action for almost immediately after Lord Roberts' inspection, some of the German fleet appeared off that part of the coast. The boys of that Essex Greyfriars did their duty as nobly as Harry Wharton & Co. would have done if the Germans had waited a year or two and landed in Kent. The little maxim gun did quite a lot of damage, but, of course, could not sink the whole German Fleet and soon the old school and the surrounding district was in

the hands of the invader.

From then on it was one hundred per cent action, with never a dull moment. The two heroes, 'Sam' Villiers and his younger brother Stephen, did many a deed of doughty valour on land and sea, sufficient for each to win a V.C. with a dozen bars. They even got into the hands of the Kaiser, who was over here in person.

Some of the large front page pictures by 'Val' were really striking; the one appearing on 10th November, 1906, for instance. It showed a scene on London Bridge and carried the caption "There was a loud explosion under the arch and then an appalling crash. The entire arch leaped upwards in a blinding flash of flame, and huge masses of masonry were driven in all directions as the great bridge was torn asunder."

For by that time the German hordes had reached London and there was desperate fighting in the streets. Highgate, Islington and Clerkenwell were in the hands of the enemy and there were graphic descriptions of battles in the City with attacks on the Bank of England, the Royal Exchange and the Mansion House, blood running in the gutters of Cannon Street and many other famous streets.

When "Britain at Bay" started on 24th November, 1906, the key positions in London and the greater part of southern England were in German hands. Apparently it had only taken a fortnight, though the story had been running six months.

With the opening of this second part Sam Villiers is looking out over London with a pair of field glasses and the reader was told:

"There were many sights that would have puzzled a visitor returning to the great city after an absence. The dome of St. Paul's would have seemed to him out of shape. One side of it was crushed in, as if it were a gigantic egg that had been struck with a giant spoon. Another landmark was the clock tower of Big Ben. Right down to the great clock-face itself the top had been shored away.

The chimneys of the tall Hotel Cecil were for the most part, mere jagged stumps - the great windows of the House of Commons were smashed in, and as for the minor buildings, far and wide, the wreckage amongst them was amazing."

Well, that was written in a boys' paper in 1906, and we know too well that years on, say on New Years Day 1941 anyone could have taken a pair of field glasses and surveyed a scene of similar devastation. The ruin had come by a different method, but if anything the destruction would be seen to be more appalling than even David Goodwin had visualised. True, St. Pauls escaped but only by a miracle on that December night when London burned and, come to think of it, was there anything more exciting in a fiction story than that dramatic, hair-raising dash to Hackney Marshes through the streets of London with that delayed action bomb discovered in St. Pauls after that night of horror?

After a run of no less than forty-three weeks, and at least 300,000 words, "Britain at Bay" came to an end, with the invader beaten and the Kaiser a prisoner, but at a cost of 400,000 British lives and a great part of the country in ruins.

"Britain's Revenge" opened like this:

"On the afternoon of August 10th, 1909, the flags were flying upon every

staff that would hold one throughout the City of London. From every church that was not in ruins, the populace was filing out after attending, in deep gratitude, the thanksgiving services that followed upon the news that the British forces had triumphed at last over the German invader who for so many months had dominated England.

The awful signs of the conflict that had raged were still plain to see. The wrecked buildings and gaping rents in the walls of houses told of the recently ended struggle, where the newly-armed millions of London had overwhelmed the Kaiser's troops and the gutters were still dark with blood."

But the trouble was by no means over. At the Peace Conference Germany had the audacity to hurl defiance, in fact dictate her terms - Britain to pay an indemnity of £60,000,000; to surrender Rhodesia, the Transvaal and Natal to Germany, and a few other items. Needless to say the British Lion roared a furious negative.

Into the picture comes John Carfax, the eccentric inventor with his flying machine, the 'Condor', which though not a 'gas-bag' but a big box-kite looking affair is termed an 'airship'. Carfax, accompanied by Stephen and Sam, flies to Berlin with his own terms. These being refused, he destroys the royal palace of Potsdam and a German arsenal. They then learn that a British brigade has landed at Husum and is being hard pressed, so they fly to the rescue. Carfax vows to bomb Berlin, but General Blake, who is in command of the British forces, points out that it would be in opposition to the rules of war and urges Carfax to stick to the laws of the nations. I wonder if, from the shades, dear old General Blake has heard of the atom bomb! However, Carfax reluctantly agrees and decides to use his machine for the gentler, if less exciting duty of aerial scouting. But they get the excitement nevertheless, for there's fighting with German Zeppelin type airships, with a daring attempt by one of the latter to rescue the Kaiser from the Tower of London. No. 339, December 7th, 1907, devotes its front page to a dramatic picture in Val's very best style showing the 'Condor' throwing one searchlight on the Tower and another on the German airship with the caption, "The Escape from the Tower!" The Condor's searchlight dwelt on the lower end of the rope-ladder, and showed a man hanging by his hands and grasping the cross-cords with his feet. "Great Scott!" cried Stephe. "They're pulling him up with a Jacob's ladder."

Yes, there were any amount of thrills in the story even if it was a 'gentleman's war.'

Well, needless to say Germany at long last was brought to her knees and peace reigned over Europe once more. Sam and Stephen Villiers were given the decorations they had truly earned.

"A World at War"

"The Scourge of the Skies"

Author: Andrew Gray

Following the example of the "Boys Friend" the "Boys Herald" published a couple of invasion stories. "A World at War" started in June 1908 and ran until November. It was followed immediately by "The Scourge of the Skies" which continued until early in 1909. They were written by Andrew Gray, an author about whose identity we know nothing.

In writing these two stories it was evident he had made a close study of

"Britain Invaded" and its sequels, but he was no John Tregellis. Today I can read an instalment of "Britain Invaded" with as much enjoyment as when it first appeared, but I can't say the same for "A World at War". It is difficult to explain why; he had the valuable help of 'Val' for the illustration, and there were many of the same situations, but somehow Andrew Gray failed to hold one's interest.

The hero was Jack Stornoway, a "brilliant inventor of a silent and smokeless gun". Instead of the Greyfriars Cadets of "Britain Invaded", Andrew Gray brought in the St. Osyth's Cycle Corps. Britain was fighting Germany and a few other countries, and once again poor old Colchester, Frinton, Walton and other places Essex way were having a rough time.

As I have told, Lord Roberts went down to inspect the Greyfriars Cadets in John Tregellis' story, but Andrew Gray went one better for the St. Osyth's Cycle Corps had the honour of being visited by King Edward the Seventh.

But we must give Andrew Gray his due: he did give a new twist to the story - a remarkable one in its way. Hard pressed by many foes Britain was buoyed up with the hope that a powerful ally was hastening to its help - Japan. Alas! the 'little yellow men' committed a diabolical act of treachery and were added to our enemies. The rest of the story dealt mainly with the battles against the hordes from the Land of the Rising Sun. One wonders what made Andrew Gray think of Japan as an enemy, for the treachery of Pearl Harbour and all it led to was afar off in the distant future. During the Russo-Japanese war a few years before the time of these stories, we all talked about the 'gallant little Japs' and every errand boy whistled "Good-bye, my Little Yo-San".

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THE PERIL TO COME

Author: SIDNEY DREW

"The Peril to Come" started in No. 408, The "Boys' Friend" April 3rd, 1909. No author's name was given but undoubtedly it was by Sidney Drew. He was an author who wrote many fine adventure stories, but "The Peril to Come" was not one of his best. Once again the inhabitants of this tight little island woke up one morning to find the armies of a foreign country had landed on our shores much more easily than a Channel swimmer arrived at Dover from Calais. And again the enemy was Germany. The editor had a good deal to say in his chat the week the story started, about the danger the country was in, but "The Peril to Come" was never given the boosting "Britain Invaded" had had three years earlier. It was given the front page once or twice then relegated to less prominent parts of the paper.

The heroes were Nick Ferns, Val Vallance and Sir Clifford Asterley, Bart. When the story opened they were having a holiday cruising round the East Coast, aboard a fishing smack, the "Dainty Dora". They land on Dandy Island with the idea of shooting a few rabbits, but soon find it swarming not with rabbits but Germans. The boys are captured and the Kaiser's men cross to the mainland. In less time than it takes to tell, as Maxwell Scott used to say the British fleet has been destroyed, Portsmouth has fallen and the enemy is advancing on London. The three boys succeed in escaping, and, of course, go on to perform numerous doughty deeds.

Zeppelins played a prominent part in "The Peril to Come". On the front page of No. 419 there was a vivid picture, drawn by A.H. Clarke, and taking up the

whole page, depicting one landing on the Thames by the House of Commons. Just a few years later Zepps did come down in England, but usually in flames and not from choice. Remember Potter's Bar?

In 1909 I bought the "Boys Friend" each week at a shop right opposite a big red brick building into which could be seen going men of military bearing. As I passed by daily I little thought I was destined to spend many years within its walls, and that in a little room I should take telephone calls by candle-light whilst Zeppelins dropped bombs in the near vicinity. No I looked upon "The Peril to Come" as just another interesting story and never thought of taking its title seriously.

This particular instalment (No. 419) did see into the future with quite remarkable accuracy. Listen to this:

"The Zeppelins were not doing well. Every instant the wind increased. It veared and blew clear from the south - a real, blustering gale.

Within twenty-four hours, of the ninety-four Zeppelins that had boasted that they held London at their mercy, only three escaped. Many were wrecked; others descended only to be destroyed by an infuriated populace, and the sea claimed others. It was all a dreadful fiasco.

The wild dream was over. Any vessel lighter than air was an absurdity. No engine that man could contrive could make such a machine master of the elements."

Well those old enough to remember know that is almost exactly what did happen, though not as many ever came in one raid as pictured by Mr. Drew.

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"BRITAIN'S DEFENDER"

Author: F. St. Mars.

Now to "Pluck". In that paper in 1910 appeared a number of long complete stories followed after an interval by a serial under the above title. A special matter of interest concerned the author. Until comparatively recently "F. St. Mars" was something of a mystery, then that ace researcher of ours, Walter Webb revealed that the initial stood for "Florrie" which seemed to make it evident that this writer was of the feminine gender. To those familiar with the work of F. St. Mars this was a real surprise, which is added to when one examines the stories I am dealing with here. They took quite a different line to the usual 'war of the future' stuff they dealt mainly with action at sea, and were extremely well written. In saying this I am not attempting to have a 'dig' at a woman trying to poach on a man's preserve but simply because one does not usually find a woman writing of naval warfare with knowledge, especially in the days long before we had ever heard of 'Wrens'.

