

# THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOLUME 9, No. 105.

PRICE 1s. 6d.

SEPTEMBER 1955

REPRODUCED FROM "THE SURPRISE", No. 44, DECEMBER 31, 1932



# The Collectors' Digest

Vol. 9 No. 105

Price 1s. 6d.

SEPTEMBER, 1955

Editor, HERBERT LECKENBY,  
c/o YORK DUPLICATING SERVICES,  
7, The Shambles, YORK.

## From the Editor's Chair

CAN YOU DRAW? Maurice England, of 2 High Street, Presteigne-upon-Lugg, Radnorshire, has put up a very interesting suggestion. Here it is:

"The Magnet has published on at least one occasion a map of Greyfriars and district. This seems by no means to fit in with the various descriptions in the Magnet, etc. I believe this also applies to other maps in the Holiday Annuals, etc.

So I would like to suggest a competition for a map of Greyfriars and district nearest to the descriptions generally given.

The best three to be selected by a small committee and Frank Richards would perhaps be persuaded to pick the best out.

I would like to offer £1 prize as a small incentive if the idea meets with approval and suggest that the winning effort might be printed in the Annual."

Well it seems to me a jolly good idea, don't you? It would be just the thing to accompany Eric Humphreys fine article "A Ramble Round Greyfriars". It won't be an easy job but I know those of you who are handy with your pencils, and there are quite a few of you, won't mind that. There's Percy North for instance who has already done one of the district round Harry Wharton's home.

Anyway let me know if you would like to have a go for Mr. England's generous prize. We should have to make the dead line the last week in October. And please don't forget to allow for plenty of margin, about an inch all round.

\* \* \* \* \*

'ANNUAL' PROGRESS: All goes well; at the moment of writing four articles have been set including Eric Fayne's review of the Gem "White Cover Days". It will appeal to all Gemites. Soon we shall have Roger Jenkins' description of the Magnets of the same period.

Further Geoffrey Hockley's article on S. Walkey's 'Chums' serials is on the high seas.

Then John L. Jukes of Bournemouth has promised us an article which to use his own words will deal with "How I started at the A.P. when I returned from abroad and my subsequent meetings with various and sundry characters. Escapades in Fleet Street, etc. etc. before I took the gypsy's warning and left it all for more sylvian fields."

Sounds good, doesn't it? Gives you a longing for Christmas I guess. It does me.

Well take time by the forelock, and send those order and Who's Who forms along. As I've said before its a big job compiling the 'Who's Who' and it helps a lot when they are in early and, of course, it is not essential to pay for your copy yet.

\* \* \* \* \*

PERIODICALS OF THE PAST: If for a change occasionally you will like to browse over some old time adult publications you cannot do better than send for some of those advertised by Charles Vennimore on this page. He has John Bulls, Answers, Tit-Bits, Pearsons, etc. etc. all in mint condition, at little more than original prices. Its amusing to discover articles written twenty or thirty years ago on such topics as: "The Morals of the Modern Girls"; "How to Brighten Cricket". and "Too Much Rough Play in Football".

\* \* \* \* \*

ANOTHER ANNUAL: On the morning of September 12th, all being well, shall be setting off for ten or so exhilarating, thrill-packed days in London town and vicinity. Once again I am looking forward with relish to meeting old friends, and other friends whom I shall be meeting for the first time. The faithful Len will be drawing up a programme and I shall be staying with John R. Shaw, 4 Brunswick Park, Camberwell, S.E. 5. All mail to York will be sent on to me.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT LECKENBY.

A SNIP THINNING DOWN COLLECTION. Thousands of Periodicals 1920 to outbreak of World War II at 3d per copy. Also thousands of 1914 period (now very scarce) all mint condition. Bulk orders preferred. Refer Herbert Leckenby and Len Packman. Postage extra. C.E.F. VENNIMORE, 25, BYRON AVENUE, WEST HOUNSLOW, MIDDLESEX.

# BLAKIANA

Conducted by JOSEPHINE PACKMAN

27, Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

In response to my recent request I have received a number of interesting letters. I have of course answered each one individually. I do, however, take this opportunity of again saying THANK YOU. I hope you will write again.

In my opinion the new set-up of the S.B. Library is rather good. It certainly makes the story easier to read. Incidentally, the quality of the stories has improved very much of late. They are at least topical - a policy which was always the key note of the U.J. and S.B.L. in the 'good old times'.