Anyway, Walter has invariably been right so we will take it without question that here a feminine hand had been at work. Lets survey what it did.

The complete stories, which started in January 1910, ran to over 20,000 words each, and were given a new title each week. They were illustrated by Leonard Shields, one of the drawings appearing on the cover, making "Pluck" of that period look very attractive. Some of the titles were "The Lightning Flash"; "Kings of the Surge"; "The War-Makers' Plot"; "The Smoke Puff"; "The Armed Tramps"; "Plot and Counterplot"; "War on the High Seas"; "The Aerial Peril"; and "The Master Stroke".

The first story "The Lightning Flash" opens by telling how Reggie Horton, apprentice engineer, finds himself on board a destroyer which has been built by his own firm Garland and Jelf and is the latest and fastest thing afloat. He is somewhat puzzled when it is challenged by a battleship the "Venerable" and ordered to "heave to". He makes the acquaintance of a mysterious individual Commander Henry Leyland Norman and a Dr. Roland Matherson. The latter explains that the Commander, man of great intellect, courage and above all a patriot is convinced that the Government is asleep and blissfully unaware of the fact that Germany is plotting war. The Commander aware that the "Lightning Flash" was about to be taken over by the Admiralty stole a march on them by getting a crew together himself, coolly presented himself at the ship-yard and took over the destroyer before the arrival of the official crew. He then set to sea. In doing so they ran down Reggie Horton's boat and then rescued him. The doctor further explained that the Commander's intention was to gradually add the very latest improvements to the destroyer, make it the most powerful vessel on the high seas and devote his life to thwarting the sinister plotting of the German Kaiser and his underlings. Reggie Horton agrees to join in, he hasn't much choice really, and soon finds himself experiencing some hair-raising adventures. The British Government, of course, does not approve of the methods of the daring Commander, so that he finds himself hunted by his country's Navy, and becomes known as a modern pirate.

Reggie asks the doctor if he thinks war with Germany is likely and this is the reply he gets:

"Do I believe? Good heavens, man, what do you think we are risking our lives for? Aren't we trying to give these blind people here a weapon such as has not yet been dreamt of? Britain ought to have something up her sleeve in case of war, something secret. She has nothing and Germany has two or three nice little inventions she is keeping dark. We are going to be that something up the sleeve, whether Britain likes it or not. At the present moment the Emperor is discussing "peaceful proposals" with President Taft and King Edward at Windsor. That is the method of German diplomacy....."

All of which would make it appear that Lord Northcliffe looked upon papers like "Pluck" as something more than just penny weeklies for the amusement of boys.

Now here's a description of a fight at sea written by this mysterious Florrie St. Mars. It is taken from "The Armed Tramps".

"It was true. Throughout that monumental dash not a shot was fired by the Lightning Flash. She raced it out almost in silence - not quite. She became a centre of shell bursting and otherwise; a pin, as it were, in some huge Catherine wheel, a halo of stars and spume, and upflung towers of water and spray. Yet because of her speed, quite nine out of every ten shells fell behind her, some only just behind, but still behind. You cannot train men to fire at a target travelling at a speed twice as fast as that to which they have been used, in a minute or two. The German officers found that out. One shell only aimed sufficiently far ahead would have hit the Lightning Flash, but because you cannot find one man in a thousand whose eye is not ensnared by a quickly moving mark, because not one man in a thousand will fire at the air in front of, instead of at the target itself, because of this the Lightning Flash still held her course.

The thunder of guns became then one continuous roar, one awful unbroken,

rolling crash, but that cloud of spray which marked the Lightning Flash held on. Men lined along the rails of the Thunder Bolt held their breath. Sweat poured from more than one forehead. Some shouted encouragement and advice as if the Lightning Flash was alongside. And all the time the muffled thuds which marked the firing of torpedoes dotted the infernal din of the German guns like punctuation marks."

Not bad descriptive, writing for a woman in the days years before her sex got the right to vote, and their place was considered to be in the home.

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Kaiser or King
The Flying Armada

Author: John Tregellis

Four years after the conclusion of "Britain's Revenge" in the Boys' Friend, John Tregellis wrote two more serials for the same paper.

The first "Kaiser or King" started in April or May, 1912, and ran until August 17th (No. 584) and on the same day "The Flying Armada" started. By that time, of course, Bleriot had flown the Channel and in Lord Northcliffe's picturesque phrase "Britain was no longer an island". Gustave Hamel, Colonel Cody, Jules Vedrines, Graham White, and other daring pioneers of the air were giving the boys of the period glorious thrills as they flew at 60 miles or so in their biplanes and monoplanes, as they were called, so naturally flying played a prominent part in boys' stories of the day. "Kaiser or King" and "The Flying Armada", the latter especially, as the title implies, were no exception.

In these two particular stories the youthful heroes were Jimmy Daggers and Dan Stafford, members of the Curlew Patrol of the Easthaven Boys Scouts, and like their predecessors, the Villiers brothers, they performed wonderful deeds of derring-do against the German hordes, for once again the Kaiser's minions had landed on the luckless counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex, whilst Britain slept. Once more they advanced rapidly on London and Hyde Park, the Green Park and St. James's became the sites of huge German encampments and as had happened a few years earlier 'the dome of St. Pauls looked like a breakfast egg that had had a spoon stuck in it'. The twin turrets of the Tower of London too, were mere stumps of broken masonry. For compensation, though, the Union Jack still flew defiantly at the top of Nelson's Column.

South of the river in Southwark, Bermondsey, and along the Jamaica Road scurvy aliens and a few renegade Englishmen tried to stir up trouble and demand peace. The war spreads, and there's desperate fighting round the Stratford Road, Old Ford and the Bromley High Street. Then at long last the invaders are beaten and the German Fleet sent to the sea bed, but only at a cost of a million British lives.

But that's not the end for there arrives the new Armada, the Armada of the Air. To the rescue comes the Farringdon brothers with their own little fleet of British aeroplanes. Followed, in miniature, a foretaste of what was to happen thirty years later, a Battle of Britain with German aircraft crashing near Cannon Street Station and other London streets. Uncanny in some ways how this fertile-brained author visualised the future and in no way exaggerating. In fact, when it did come the air battles were on a much vaster scale. John Tregellis was satisfied to tell of 'planes speeding through the skies at the incredible speed of over a hundred and twenty miles and hour. "it sounded like the Arabian Nights"

said he. His Farrington brothers, too, had invented "an aeroplane gun, which mounted on a motor-car, could hit and destroy a flying machine a couple of miles away as certainly as a sportsman could shoot a partridge."

With the enemy driven from the old country once again, the war was transferred to the continent where battles galore were fought by land and air but space forbids going into all that.

With victory came a demand for the handing over of German East Africa, the Cameroons, naval coaling stations and indemnities. John Tregellis, author of boys' stories writing history well in advance.

These two serials were re-published in the Boys' Friend Library (1st series) as follows:-

231. Kaiser or King; 233. The Conquest of London; 236. The Flying Armada; 239. The Emperor of the Air.

I can assure you they make thrilling and fascinating reading - if you are lucky enough to get hold of them.

* * * * *

WHILE BRITAIN SLEPT

Author: Reginald Wray

This story appeared in the Boys' Herald, starting towards the end of 1911. As I possess only one or two odd instalments I cannot say much about it, but an introduction told the reader:

"Britain was doomed! So said, so hoped, her countless enemies. Whilst those at the head of affairs wasted their time squabbling over unimportant details of domestic government, our enemies had been preparing the blows which struck at Britain's very heart.

The Germans, taking advantage of the fact that a rebellion - even worse than the one in '57 - had broken out in India, despatched an army of a million to the shores of England.

Sweeping through Kent, they are victorious until they are brought to bay by the British Army under Lord Roberts."

Once again the hero was a Boy Scout, Dick Halliday of the "Otter" Patrol. Promotion seems to have been rapid for the youngster for on being sent by Lord Roberts to Sandringham to inform King George of the victory in the Battle of Deptford he is made a colonel by the king himself. Later he meets General Abington, a stern old soldier of 'the spit and pipeclay school'. The general asks him for his name and Dick answers proudly "Colonel Halliday". "Who made you a colonel?" growls the general and shuts up promptly on receiving the reply "The King, no longer ago than this morning," and straight away is made General Abington's aide-de-camp!

The story followed the usual formula, terrific fighting against heavy odds, boys performing deeds of valour, Britain finally triumphant and the invaders driven into the sea.

---ooOoo---

"THE LEGIONS OF THE KAISER"
"THE MAILED FIST"

Author: John Tregellis

A notable fact about "The Legions of the Kaiser" was that it started in the "Boys' Friend" about two months before the First Great War actually broke

out, once again proving the remarkable foresight of the clever author who for this purpose wrote under the pen-name 'John Tregellis'. As the elder generation remember few people would believe in June 1914 that very shortly the greatest war in history was to burst upon the world.

At the time there was great unrest and serious trouble in Ireland over Home Rule and the opening scenes in "The Legions of the Kaiser" were laid in the Emerald Isle.

The hero of the story was Roy Kildare, "the young Squire of Donaghkilty" who had let his country estate to Harvey Dunster, an Irish American, "who arrives to find Ulstermen and Nationalists ready to fly at each others throats" to quote the author.

He had hardly time to look round before the soldiers of the Kaiser swoop down on Ireland. Both Nationalists and Ulsterites at first think it is a force sent over from England to subdue them and both sides arm themselves. Roy Kildare warns them of the true state of affairs just in time, and the rival forces of Ireland forget their grievances against each other and combine against the common foe.

Well the Kaiser's hordes never did actually land in Ireland of course, but some of us can recall that dramatic scene in the House of Commons when John Redmond, the Irish leader rose one night and declared that until Germany was beaten the Home Rule controversy was forgotten, again making John Tregellis a true prophet.

"The Boys' Friend", of course, went to press several weeks in advance, and it was therefore some time before news of the real war with Germany was mentioned in the paper. It obviously meant a revision of the plot of "The Legions of the Kaiser". John Tregellis was capable of dealing with the situation. Skilfully he described the defeat of the Kaiser's hordes in Britain and on September 19th the story finished with these words:

"Victory!" cried Roy with a catch in his throat, and the two comrades in arms clasped hands. "Ireland is rid of them, Scotland's saved from them, and she'll stamp her own invaders into the earth. It's a blow at the Kaiser's heart."

"Roy," cried Dunster, "as sure as I live within a few days you Britishers will carry the flag into Germany! It's the beginning of the end!"

Well it took rather more than a few days but we got there eventually.

In that same issue (No. 693) "The Mailed Fist" started with all the fighting moved to the Continent.

There also appeared that week some interesting comments by John Tregellis himself under the heading "An Author Who Foretold the War". He told of some exciting adventures he had experienced on the Continent, on one occasion being taken for a spy in Belgium.

He also stated that a fortnight before the declaration of war he wrote to the editor of the Boys' Friend saying he firmly believed a conflagration was very near and predicted the siege of Liege and the French raid on Mulhausen. The editor wrote back and advised him to apply for a job on Old Moore's Almanac!

Well in fairness to that editor, Hamilton Edwards, most of us who were living in the middle of July 1914 would have made the same comment.

Published in the Boys' Friend Library:

No. 285 - The Legions of the Kaiser; 295 - The Mailed Fist; 300 - With The Allies Flag.

* * * * *

(This review of invasion stories was written for last year's Annual, but it had to be held over. I confined myself to the yarns which appeared in the Boys' Friend and Boys' Herald and a story which appeared in "Chips", because I knew them best and had the material. But several interesting stories appeared in Chums. Peard Sutherland, who owned a complete set of those scarlet-clad volumes, kindly consented to write a review of these particular stories. Unfortunately his work appears posthumously, for he died before it could appear in print. - H.L.)

* * * * *

Six "CHUMS" Invasion Stories

By the late PEARD SUTHERLAND

Between April, 1908, and the outbreak of the first German war in 1914, the once popular boys' periodical, CHUMS, ran no less than six serial stories on the "Britain invaded" theme, all written by Captain Frank H. Shaw. They were exciting, well-told stories by a capable craftsman, illustrated by such perennial favourites as Paul Hardy, Fred Bennett and Harry Lane. While the stories had their own fictional heroes, Shaw and his publishers, Cassell & Co., had no hesitation in introducing real people, including royalty, into the thick of the adventures. King Edward VII, King George V, Admiral Beresford, Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener all played prominent parts, adding much to the realism of the yarns.

Captain Shaw made his bow as a writer for CHUMS in 1907, and was a prolific and popular contributor thereafter. During the six-year span when he wrote the invasion stories, he also wrote 11 other serials and scads of short stories for the same publication. His by-line usually carried his own name, but sometimes he wrote as "Frank Cleveland" or "Grenville Hammerton". Shaw, it should be said, was no mere armchair observer. A seaman of the old school, he began his career on a sailing ship and rose to the rank of captain in the merchant service. In World War I he had the unique distinction of serving in all three major services -- the Army, the Navy and the Royal Flying Corps. Captain Shaw not only wrote adventure; he lived it.

The first of Captain Shaw's great war stories was "The Peril of the Motherland". This was in the volume for 1908 and ran from April 22 to September 9 of that year. The foe was Russia. The story opened with a ding-dong naval battle -- one British ship against 10 Russian -- and introduced its hero, a young midshipman named Jack Tremont. Also prominent in the story were Jack's brother, Ted, and his father, Sir Edward Tremont, inventor of a combined submarine and airship, "The Duck," which figured extensively in the plot. As the serial closed, Jack had won the V.C. and was commanding a battleship, but Britain had not fared so well. After a terrific bombardment by airships, London had fallen to a Russian army.

If you read CHUMS as an annual, you had to wait a whole year for Britain to strike back (in the volume for 1909). But readers of the weekly had cause

for rejoicing in just seven days, when the sequel, "The Vengeance of the Motherland," began. The Tremont family, stoutly backed by the Army under Kitchener and the Navy under Beresford, proved too much for the Russians in this one, and all ended happily in the issue of May 19, 1909, with our hero, Jack Tremont, a knight and an admiral. The "Motherland" stories were illustrated by Fred Bennett.

As "Frank Cleveland," Shaw gave CHUMS readers the first of another two-serial war series in 1910. The yarn was called "The Great Mutiny of 1911," and ran from June 8, 1910, to September 7, 1910. There was a general uprising of Asiatic races against Britain, main events taking place in India. The heroes were Jack Collingwood, an officer in a native Indian regiment, and his brother, Cyril. The story ended with India wrested from British rule.

The actual invasion did not come until the sequel, "The Terror from the East," appeared. In the 1911 volume, it ran from September 14, 1910, to February 1, 1911. Shaw wrote the sequel under his own name. The Asiatic war continued, with both Japan and China now lining up against Britain. The Japs were the invaders, making surprise landing at St. Ives, Cornwall. There were a number of heroes, depending on the shifting scenes of action -- but the Collingwood brothers were still doing their bit in India, and at sea the spotlight was on a midshipman, Jack Mervyn. A novelty was that most of Mervyn's adventures were related in extracts from letters to his mother. King George V commanded the fleet that eventually whipped the Japs, and Lord Roberts led the victorious British Army. Both of these serials were illustrated by Paul Hardy.

The German threat arrived for CHUMS readers in the issue of October 19, 1912 (annual for 1913), with Captain Shaw's "The Swoop of the Eagle," illustrated by Harry Lane. It was introduced with an editorial note: "This story is not intended to stir up race hatred, but is written as a true picture of what would happen if a great Continental nation attacked our country." Hero of the story, Sergeant Dick Reynolds, of the O.T.C., had a very busy time of it, his feats including saving the life of King George V and capturing the Kaiser. The story concluded on March 29, 1913, with Dick a V.C. and promoted to the rank of major on his seventeenth birthday.

Soon the Germans were at it again. "Lion's Teeth and Eagle's Claws" commenced on December 13, 1913, and ran to April 25, 1914. It was an appropriate story for the 1914 annual. Paul Hardy illustrated only the first instalment of this serial, Harry Lane carrying on thereafter. Heroes of the story were the Carrington brothers, Gerald (a cripple), of the Royal Flying Corps, and Roy, of the Navy, who led these respective services to victory.

Then the real war came and Captain Shaw, emulating his various heroes of fiction, played his part in saving Britain. Stout fellow, Captain Frank H. Shaw!

* * * * *

Well, there's some record compiled, by necessity, at odd moments over several months, of some of the "invasion" stories written for boys in the days before world wars were known. Fiction, yes, but here and there a shrewd foretelling of the future. Exaggeration? No! For, when the real thing came the slaughter, the destruction, the horrors and the misery were greater than anything described in these yarns of the long ago. And none of those who wrote them visualised the frightful fate of a Japanese city one August day.



FIVE STALWARTS OF THE LONDON O.B.B.C. WATCHING BILLY BUNTER ON TELEVISION

From left to right: BEN WHITER, BOB WHITER, LEN PACKMAN, CHARLIE WRIGHT
and BOB BLYTHE

WHO'S WHO

Compiled by HERBERT LECKENBY

* * * * *

Again we have managed to get as much information into two pages as we used to get into three, thanks to our present publishers not wasting a single inch of space.

A considerable number of regulars failed to send in their Questionnaire forms. I have done my best to get them in, but if any are missing I hope they won't blame me, for it honestly is a formidable job.

Again there are several new names, indicated with an asterisk, and quite a number of changes of address.

Old Boys' Book Club Branches: London (L); Northern (N); Midland (M); Merseyside (Mer).

Here are the Groups:-

1. Victoria Papers; 2. Early 20th Century; 3. Aldines; 4. Captain, Boys' Own Paper, Chums and similar papers; 5. "Hamilton" Papers, (a) Magnet, (b) Gem, (c) Penny Popular, (d) Schoolboys' Own Lib., (e) Holiday Annuals; 6. Sexton Blake (a) Union Jack, (b) Sexton Blake Lib., (c) Detective Weekly; 7. Nelson Lee (a) Nelson Lee Library, (b) Monster Library; 8. Between Two Wars (Champion, Thriller, Ranger etc.); 9. Comics; 10. Schoolgirls' Own Library, School Friend, Schoolgirls' Weekly, etc.

Collectors' favourites appear in order of preference.

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*ADAM, BASIL, 28 Derwent Road, West Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. Laboratory Assistant in Chemistry. Group 5 (a), (d), (e). Has been collecting Magnets for one year and has already those for 1934, 1935, 1938, and 1939, also part of 1936, all thanks to C.L. Lettley, of Bristol.

ADDISON, JOHN, R., 319 Long Lane, East Finchley, London, N.2. (L). Group 5 (all).

ADLEY, DEREK, 19, Braithwaite Gardens, Stanmore, Middlesex. (Age 27). Groups 5 (a), (b), (d); 7 (a); 5(c), (e); 7 (b); 6(b). Requires comics published by Amalgamated Press, Chips, Joker, Butterfly, etc., between 1930-40. Would appreciate help from other collectors in compiling titles lists of the old papers.

ALLEN, LEONARD, M., 3 Montgomery Drive, Sheffield, 7. (N). (Age 48). Groups 4; 6; 7; 9. Requires old comic papers. Many items for exchange. Nelson Lee Library No. 357 required.

ALLISON, GERALD, 7 Summerfield Gardens, Bramley, Leeds, 13. (N). Department Manager. Groups 5 (all); 2; 9; 3; 4; 6 (all) (cont'd page 135...)