Do any of you recognise the cover design for S.B.L. 341 ("The Trail of the Missing Scientist" by A. Parsons)? It is a reprint of the cover of a SEXTON BLAKE ANNUAL. I am not sure whether it was the second or the third of those Annuals, because they were not dated; but I can pin it to one of these two (there were four altogether). The original illustration related to a Gwyn Evans story "The Case of the Wandering Jew", a story which was itself a reprint of U.J. No. 1130 but slightly abridged. In that same Annual one of G.H. Teed's excellent Chinese yarns made its third appearance. The story first appeared in S.B.L. No. 360 (1st series) "The Case of the Jade-Handled Knife", was reprinted in U.J. No. 1172 as "The Clue of the Cracked Footprint", and bore the same title - with several chapters deleted - in the Annual. What a pity none of those old stories are reprinted today.

Next month's Blakiana will contain part two of Walter Webb's "Raffles" article, and another of Derek Ford's Consulting Room Chats. I do ask you to write to him if you have any interesting items or tit-bits for inclusion in these Chats.

JOSIE PACKMAN.

\* \* \* \* \*

## CRICKETER AND CRACKSMAN

by Walter Webb

### PART ONE

A MAJOR EVENT IN DETECTIVE WRITING! ran the announcement heralding the first meeting between Sexton Blake, word-famous

private investigator, of Baker Street, London, much feared, greatly respected tracker of criminals, and A.J. Raffles, the suave, debonair, devil-may-care man-about-town, permanent resident of the Albany Hotel, Piccadilly, also both feared and respected by those small time criminals whose actions had brought upon their uneasy heads his wrath and contempt.

Strange but true is the fact that although Raffles did not enter the Sexton Blake stories until June 1937, he was even then the oldest created character, apart from Blake himself, being featured in either the Sexton Blake Library, or Detective Weekly.

It was in the Victorian era that Raffles first made his appearance, in a story entitled "The Amateur Cracksman", in the year 1899, an inspiration on the part of the author which was to make him world famous as a writer of crime novels and romantic stories.

Ernest William Hornung, creator of Raffles, was born in Middlesbrough, on 7 June 1866 and educated at Uppingham Grammar School. Having spent his early life in Australia he gained valuable experiences and these were reflected in his earlier tales of adventure. In the 1914-18 war, Hornung served with the Y.M.C.A. in France and Flanders, and not long after peace was signed passed on. He died on 23 March 1921.

Almost as famous a figure as Raffles himself was Bunny Manders, the junior partner, who shared in many a famous exploit, a willing and faithful ally, who, at one time in the days of their boyhood was Raffles' fag at school. The fostering of the partnership of Raffles and Bunny in crime was related in "The Ides of March", in which story was described how the junior partners, ruined and penniless by continuous losses at gambling was taken under Raffles' wing, which resulted in the two sharing their first criminal undertaking together.

Amateur cracksman by night, during what time he would crack a safe with calm and calculated assurance, he would, on the cricket field the day following, in his status of amateur cricketer, crack a century with the same immaculate ease. His calm, unruffled figure was familiar on all the famous county grounds, for he visited them all when playing for his county, which, in view of his nefarious enterprises must be nameless - Lords, the Oval, Trent Bridge, Old Trafford and all the rest. These were the days of Dr. W.G. Grace, of Gilbert Jessop, of Wilfred Rhodes and others, the truly great cricketers, whose names will never be forgotten in the

memories of those whose good fortune it was to witness their skill and sportsmanship on the field of play.

It was during a tour of Australia, as a member of the English touring side, that A.J. Raffles first took to crime. During the races at Melbourne, Raffles, having left all his cash in the hands of the bookmakers by the usual expedient of backing the wrong horses, found himself utterly and completely "broke". The only thing to do was to rob a bank, or something equally daring, and it was the bank that Raffles ultimately succeeded in relieving of several hundred golden sovereigns, just enough for his immediate needs.

The audacity and queer sense of humour which was such a part of the gentleman cracksman's make-up was particularly in evidence in "A Jubilee Present", a story set in the days of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Having, with the help of Bunny Manders, lifted a golden cup of ancient history from the Room of Gold in the British Museum, a cup which at one time was supposed to have been the property of Henry the Eighth and Queen Elizabeth, Raffles decided to send it to the Queen, for whom he had no greater reverence and admiration. And so it was that whilst all the police forces in the British Isles were searching frantically for the relic and the men who had stolen it, it was at that very moment, packed in an ordinary biscuit tin, en route to Buckingham Palace via the G.P.O.