- Wants "Chatterbox Annuals" 1900 and 1921. "Young Folks Tales" with King Pippin stories 1911 to 1914. "The Prize" for 1909 and 1910. Jack North Haygarth "Pluck" and "B.F.L's". Hopes the "Collectors' Digest" will reach its No. 1,000. Thinks "that grand magazine" and the O.B.B.C. are the greatest joys in life!
- ALLISON, MOLLIE, 29, Eden Crescent, Leeds, 4. (N). (Age 37). Bank Clerk. Groups 5 (a); (d); (e); (b); 10.
- ADSLEY, G.R., 17 Abergarw Road, Brynmenyn, Bridgend, Glam. (Age 31). Building and Decorating Contractor. Group 5 (a), (b). Has a small collection of Magnets and Gems only, each year represented, including nearly all Xmas and Xmas series numbers. Nearly always has the popular papers for sale and exchange.
- ARMITAGE, TOM, 205, Batley Road, Alverthorpe, Wakefield, Yorkshire. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a); 9. Would like to obtain: Film papers, 1914-21; any Comics, 1914-16; "Boys Friend" Weekly, 1915-18; "The Scout" between Spring 1916 and Summer 1917; "Chatterbox Annual" 1914, and anything January 1920. Also 1st series "Young Britain".
- AUCKLAND, CHARLES KENNETH, 20 Chiltern Road, Sheffield, 6. (N). Groups 7 (a), (b); 5 (all).
- BAKER, ANTHONY, P., Christ Church Vicarage, Barnet, Herts. (L). (Age 16). School-boy. Groups 5 (a); 4; 5 (e),(b),(d); 6 (b). Collection of "B.O.P's." and "Chums" has risen to 20 and 10 volumes respectively. Open to offer of these and pre-1932 Magnets.
- BAKER, CHARLES, G., 7 Marine Terrace, Waterloo Port, Caervarnon. Groups - All.
- BANKS, CYRIL, 42 Rose Terrace, Calton Street, Huddersfield. (N). (Age 45). Wages Clerk. Groups 7 (a); 5 (b), (a); 6 (a), (b).
- BARTLETT, HENRY JOB HANSFORD, Peas Hill, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset. Hire Car Proprietor. Groups 5(a),(b),(c); 7 (b), 5 (e), 1. 2. 3. 10 (for daughter). Wants Boys' Friend 3d & 4d Libraries and Greyfriars Schoolboys' Own. Has a number of Comics to dispose of.
- BEARDSSELL, FREDERICK CLIFFORD, "Plymstock," Ross Avenue, Davenport, Stockport, Cheshire. (N). (Age 50). Master Window Cleaner. Group 5(a), (d), (b).
- BELLFIELD, J.F., 24 Grainger's Lane, Cradley Heath, Staffs. (M). Groups 5(a),(d), (e),(b),(c); 7 (a),(b); 6 (b). Keenly interested in Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rookwood stories. Thinks Greyfriars leaves all others well behind.
- BENNETT, RAYMOND V., 64, Dudley Road, Tipton, Staffs. (L). (Age 38). Chief Clerk. Groups 5(a); 7(a); 6(b); 5(b).
- BENTLEY, J. BREEZE, 4 Grenfell Drive, Bradford Moor, Bradford, Yorks. (N). Group 5(a),(b),(d). Chairman, Northern Section O.B.B.C.
- BLIGHT, EDWARD, "Treneglos," 12, Trevarthian Road, St. Austell, Cornwall. (Age 53). Retired Engineer. Groups 3; 5 (a),(b),(e); 6 (a),(c); 7; 8 (Thriller). Still hoping to get Marvel No. 393. Also interested in Boys' Friend 3d Lib.
- BLYTHE, ROBERT CHARLES, 46, Carleton Road, Holloway, London, N.7. (L). (Age 40). Assistant Stock-keeper. Groups 7(a); 5(a); 6 (E.S. Brooks stories only). Co-founder London Old Boys' Book Club.

- BOND, HERBERT MAURICE, 10 Erw Wen, Rhiwrina, Cardiff. (Age 42). Group 6 (all).
- BOTTOMLEY, FREDERICK, A. 48, Downhills Park Road, Tottenham, London, N.17. (Age 47). Groups 5 (a),(d); 7 (a); 5 (c),(e),(b); 4; 6 (b),(a); 3.
- BRADSHAW, W.H., 227 West 88th Street, Los Angeles, Cal. U.S.A. Group 6 (all).
- BRANTON, W. LESLIE, 63 Thoresby Street, Hull, Yorkshire. (L). Commercial Artist. Group 5 (a),(e). Is extremely anxious to contact someone who has a spare copy of Magnet No. 925.
- BRETHEERTON, T.P.Rheskin, Nr. Chorley, Lancs. Groups 2; 1; 9.
- BRIGGS, S.C. GODFREY, The Dispensary, Public Hospital, Rotorua, New Zealand. (Age 60). Hospital Dispenser. Groups 5(a),(d), 4 (Chums, Captain); 6 (a); 9 (Chips).
- BROMLEY, GEORGE, "Holeywell," Estoria Avenue, Wigston Magna, Leicester. (L). (Age 33). Trade Union Officer. Groups 5(a),(b),(d),(c),(e); 7(a).
- *BROSTER, WILLIA, HENRY, Primrose Cottage, Stone Lane, Kinver, Stourbridge, Worcs. (N). (Mid). (Age 49). Proprietor Sheetmetal & Panel Beating Business. Groups 5(d); 6(b),(a),(c); 5(a),(b),(e). Hobbies: Reading and gardening, besides all sports. New collector, specially interested in Jack North's Wycliffe and Haygarth stories. "Yvonne" and "Roxana" Sexton Blake stories. Also Christmas numbers Magnet, Gems, Boys' Friends, etc.
- BROWN, RAYMOND, E., 54 Longreach Road, Liverpool, 14. (Mer). (Age 27). Groups 5 (all), 6 (all); 8; 9.
- *BUSH, JOHN WILLIAM ALFRED, 32 Walden Avenue, Chislehurst, Kent. (Age 43). G.P.O. Telephone Mechanic. Groups 5(a); 7(a); 5(b); 6(a). A newcomer to O.B.B. after an interval of 30 years. Collection at the moment small, about 60 Gems, Magnets, etc. Intends to make main collection Magnets and would like to hear from anyone interested in the hobby. All letters answered.
- BURROW, RONALD, "Burrowmede," 164 High Street, Yeadon, Leeds. (Age 44). Market Gardener. Groups 7(a); 8; 5(b); 2. Wanted: Nelson Lees (old series) 17,30, 78,107,114. S.O.L. 4. Union Jacks: 777,794,806,807,810. Gems: 1023,1024. Marvel: Vol. 1. (1894).
- BYRNE, F.G., 40 Whitebarn Lane, Dagenham, Essex. (Age 29). Schoolmaster. Group 5(a),(d),(b),(e),(c). Requires C.D. Annual No. 1 and C.D. No. 11. Any Group 5 books in reasonable condition at reasonable prices.
- *CARBIN, IDRIS, A., 22 Wentworth Road, Overslade Estate, Rugby, Warwicks. (Age 34.) M/C. Tool Setter. Groups 5(a),(b),(d),(e); 7(a); 6(b); 8. Collection consists of 100 Magnets, 50 Gems, 60 Nelson Lees, 50 S.O.L's., 50 B.F.L's., 30 S.B.L's., (3rd series), Modern Boys, Detective Weeklies, Holiday Annuals etc.
- CARTER, ERNEST, CHARLES, 2 Cooper Street, Kingsford, N.S.W., Australia. (Age 43). Clerk, Central Registry Dept. of Army. Groups 7(a),(b) and Nugget Library (A.P.); 5 (a),(b); 6(a),(b); 4 (Chums and Captain only); 5 (e),(d). Still requires Nelson Lees 1915-16 to complete set. Will pay good price for them. Also Sexton Blake first series and Union Jacks 1894-1916.
- CASE, FRANK, 4 Dee Street, Liverpool, 6. (Mer.). (Age 48). Groups 5(a); 1; 5(b), (c); 2; 3. Hon. Sec. and Co-Founder Merseyside Section O.B.B.C.
- CHAMPION, WILLIAM, 13 Drayton Road, Reading Berks. (Age 45). Manager, Engineering Works. Groups 5(b); 7 (a); 5 (a).
- CHAMBERS, W.E., 83 Orme Road, Bangor, North Wales. (Age 35). Porter (S. Aston & Sons Ltd.). Groups All. (10 Girls Own Paper only).

RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RO

FOR SALE: Magnets, 1917-40, also another complete mint run 1933-40; Gems, 1918-40; Holiday Annuals, 1923-31; Populars; 1917-29; Nelson Lees, over 600 mint numbers, 1924-33; Marvels, 1916-24; Schoolboys' Own Libraries; Modern Boys, 300 mint numbers; Sexton Blake Libraries, 2nd and 3rd series; Union Jacks, 1905-30; Young Britains; Bullseyes; Surprises; Boys' Friends; Boys' Realms; Pilots; Jack's Paper (mint set); Sexton Blake Annuals; Aldine Robin Hoods; Dick Turpins; Buffalo Bills 1914-30; Over 100 Nos. Punch; 46 vols. Wide Worlds, early mint vols. Captain; Chatterbox; Black & White; Boys' Own Paper; Vanity Fair; Collectors' Digest: pre-war Picturegoers; Crime Fiction; Aviation; Stage; Motoring; Photography; Rare old Books; Railway; Humourous; American; Science; Occult; Old Prints; Cookery Books; Horse Riding; Sport; Tubby Haigs; Boxing: All kinds Cigarette Cards, 1880-1910, (American and English). All Revers, Adventures, Skippers kinds of books required. Good prices paid. S.A.E. please. Exchanges considered. Satisfaction Guaranteed. A Merry Christmas to all Fellow Collectors and Customers.

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R. E. J.
ROUSE

3, ST. LEONARD'S TERRACE, GAS HILL,
NORWICH, NORFOLK.

RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RONALD ROUSE RO

- CHECKLEY, PETER J., 18 Tarleton Road, Coundon, Coventry. (Age 20). Printer's Apprentice. Group 8 (Bullseye, Surprise), 5 (b),(d),(c); 6 (a); 7 (a).
- CHILD, A.C., 64 Gilberstone Avenue, Birmingham, 26. Group 7.
- CHURCHILL, CHARLES H., "Highfield," 123, Pinhoe Road, Exeter. (Age 46). Accountant. Groups 7 (a),(b); 6(a). Particularly wanted: Nelson Lees, (old series) Nos. 85, 88, 93, 98 and 102.
- CLOUGH, WILLIAM H., 3 Fonthill Grove, Sale, Manchester. (Age 53). Telephone Engineer. Groups 2; 3; 6; 9. Particularly required: Certain Aldine Dick Turpins and Lot-0'-Funs.
- *COLBY, VICTOR EDWARD, 8 Beresford Avenue, Beverley Hills, N.S.W., Australia. (Age 38). Chartered Engineer. Group 6 (all). Employed as Group Engineer in Postmaster General's Dept., Sydney. Has 500 Union Jacks, 650 S.B.L's., and 160 Detective Weeklies containing Blake yarns. Interested in all phases of the Blake tradition and in all publications dealing with it.
- CONROY, PATRICK, 14 Middle Gardiner Street, Dublin, Eire. Group 3.
- COOK, JAMES W., 4 Swanston Path, South Oxhey, Watford, Herts. (Age 46). Film Despatch Clerk. Groups 7 (a),(b); 6 (b); 5 (all).
- COOK, RONALD, 190 Crowborough Road, London, S.W.17. (L). (Age 32). Civil Servant. Groups 5 (all); 8. Collection consists: 781 Magnets, 36 Gems, 62 S.O.L's., 3 Holiday Annuals. Requires: Populars 626-8; S.O.L. 19; Magnets 893, 896, 900, 906-18, 920, 921, 925, 927-34, 936-40, 942-4, 946-50, 952-7, 959, 960, 962, 963, 965, 968-72, 974, 982, 986, 990. Hobbies: Chess.
- COPEMAN, ERIC VICTOR, 50 Ruby Street, Marrickville, N.S.W., Australia. (Age 37). Accounting & Writing. Groups 6(all); 5(all); 7(a),(b); 8(Thriller). Is anxious to complete set of Holiday Annuals, needs 1920, 1922, 1926, 1931, to end. Also Tom Merry's Own (Annual) Nos. 1, 2 & 4. C.Ds. Nos. 1 to 53, 74, (cont'd page 138)

78 and C.D. Annual prior to 1953.

- *COPPING, G., 104 Mayfield Road, Swaythling, Southampton. Hairdresser. Groups 2; 5(b),(c). Specially wants Jack, Sam & Pete stories in the $\frac{1}{2}$ d Marvel.
- CORBETT, JACK, 49 Glyn Farm Road, Quinton, Birmingham, 32. (M). Group 5 (all). Chairman, Midland Branch, O.B.B.C.
- COX, EDMUND WALTER, 29 Carisbrooke Drive, Bitterne, Southampton. (L). (Age 26). Groups 5(a),(b),(d),(e),(c); 9; 10; 7(a); 8; 6(all). Wanted: Pre-1927 Magnets, Gems, 1920-28; Comics pre-1939.
- CROLLIE, RON, 8 Lytton Road, Romford, Essex. (L). (Age 36). Bakery Engineer. Groups 5(a),(b),(d); 7(a); 5(e); 6(a),(c).
- DAINES, COLIN, 209 Mile Cross Lane, Norwich, Norfolk. (Age 44). Electrical Draughtsman. Groups 7(a); 5(a),(b).
- DARWIN, WILFRED, 76, Western Rd., East Dene, Rotherham, Yorks. Gardener. Groups 6(a); 8 (Hulton's Boys' Magazine).
- DAVIES, ALFRED O., 12 Alfriston Road, West Derby, Liverpool, 12. (Mer.) (Age 51). Secretary. Groups 5 (b),(a),(c),(d).
- DAVEY, EDWARD JOHN, 26 Bourton Road, Olton, Birmingham, 27. (M). (Age 51). Accountant (Export). Groups 5(a), 4; 10. Hon. Sec. Midland O.B.B.C.
- DEASY, JAMES C., 11 Sallymount Gardens, Ranelagh, Dublin, Ireland. (Age 22). Clerk in Aer Lingus. Group 5 (a),(b).
- *DICKENS, RON, 10 Petersfield Drive, Whiteheath, Blackheath, Birmingham. (L). (Age 42). Toolroom Turner. Groups 5 (all); 6 (all); 7 (a),(b). Started collecting 1953, and has already 200 S.B.L's. 3rd series; 250 Comics, about 250 "Thomsons" Bunter Books, Gold Hawks, etc. etc. Puts Greyfriars first. Wishes he had heard of O.B.B.C. and C.D. sooner.
- DOBSON, TOM, 16 Tovan-Akas Avenue, Bentleigh, Victoria, Australia. (Age 49). Public Servant. (P.M.G. Dept.). Groups 5(b),(a),(e),(d),(c); 6(all),7(b),(a).
- DOWLER, HARRY, 86, Hamilton Road, Longsight, Manchester, 13. (Age 64). Commercial Teacher. Groups 2; 4; 6.
- DOW, JAMES (Junr), "Romla," Kingswells, Aberdeenshire. (Age 40). Shopkeeper. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b).
- DRYDEN, WHEELER, Box 2647, Hollywood 28, Cal., U.S.A. Group 5 (all).
- EAMES, ELIZABETH PAMELA, 169a Oxford Road, Calne, Wilts. (Age 25). Civil Servant. Groups 5(a),(b),(d),(e); 10; 6(b); 8(Champion); 4 (Chums). Is very interested in the hobby and would like to obtain any Greyfriars stories dealing with Harry Wharton on the warpath against Mr. Quelch. Also Cliff House stories. Appeals 'Please help!!'
- EVERETT, C.A., P.O. Box 7, Brinkworth, South Australia. (Age 50). Farmer. Groups 5(a), (c), (d); 7 (a).
- FARISH, ROBERT, 24 English St., Longtown, Cumberland. (Age 53). Groups 5(b),(a), (c),(e).
- FAYNE, ERIC, The Modern School, Grove Road, Surbiton, Surrey. (L). Groups 5(all); 6; 8.
- FENNELL, HUGH W., 12 Exeter Road, Brondesbury, London, N.W.2. Groups 1; 2; 3; and all others. Wants: Wild Boys of London; "Scoops"; Frank Reade's; Skeleton Horseman and Boy Detective, odd numbers or complete. Early detective fiction and fantasy.
- *FLEMING, WALTER, 67 Connington Crescent, Chingford Hatch, London, E.4. (L). (Age 37). Shoe Clicker. Groups 7 (a); 5(a); 6(a); 5(b); 6(c),(b); 2. Has been collecting off and on for 20 years. In 1940 had about (cont'd page 139)

- 2,000 A.P. papers but these were unfortunately destroyed in the raids of that year. E.S. Turner's "Boys Will Be Boys" rekindled his interest and he is building up a collection again. Is anxious to obtain copies of Nelson Lee Library dealing with the School Train and the Tour of Australia.
- FLINDERS, E.B. (MISS), "Roseview," Gosmore Road, Near Hitchin, Herts. Illustrator. Groups 5 (b), (a), (c), (d); 10.
- FORD, DEREK, 42 West Bond Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire. Group 6 (all).
- GANDER, WILLIAM HENRY, Box 60, Transcona, Manitoba, Canada. (L). (Age 56). Retail Newsdealer. Groups 5 (a); 2 (Boys' Friends, all periods).
- GEAL, JOHN W., 277 King's Road, Kingston, Surrey. (Age 33). Scientific Instrument Maker. Groups 5 (a); 8 (Modern Boy); 5 (e), (b); 7 (a).
- GILES, F. VICTOR, 6 St. Paul's Road, Barking, Essex. (Age 31). Sales Writer. Group 5 (all).
- GOCHER, JOHN WOODWARD, Benovenagh, Abbey Rd, Sudbury, Suffolk. (Age 33). Ironmonger. Group 8; 6 (all); 5 (all); 4; 3; 2; 9; 10; 1.
- GODSAVE, REUBEN JAMES, 35 Woodhouse Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11. (L) (Age 44). Commercial Traveller. Groups 7 (a), (b); 5 (a).
- GOODHEAD, WILLIAM HENRY, 50 Porter Road, Derby. (Age 38). Postal Worker. Groups 5 (a), (d), (e); 6 (all).
- *GORFAIN, ARTHUR, 66 Beaconsfield Street, Newport Beach, N.S.A., Australia. (Age 42). Publisher of "Silver Jacket". Groups 5 (a); 7 (a). "The Silver Jacket" - Australia's magazine for boys. Why not start a collection of this famous monthly. Back numbers available 1/- each, Post Free. No. 15 now on sale. Every issue contains a school story by Frank Richards. Published at 149 Castlereagh St., Sydney.
- GOURLAY, NEIL C., 54 Grosvenor Drive, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. (Age 28). Groups 5 (a), (b), (d); 7 (a); 6 (a), (b).
- GRAINGER, GEORGE P., Alexandra Road, Paynter's Lane End, Redruth, Cornwall. Groups 1; 2; 3; 6 (a). Wanted: 1d Boys' Friend, Nos. 523, 575, 577, 578, 579, 581, 597, 616, 743-748, 750, 753, 754, 755, 762, 764, 1042, 1054, 1073, 1084, 1103, 1213-1229, 1276, 1299. Also Vol. 14. Ally Sloper 1892. Aldine Detective Library Nos. 10, 17-20, 22, 23, 32, 73, 75, 78.
- GREGORY, NORMAN, 11 Emerson Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (M). (Age 38). Accountant and Auditor. Groups 5(a), (b), (c); 7 (a), (b); 6 (a); 4; 3; 2; 8; 1; 6 (b), (c); 9; 10. Asks that old friends should note new address. Is always pleased to hear from fellow collectors. Interested in obtaining Jack North B.F.L's. Can anyone oblige?
- GUNN, JOHN MAXWELL, c/o Gunn's Guest House, 1 Stratford Square, Nottingham. (Age 17). Page Boy, The County Hotel, Nottingham. Groups 7 (a); 5 (d); St. Frank's stories. 8 (Thrillers).
- GUNN, JOHN, A.M.H.C.I., Gunn's Guest House, 1 Stratford Square, Shakespeare St., Nottingham. Guest House Proprietor. Groups 7 (a), (b); 8.
- HARRISON, WILLIAM, 54 Chandos Avenue, Leeds, 8. Phone 66-4849. (N). (Age 51). Groups 5 (a), (b), (c), (d); 9.
- HALL, ALFRED L., 34 Compton Crescent, Leeds, 9. (N). Clerk. Groups 3; 2; 6 (a), (b).
- HALL, LESLIE, 35 Broadlea Hill, Sandford, Bramley, Leeds, 13. (N). (Age 49). Groups 5 (a), (b); 3; 5 (d), (e); 7.
- *HALL, WILLIAM, 46 Walder Road, Hammondville, Via Liverpool, N.S.W., Australia. (Age 49). Carpenter. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a), (b); 9; 3. Has been collecting about a year. Nelson Lee Library first favourite. Has (cont'd page 140).