One of the best stories of Raffles was that which appeared under the title of "The Gift of the Emperor", which recorded some thrilling events that took place on a German liner on its journey across the Mediterranean from Genoa to Naples. In order to retain his liberty, Raffles was compelled to jump overboard near the island of Elba, and his horrifying experiences as he battled for his life in the sea resulted in his dark hair turning completely white. Although he survived this ordeal he was never again to Bunny Manders the same Raffles of old, and in subsequent stories of his character Hornung always referred to Raffles as a prematurely aged, grey haired and handsome man, a fact which was to be overlooked, maybe accidentally, perhaps deliberately, when, in years to come, the character was to be revived under the guiding hand of Barry Perowne.

Many years ago the most notable stories dealing with the exploits of the gentleman cracksman were published in book form and were immensely popular. Afterwards when dramatised they proved

equally successful as a play, with Gerald du Maurier in the leading part. Two films dealing with the exploits of Raffles, produced in America, were shown over here, the first one having Ronald Colman in the role of the gentleman cracksman, and the other with David Niven in the title role.

Twelve years after Hornung's death arrangements were made to revive the character of Raffles, and it was in the pages of "The Thriller" that the first of the new adventures of the gentleman cracksman were published. The first story, entitled, simply, "Raffles!" appeared in issue No. 208, on Saturday, 21 January 1933, but as the paper was published a week in advance the publication date was given as 28 January.

The author responsible for the new series was Barry Perowne, who followed faithfully in the footsteps of his predecessor, so that Raffles was exactly as the reader had pictured him before - lean, handsome, brown, aquiline, with blue compelling eyes, dark, crisp hair, a strong unscrupulous mouth, between the lips of which was the inevitable Sullivan Egyptian cigarette. Of his skill as a batsman and bowler there was no deterioration whatever; he was still an automatic choice for the Gentlemen versus Players in the Festival games.

There were thirteen stories of Raffles published in "The Thriller", all splendidly illustrated by Ernest Hubbard, whose work is familiar to millions as the artist who draws 'Jane' so delightfully in the Daily Mirror these days.

Following these stories came that eventful entry of Raffles into the pages of the Sexton Blake Library, for in No. 577, Second Series, in an adventure entitled "Raffles v Sexton Blake", the two world-famous characters came to grips for the first time.

On renting a house near the estate of the Earl of Welland, near Bath, in Somerset, and learning that that gentleman was the proud possessor of a famous bracelet, known as the Fetter of Buddha, Raffles decided to relieve the Earl of it. In ignorance of the fact that Sexton Blake was a guest of the man they intended to rob, Raffles and Bunny laid their plans, and discovering that an order had been issued for the exhumation of the body of a local resident who had mysteriously died, in consequence of which the attention of the police would be concentrated on the reopening of the grave, the partners decided to make their bid whilst this was in progress. It was at this point that their path crossed that of a gang of Russian crooks who had contrived to possess themselves of a considerable

portion of the Crown Jewels of Russia, stolen during the confusion of the Revolution, the disappearance of which had been a mystery ever since. With rival gangs of Russian crooks striving for possession of the priceless treasure, Sexton Blake's task was primarily in attempting to thwart their intentions rather than being engaged in a battle of wits with the daring and impudence of the wily Raffles.

This story of murder, violence and robbery, with, as its setting a remote rain-swept Somersetshire village, is one of the best exploits of Raffles - and, incidentally, Sexton Blake as well - that has been printed. It ended with the famous rivals regarding each other with even greater respect, and, because but for Raffles' intervention, Blake would not have brought the case to a satisfactory conclusion, the criminologist was not sorry to find that having no shred of evidence by which he could pin the theft of the Fetter of Buddha on the gentleman cracksmen, he had to let him go.

\* \* \* \* \*

### THE ORIGIN OF SEXTON BLAKE

By Herbert Leckenby

\*\*\*

The "Daily Telegraph" recently published some very interesting correspondence on Sexton Blake. It was started off by a member of our circle, Frank Vernon Lay, who opened out by saying "Most emphatically as your leader states Holmes Has Had It. The reigning king is Sexton Blake".

Frank went on to give some illuminating details of the career of our favourite detective, and of the vast amount of research that was being undertaken by his admirers.