- about 60 small series and 120 of others. Also 60 Gems, 60 Magnets, a few Aldines and various others. Is very anxious to obtain Henderson's Young Folks Tales, particularly the "Betty" series. Also a Christmas Double number 'Lot O' Fun'. Is also a breeder and exhibitor of old English Game Bantams. Has won many prizes.
- HARRIS, ARTHUR, "Caynton," Llanrhos Road, Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno. Group 9 (Comic Cuts 1890 to Chuckles 1914). Interested in all comics between these dates. Has now just on 3,000.
- HEPBURN, JAMES, 4 Waterloo Road, Blyth, Northumberland. (N). (Age 49). Grocery Manager. Groups: General Interest.
- HOCKLEY, GEOFFREY, 308 Keyes Road, New Brighton, New Zealand. (L). (Age 53). Motor Cycle Dealer. Is not now actively collecting but just as interested as ever in everything pertaining to Old Boys' Papers and the hobby in general. Is very proud of possessing one of the few complete sets of "Chums" volumes in existence.
- HODGSON, RONALD, 5 Silver St., Newton Hill, Wakefield. (N). (Age 29). Clerk. Group 5 (b), (a).
- HOLT, BRIAN D., British Legation, Reykjavik, Iceland. (L). Groups 7 (a); 5 (b), (d), (a).
- HOMER, HARRY M., Yulden Farm, Heathfield, Sussex. (L). (Age 48). Teacher of Languages. Groups 6(a); 5(c); 6(b); 5(d); 9; 5(d). Anxious to obtain in order to complete sets, Union Jacks, Nos. 988, 1007, 1019, 1025. Holiday Annual 1928. Penny Populars 3, 4, 5, 9, 39, 51, 69. Will be grateful for any help.
- HOPKINS, RAYMOND H., 39-34 45th Street, Long Island City 4, New York, U.S.A. (L). (Age 35). Clerk. Group 5 (a), (b), (d), (e), (c).
- HORTON, WILLIAM, 4 Willoughby Road, Liverpool, 14. (Mer). Group 4 (Chums). Librarian, Merseyside O.B.B.C. Has several Chums volumes.
- HUBBARD, ERNEST ALEXANDER, 58 South Bank Crescent, Sheffield, 3. (N). (Age 48). All Groups. Would like to obtain Holiday Series in Gems, Magnets and Nelson Lees. Also Christmas numbers. Is anxious to obtain S.O.L. "Schoolboy Crusoes".
- HUBBARD, WILLIAM JOSEPH ALFRED, c/o The Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 27, Machakos, Kenya Colony, B.E.A. (L). (Age 34). Administrative Assistant, Department of Agriculture, Kenya Colony. Groups 5(b); 7(a); 5(a), (d), (e); 7(b). Is building up a collection of Nelson Lees at present and would welcome offers which will enable me to purchase copies of Old, First and Second New Series.
- HUGHES, JACK SHERWOOD, 184 Riverview Drive, Chelmer, S.W.3., Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. Minister of Religion. Group 5 (b), (d), (e); 7 (a); 5 (c); 7 (b).
- HUMPHRIES, KENNETH, 61 Long Hill Rise, Hucknall, Notts. Group 5 (all). 7.
- HUMPHREYS, ERIC, "Oak Dene," Boat Lane, Higher Irlam, Nr. Manchester. (N). (Age 40). Laboratory Assistant. Group 5 (all).
- HUNTER, J.V.B. STEWART, 4 Lulworth Road, Mottingham, London, S.E. 9. (Age 55). Groups 1; 3; 2.
- HUNTER, RONALD H., Rua Inglaterra, 8, Santos, Brazil, South America. (L). (Age 41). Assistant in Shipping Agency. Group 5 (a), (e), (c), (d), (b).
- HURRELL, JAMES W., "Glenisle," 10 Ilfracombe Gardens, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex. (L). (Age 44). Progress Clerk. Groups 7(a), (b); 5(a), (c), (e), (b), (d); 6(all).

WANTED: Nelson Lee Old series before 300; Detective, Prairie & Buffalo Bill Libraries. Nugget Weeklies, Boys Realm 2nd series after 104; $\frac{1}{2}$ d Union Jacks, Marvels, Vanguard, Plucks etc., any Sexton Blake & Nelson Lee material, in Penny Popular, Dreadnought etc. Union Jack, S.B. Libraries, Detective Weeklies, Thrillers, Story Paper Collector Vol. 1. Vanity Fair (Parks) Young Britain, Young England 1893, 1897, & 1889, Beeton's Boys Own Mag. 1888-90, Cornhill Mag. 1868 Vol. 17. Chambers Journal Sept. 2-23 1899. Grip Vol. 1. Captain vols. 37, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 49 & 50. Early dated editions by Henty. Any bound stories on Pirates. Any books by Talbot Mundy. Any presscuttings, mss. photos, letters, original drawings, front covers, anything relating to the hobby. LAY - 167
WATFORD ROAD, HARROW, MIDDLESEX. Tel: Arnold 6508.

- IMPSON, STANLEY, "Stanfield," Jerningham Road, New Costessey, Norwich. (Age 57). Master Upholsterer. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e),(d); 4; 5 (c); 7 (a); 8; 6 (all); 2; 7 (b); 1; 3; 9; 10.
- INGRAM, ARTHUR JOHN, 97 Tettenhall Rd., Wolverhampton. (M). (Age 40 odd). Schoolmaster. Group 5 (all).
- IRALDI, JAMES C., 28-13 33rd St., Astoria, Long Island, New York, U.S.A. (L). (Age 47). Group 5 (all).
- JACK, JOHN, c/o Miss Bryden, 22 Barns Street, Ayr, Scotland. (Age 33). Clerk. Group 5 (a),(b),(d). Says he wishes everyone would lose interest in Charles Hamilton's works so that he could complete collection at a price he could afford.
- JAMISON, WILLIAM, Lisnacree, Newry, Co. Down, Northern Ireland. Gardener. Groups 5 (a), (c).
- JARDINE, WILLIAM WALTER, 52 Kipling Avenue, Woodingdene, Brighton, Sussex. (L). (Age 39). Engineering Sales Correspondent. Groups 5 (all); 7 (all); 6 (all, but only Gwyn Evans' stories). A Frank Richards devotee, with a nostalgic affection for the years 1920's and 1930's; particularly the former. "Second favourite" writers are Edwy Searles Brooks and the late Gwyn Evans.
- JENKINS, ROGER MICHAEL, "The Firs," Eastern Road, Havant, Hants. (L). (Age 29). Civil Servant (Legal Branch). Group 5 (all).
- JEYBS, JAMES A., 108 Adnett Street, Northampton. (Age 58). Group 2.
- JOHNSON, MARCUS, 164 Amesbury Avenue, Streatham Hill, London, S.W.2. (L). (Age 47). Accountancy. Groups 8 (Boys' Friend); 7 (a); 5 (a),(b),(e); 6 (a),(b). Would be pleased to hear from any collector who may have any of the following for disposal: Boys' Friend Nos. 908, 913, 916-7, 967-71, 973-9, 1018 and 1020. Nelson Lee Library (old series) 85, 121, 132-5, 142-7, 166-9.
- JONES, RAYMOND, 39 Mill Hill Road, Cowes, Isle of Wight. (Age 25). Shop Manager. Group 5 (a),(d),(e),(b).
- JONES, S.F., High School, Penrith, N.S.W., Australia. Group 5 (b),(e).
- KEELING, FRANK, 107 Dolphins Road, Folkestone, Kent. (L). (Age 47). Electrical Instrument Maker. Groups 7 (a); 10; 5 (a).
- KELSHAW, L.G., 41 Selby Ave., South Shore, Blackpool. Group 5 (a).
- KIRBY, GORDON J., c/o Public Library, Swanston St., Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Group 5 (all); 10.
- KNASTER, R.M.J., 4 Elm Place, Onslow Gardens, London, N.W. 7. Group 5 (all).
- KUTNER, M., 4 New North Place, Scutton Street, Finsbury, London, E.C.2. (L). (Age 47). Woodcarver. Group 5 (b),(a),(c). Keenly interested in the illustrators, especially Warwick Reynolds. Requires Gems Nos. 1283 and 1285 to complete long run.

- LANDY, ERIC R., 4 Nuncaton Rd., Dagenham, Essex. (Age 51). Commercial Traveller. Groups 3; 1; 2. Still requires certain Aldine Robin Hoods (1901) and Jack Sheppards.
- LAWSON, ARTHUR W., 13 Charles Square, Hoxton, N.1. (L). Groups 1; 2; 3. Requires certain volumes; Bow Bells; Boys of England; Boys' Comic Journal; Young Men of Great Britain; London Reader; Young Ladies Journal; and Boys' Own Library. List on application.
- *LAY, FRANK VERNON, 167 Watford Road, Harrow, Middlesex. (L). (Age 41). Sales Manager. Groups 7 (a),(b); 6 (all); 4; 8; 1; 2; 5 (a),(b),(c),(e). Collection includes 41 vols. Captain; several hundreds Nelson Lees and Union Jacks; Vol. 1,2,3 Boys' Magazine; Vols. 1 & 2 Champion; Vols. 1,2,3 & 4 2nd series Boys' Realm; several hundreds S.B.L's. $\frac{1}{2}$ d U.J., Marvels etc. Victorian bloods and numerous others. Also interested in correspondence with other collectors and desirous of obtaining press cuttings, photos, autographs, original drawings, in fact anything relating to the hobby.
- LECKENBY, HERBERT, c/o York Duplicating Services, 7 The Shambles, York. (L).(N). (Age 65). Retired Civil Servant. Groups - All, particularly 1; 2; 3. Anxious to obtain Comics 1896-1904.
- LETTEY, C.L., 27 Heather Close, Kingswood, Bristol. (L). Furniture Maker. Group 5 (all). Always glad to hear from anyone who may have bound volumes of pre-1930 Magnets, Gems or Populars for sale.
- LEWIS, MERVYN D., 10 Dudley Road, Folkestone, Kent. (Age 32). Group 5 (all).
- LOFTS, W.O.G., 42 Ashbridge Street, St. Marylebone, London, N.W.8. (L). (Age 31). Carburettor Engineering. Groups 6 (b); 5 (a); 9; 1; and all other groups. Is very interested in all pre-war juvenile periodicals, and is still engaged in research work at the British Museum. Acquainted with several authors of the S.B.L. Has compiled a list of comics from the 1900's to the present day.
- MCCABE, ROBERT, 16 St. Boswell's Terrace, Dundee, Scotland. (Age 36). Reed Maker. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c); 6 (b). Would like one or two copies of World War I stories also sport stories (preferably football pre-war).
- MCPHERSON, E., 60 Benedict St., Glastonbury, Somerset. (Age 38). Groups 7 (a), (b); 5 (a),(d).
- McKIM, WILLIAM, Coxwold, York. Medical Practitioner. Groups 1; 2; 3; 4.
- McROBERTS, GEORGE, 31 Ardenlee Drive, Cregagh, Belfast, N. Ireland. (Age 53). Health Official. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b); 4.
- MACHIN, F., 38 St. Thomas's Road, Preston, Lancs. School Teacher. Groups 8 (Boys' Friend with Rookwood and Frank Richards' Schooldays stories); 5 (c),(b),(a); 4. Collection includes 40 Chums Annuals; 6 Boys Own Annuals; 15 Chatterboxes; 12 Prizes; 100 Boys' Friend Weeklies; 50 B.F.L's. Is anxious to obtain Amalgamated Press Robin Hoods and Boys' Friends with Rookwood stories.
- MAGOVENY, EDITH, 65 Benthams St., Belfast, Northern Ireland. (Age 45). Groups 5 (a),(c),(d),(e); 7 (a),(b).
- MARTIN, BILL, 93 Hillside, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W.10. Dairyman. Groups 5 (all); 6 (all).
- MATHESON, ALEX, S., 11 Ackergill Street, Wick, Caithness, Scotland. (Age 23). Groups 4 (Chums); 6 (a); 8 (Thrillers); 5 (a), (b).
- *MATTHEWS, GEORGE HENRY, 38 Victoria Street, Alderney, Channel Islands. (Age 42). Pharmacist (M.P.S.) Groups 4 (Chums, B.O.P.); 5 (a),(b); 8 (Adventure). Chief interest bound volumes of Chums, especially between 1920-30. Also Strand Magazines containing Sherlock Holmes stories. Been collecting a few months, heard of the O.B.B.C. through a letter in 'Radio Times' from Ben Whiter. Has a busy chemist's business in Alderney which he considers a paradise for a quiet holiday. Is a Methodist local preacher.

- MELL, GEORGE, 49 Gracefield Gardens, Streatham, London, S.W.16. (Age 46).
Journalist. Groups 5 (a),(e); 4.
- MERRALLS, JAMES DONALD, 13A Campbell Road, Balwyn E8, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. (Age 18). University Undergraduate. Group 6 (all). Has about 400 S.B.L's. and 100 other papers in his collection. Says Sexton Blake appeals to him because he has moved with the times. Suggests that Gwyn Evans, Teed & Co. were just as dissimilar to Graydon and the pre-1915 writers as are Parsons and Tyrer to the 'between wars' group.
- MORGAN, JOHN K., 58 Moorfield Road, Great Crosby, Liverpool, 23. (Mer). (Age 45).
Groups 5 (a), (b); 7 (a); 5 (d),(e),(c); 7 (b).
- MORLEY, LAWRENCE, 10 Neveravon Road, Chiswick, London, W.4. (Age 28). Bus Conductor (London Transport). Groups 5 (a); 8; 1; 2; 9; 6 (a); 3; 7 (a); 4; 10. Although interested in old boys papers as a whole puts the Magnet well in front of all others. Thinks its best period 1930-35. Would like to obtain Magnet Christmas Double numbers. Says there's an engineering firm in Chiswick named Vernon Smith & Co.
- MURTAGH, JOHN R., 509 Selwood Rd., Hastings, New Zealand. (Age 41). Entertainer.
Groups 7 (a), (b); 5 (d), (a); 6 (a), (b); 5 (c), (e).
- NICHOLLS, VERA (MRS.), 44 Grosvenor Place, Leeds, 7. (N). Groups 10; 5 (a); 6 (b); 7 (a). Would like to obtain Schoolgirls Own Libraries featuring Morcove School. Also would welcome information concerning Marjorie Stanton. Correspondence welcomed on the subject.
- NICHOLLS, RONALD ALICK, The Grey House, Staunton Lane, Whitechurch, Bristol, 4. ('Phone Whitechurch 2177). (L). (Age 40). Groups 5 (a),(b); 4 (B.O.P., Chums), 6 (a),(b); 8 (Thriller). Wants Magnets 1924-33 particularly. Any price within reason. Also 1598 to complete run. Union Jacks 1924-33; Scout Annual 1926-7-8-9. Correspondence welcomed.
- NORTH, PERCY, The Great Western Hotel, Vyne Road, Basingstoke, Hants. (L). (Age 49). Groups 5 (b), (a), (e), (d); 7 (a), (b).
- O'SHEA, R.J., 8 Eve Road, Leytonstone, London, E.11. (Age 40). Commission Agent.
Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (b),(a). Wanted: Magnets, Gems and S.O.L's.
- PACKMAN, LEONARD, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22. (L). (Age 49). Civil Servant (Established). Groups - All. Would be glad of any offers of 'Chips', 'Chuckles' and similar comics. Any issues up to year 1920 (where applicable) welcome.
- PACKMAN, JOSEPHINE, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22. (L). Civil Servant (Established). Groups 6 (a),(b); 6 (b). Would be glad to have offers of 1st and 2nd series Sexton Blake Libraries in good condition.
- PARRATT, C. JAMES, 188 Compton Buildings, Goswell Rd., London, E.C.1. (L). Groups 7 (a), (b); 5 (all); 8 (Thriller).
- PAYNE, RONALD WILLIAM, 5 Bugbrooke Road, Gayton, Northants. (L). (Age 34). Clock and Instrument Mechanician. Groups 7 (a), (b); 5 (a). Is trying to obtain to complete Nelson Lee Library, 1st New Series 6,16,33,35,43,44,50. Also wishes to obtain complete set of "Monster Library".
- PICK, ROBERT, 3 Stonegate Grove, Leeds, 7. (N). (Age 55). Master Tailor. Group 5 (b),(d),(c),(e).
- PORTER, T.W., Old Fields, Corngreaves Road, Cradley Heath, Staffs. (M). (N). Groups 5 (a),(d); 7 (a),(b); 5 (b),(e),(c); 6 (b). Keenly interested in Rookwood and St. Frank's stories. Derives great pleasure from Midland Club Meetings and hopes to attend other Clubs in time.

- POUND, REV. A.G., St. Paul's Vicarage, 68 Finmore Road, Birmingham, 9. (Age 52)
Minister of Religion. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e),(d); 1; 2.
- PRAGNELL, NORMAN, 33 Brae Street, Liverpool, 7. (Mer.) (Age 39). Groups 7 (a),
(b); 5 (d) St. Frank's stories only, 5 (a); 8 (Boys' Magazines, Boys' Realm).
- PRICE, H.C. NORTON, 22 Northdown Road, Margate, Kent. (L). Master Grocer. Group
6 (b). Has now completed his collection of all three series Sexton Blake
Libraries. Still requires many Boys' Friend Libraries.
- RANSOM, GEORGE H., 207 Basingstoke Road, Reading Berks. Independant. Groups 5
(a), (b); 7 (a); 6 (a).
- RAYNER, WILLIAM JOHN, "Albion," Clarence Road, Sudbury, Suffolk. (Age 42).
General Manager, Cinema and Theatre Co. Group 5 (all).
- RENEN, CHARLES GERARD VAN, P.O. Box 50, Uitenhage, C.P., South Africa. (Age 41).
Bank Official. Group 5 (a), (b), (e), (d), (c).
- RHODES, A. WRIGHT, The Chancery, United Kingdom High Commission (22c) Bonn,
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee, 77, B.A.O.R. 19. Group 5 (a), (b).
- RICHARDSON, ARTHUR, Hawarden, 17 Devon Crescent, Redhill, Surrey. (L). Groups
2; 1; 3.
- RICHARDSON, L.H.S., Oxford House, 21 Lee High Road, Lewisham, London, S.E.13.
(N). (Age 41). Army Officer. Group 5 (b), (a), (d).
- ROUSE, RONALD E.J., 3 St. Leonard's Terrace, Gas Hill, Norwich, Norfolk. (Age 32)
Groups 6 (b); 1; 6 (a); 7 (a) 1915-18 only; 6 (c); 2; 8. Requires Police
Budgets, Famous Fights, "Boy Detective", "Night Hawks", "Calendar of Horrors",
"Calcroft", "Terrific Register". Has all kinds of books for sale and ex-
change. Also a large collection of rare early English and American cigar-
ette cards.
- RUSSELL, BERYL, 4 Ashgrove Road, Great Barr, Birmingham, 22A. (M). Groups 5 (a),
(d); 7 (a), (b); 5 (b),(e),(c); 6 (b). Likes S.O.L's. for contents and com-
pact size. Collection now 395. Needs 16 for set.
- RUTHERFORD, FREDERICK GEORGE, Herbert Lodge, 3 Cotham Park North, Bristol, 6.(L).
(Age 50). Co-Director and Engineer. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 7 (a),(b);
5 (c). Since last year has collected approximately 200 Magnets, 300 Gems
and 120 S.O.L's., most of them thanks to Clifford Lettey. Now a member of
London O.B.B.C. and has attended one of their meetings. Would like Magnets
before No. 1480 and Gems before No. 1331: preferably runs.
- *SALMON, HAYDN E., 38 Warwick Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. (L). (Age 49). Civil Ser-
vant. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a); 9; 6 (a). Keenly interested in Nelson Lee Library
particularly after 1918; Boys' Friend 4d Library, after 1920 - school stories
other than the usual schools; Chips, Comic Cuts, Firefly, Rainbow, Lot-O'-Fun
1916-22. First heard of the O.B.B.C. through Ben Whiter's letter in the
Radio Times.
- SATCHELL, T.G., 63 Cantwell Road, Plumstead, London, S.E.18. (Age 50). Butcher's
Manager. Group 5 (a), (b).
- SELLARS, GEORGE, 1 Hesley Road, Shiregreen, Sheffield, 5. (Age 53). Labourer.
Group 5 (b), (a), (d).
- SHEPHERD, JAMES, 43 Station Road, Killamarsh, Sheffield. Group 5 (b), (a).
Particularly interested in early issues.
- SHAW, JOHN R., 4 Brunswick Park, Camberwell, London, S.E. 5. (Age 36). Groups
5 (b), (a), (c); 6 (a), (b); 7 (a); 5 (d). Is interested in all periods of
Charles Hamilton's work. Desires to obtain certain Plucks, dated 1909-10
containing stories of Tomsonio' Circus by Harry Dorrian.

- SMITH, CLIFFORD, 104 Headroomgate Road, St. Anne's-on-Sea, Lancs. (Age 37).
Local Government Officer. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(c). Please note change of address.
- SMITH, DEREK, 14 Crescent Lane, Clapham Park, London, S.W.4. (Age 28). Detective Story Writer. Groups 5 (a),(b); 7 (a); 5 (e), (c); 6 (b).
- SMITH, JOSEPH, 36 Langham Rd., Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(e).
- SMITH, NORMAN JOSEPH, 34 Waincliffe Mount, Beeston, Leeds, 11. (N). Sales Office Manager. Groups 5 (a),(d),(b),(c). Hon. Sec. Northern Section O.B.B.C.
- SMITH, STANLEY, Institute of Agriculture and Horticulture, Usk, Mon. (N). Groups 5 (all); 7 (a); 10; 8.
- SMITH, PERCY, The Stores, Mumby, Nr. Alford, Lincs. (Age 53). Groups 3; 2; 5(b); 7; 5 (c).
- SMYTH, SYDNEY, 1 Brandon St., Clovelly, N.S.W., Australia. Silk Screen Artist. Groups 5 (a), (b), (c), (d); 7 (a).
- SNELL, FRANK, 24 The Strand, Bideford, Devon. Group 5 (all).
- SOUTHWOOD, ROGER, 3 Spring Villas, Farnborough Rd., Farnborough, Hants. (L). (Age 19). Groups 3; 5 (a), (b), (d); 4 (Chums only).
- SOYSA, A.C.H. DE, 4 Boyd Place, Colombo, 3. Ceylon. (L). (Age 37). Company Director. Group 5 (a), (e).
- SOUTHWAY, ARTHUR JAMES, P.O. Box 3, Beaconsfield, Cape Province, South Africa. (L). (Age 45). Assistant Secretary (Mineral Water Factory). Groups - All.
- STEVENS, SHEILA (MISS), 783 Rathdown Street, North Carlton, N.4, Victoria, Australia. (Age 40). Group 5 (d), (e), (c), (a), (b).
- STEWART, ALAN, 290 Archway Road, London, N.6. (L). (Age 44). Dance Musician. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a), (b).
- STOKES, JOHN C., Lishegar, 6 Temple Gardens, Rathmines, Dublin, Eire. Group 5(all)
- STONE, LEON, 28 Elgin Street, Gordon, N.S.W., Australia. (L). Journalist. Groups 4; 5 (a), (b), (c).
- STOREY, ROWLAND, 4 Byron St., Shieldfield, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2. Storekeeper. Groups 2; 4. Anxious to obtain early copies of "Big Budget".
- STURDY, F., 8 Watson St., Middlesbrough, Yorkshire. Group 5 (all).
- SUTCLIFFE, HERBERT JAMES, 27 Victoria Avenue, Wickford, Essex. (L). (Age 37). Builder's Merchant's Warehouseman. Groups 7 (a),(b); 6 (a): E.S. Brook's stories only; 6 (c),(b); 5 (a),(c),(b),(d),(e). Collects all novels by Berkeley Grey and Victor Gunn. Is anxious to obtain "Dead Man's Warning" and "Murder on Ice" by Victor Gunn.
- SWAN, JAMES ROBERT, 3 Fifth Avenue, Paddington, London, W.10. (Age 38). Electric Welder. Groups 5 (a),(b); 8; 7 (a); 6 (b); 4. Still requires $\frac{1}{2}$ d Gems, Nos. 3, 10 and 13 to complete the 48 issues. Has now No. 1 Wizard, Film Fun, Vanguard and Kinema Comic.
- TAYLOR, RAYMOND, 22 Pembroke St. Etingshall, Wolverhampton. (Age 65). Groups 1; 2.
- *THOMSON, DEREK, 14 Bonaly Road, Merchiston, Edinburgh, 11. (Age 16). Auctioneer's Clerk. Groups 5 (a),(d),(b),(e); 6 (b). Has been collecting five years, mostly Bunter Books, together with a few Magnets, Holiday Annuals and S.O.I's. also all the Tom Merry books and Annuals, and 89 S.B.L's.
- THOMPSON, GORDON, 53 Wallasey Park, Belfast, Northern Ireland. (Age 39). Tobacco Worker. Groups 5 (a); 7 (a); 6 (b); 5 (b).
- *THORNE, BERNARD ROBERT, 20 Romar Crescent, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. (L). (Age 40). Aeronautical Inspection Directorate (R.C.A.F.). Group 7 (a); 5(b),(b), (e),(c),(d); 10. Collection shared with 14 year old daughter Berenice. Started in 1952 using as nucleus 140 Magnets and Nelson Lees (cont'd page 146)

- treasured from schooldays. Charles Skilton put him in touch with the C.D. and London O.B.B.C. Now has 300 Magnets & Gems, over 400 Nelson Loes, 300 S.O.L's. S.B.L's. etc. Particularly wants Magnets 828-830, Nelson Loes (old series) 112, 186, 237, 238, 394, 499, 550, 551. 1st new series 34, 152, 154.
- *THROCKMORTON, NICHOLAS, St. James' Club, 106 Piccadilly, London, W.1. (L). Civil Servant. Group 5 (a), (e). Is anxious to add to his small collection of Magnets.
- THURBON, WILLIAM THOMAS, 47 Cromwell Road, Cambridge. (N). (Age 51). Clerk. Groups 2; 3; 4; 5(a), (c) first series only; 6(a) Lobangu stories only.
- TRAYNOR, J. RICHARD, BCM/Adventures, London, W.C.1. (Age 48). Asst. Commissioner of National Savings. Groups 7 (a); 5(b); 6(a); 10 (Schoolgirls' Own).
- TWELLS, J., 32 Bridgett St., Rugby. (Age 47). Group 7 (a).
- VEINIMORE, CHARLES E.F., 25 Byron Ave., West Hounslow, Middlesex. Still possesses a huge quantity of periodicals of all types, including many No. 1's.
- WALKER, Peter A., 16 Thorncliffe Rd., Mapperley Park, Nottingham. Groups 5 (b), (a); 7 (a); 4; 5; (d), (c).
- WALLIS, CLIFFORD, 64 Orchard Park Rd., Southgate, London, N.14. (Age 34). Civil Groups 5(a), (b); 8; 7(a); 6(a); 5(d), (e), (c); 7(b); 9; 10; 1; 2; 3; 4.
- WALSH, JAMES, 345 Stanley Rd., Kirkdale, Liverpool. (Mer.). (Age 45). Group 5 (a), (b), (c), (d).
- WARREN, PHILIP, 30 Newton Rd., Urmston, Lancs. (N). Group 5 (all).
- WEBSTER, DONALD B., Waterloo House, 7 Crosby Rd. South, Liverpool, 22. ('phone Waterloo 3079). (Mer.) (Age 49). Civil Servant. Group 5 (all). Chairman, Merseyside Branch O.B.B.C., and has visited all other English branches. Not a collector in the strict sense of the word but is desirous of retaining a copy of each of the periodicals of his youth, and the changing issues of Gem, Magnet, etc.
- WEBSTER, PETER, Waterloo House, 7 Crosby Rd. South, Liverpool, 22. (Mer.). (Age 13) Group 5 (c); 9. Youngest Club member. Member of Remove Form Merchant Taylor's School. Collects Holiday Annuals and a copy each pre-war comics.
- WESTWATER, W., 4 Buckley Street, Glasgow, N. Engineering Draughtsman. Groups 5 (a), (d), (b); 6 (all).
- WHITER, BENJAMIN GEORGE, 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, London, N.22. (L). (Age 49). Storekeeper. Groups 5 (all); 6 (all); 7 (a), (b); 4; 3; 9; 8.
- WHITER, ROBERT B., 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, London, N.22. (L). (Age 30). Cycle Dealer. Groups 5 (all); 8; 4.
- WHITER, EILEEN JOAN, 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, London, N.22. (L). Insurance Broker's Book-keeper. Group 5 (a).
- WHITMORE, IAN, 3 South Bank Lodge, Surbiton, Surrey. (L). (Age 20.) Bank Clerk. Group 5 (all). Urgently requires 1920 Holiday Annual and early issues S.O.L.
- WHORWELL, RICHARD, 29 Aspinden Road, Rotherhithe, London, S.E.16. (Age 56). Groups 5 (all); 4; 8; 6 (all).
- WILLETT, E.P.K., Church Cottage, Laleham-on-Thames, Middlesex. (L). Groups 5 (all); 4 (Captains and B.O.Ps., Annuals only); 8 (Pre-war Triumphs, Skippers, Rovers, Hotspurs, Wizards and Adventures; Modern Hotspurs, Wizards and Lions).
- WILLISON, FRANK A., 6 Meredith Street, Cradley Heath, Staffs. (Age 53). Tool Progress Chaser. Groups 2; 4; 9; 6 (b). Is keen on a run of Jesters, Chips, Comic Cuts. Also Boys' Friends between 1910 and 1914.
- WILLIAMSON, WILLIAM LAWRENCE, 410 Oakwood Lane, Roundhay, Leeds, 8. (N). (Age 53). Groups 5 (all); 6 (all); 2; 4.
- WILLIAMS, J.S., 99 Smyth Road, Bristol, 3. (Age 38). Technical College Lecturer. Groups 5 (all); 7 (all); 6 (all); 9. 2.

(concluded page 119)....