Several other letters followed. One stated that at the time the stories started there was actually a real Sexton Blake who was an official in the Inland Revenue in the Holborn district. Another, though being correct when he said the first story was written by Harry Blyth was wrong when he stated it appeared in No. 2 of the 1st Marvel. It was of course No. 6 as revealed for the first time in the C.D. some years ago.

The same correspondent estimated that the total number of words written about Blake would be about 25 million, and that the authors had probably shared well over £25,000. In a letter I sent to the "Telegraph" I suggested that these estimates were very much



out of it, the total words would be more like 150 million, and seeing that well over 3,000 stories had been written and that before the war an author got a cheque for about £60 for a S.B.L. the total amount earned would be over £100,000 even allowing for modest sums for the early stories.

However, the most interesting letter came from none other than the son of Harry Blyth. In view of its importance here it is in full:

"Sir, Alfred Harmsworth, as he was then, commissioned my father, Harry Blyth to write a series of detective stories. My father asked me, then a lad in my teens, which title I liked best for his hero, Gideon Barr or Sexton Blake. I plumped for Sexton Blake.

After 60 years he is still a money spinner, but never is there a word of acknowledgment for the creator of the character.

Yours faithfully,  
HARRY BLYTH. "

Well that settles what has often been debated, to whom went the credit for coining the name, doesn't it?

Now my letter to the Telegraph wasn't published but I was very pleased when I was informed by the editor that it had been sent on to Mr. Blyth. I was more pleased still when a day or so later I had a very interesting letter from Mr. Blyth himself.

Here are extracts from it:

"

35, Wrotham Road,  
Broadstairs, Kent. 31st Jul '55

Dear Mr. Leckenby,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of 28th inst. and to the "Daily Telegraph" for kindly sending it to me.

You are quite right about my father, Harry Blyth, using the pen name of Hal Meredith. It had family connections, being his mother's maiden name. But he used many others. "Major Daring", "Captain Sinclair", "Policeman Paul" etc. If my memory serves me right "The Marvel", "Pluck" and the "Union Jack" were all launched with the first half dozen or so tales by Harry Blyth, but usually a pen name was used. He was a free lance, and never on the staff of the Harmsworth Press.

A gentleman named Joseph Hatton had for years a couple of columns in the "Sunday People" entitled "Cigarette Papers". For some reason he dropped out, and my father filled the gap with "Third Class Crimes" or the undiscovered crimes of London. It was

these that induced Alfred Harmsworth to ask my father to start the "Halfpenny Marvel" with a series of detective yarns. When they met Harmsworth greeted him by saying "So you are the crime merchant" and my father replied "Just as you are a newspaper merchant". Harmsworth liked anyone who stood up to him. They all feared him in the office.

Incidentally, "Gideon Barr" was also used. The same material, but he was never so popular as "Sexton Blake". Strange what a difference a name can make.

Yours faithfully,  
HARRY BLYTH. "

Yes, indeed, what a difference a name can make! We've often said that where Blake is concerned, haven't we? Gideon Barr, Stanley Dare, Frank Ferrett, Martin Steele and scores of other sleuths with just ordinary names have long ago passed into oblivion. One wonders if Blake had been Frank instead of Sexton whether he would have suffered the same fate. I think we should pass a belated vote of thanks to the son of Harry Blyth for his insight over 60 years ago. For just think what a difference it has made to us.

In a further letter to me Mr. Blyth says:

"Yes you are quite right; my father did die at a comparatively early age, 46, of typhoid - they had not the means of treating that disease in those days that they have now.

The suggestion that the name Sexton Blake was taken from an official in the Inland Revenue in Holborn district is absurd. My father always "coined" his names. We lived then at Peckham Rye, and it is most unlikely he ever heard of any one in the Holborn district of the Inland Revenue. If he had he would certainly not have used his name for very obvious reasons.

Just as foolish is the statement that "Frank" was the original Christian name."

Well it's all very interesting indeed. I think our thanks are also due to Frank Lay for starting the correspondence.

And just as I finished writing this I've heard that our own sleuth, Bill Lofts, has been down to Bournemouth to see Mr. Blyth. As a result I guess there'll be more on the subject next month.

WANTED: Genuine Collector requires the following numbers to complete collection of First New Series Nelson Lee Library: 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 59, 67. All offers to :- NORMAN PRAGNELL, 33, BRAE ST., LIVERPOOL, 7, LANCs.

# HAMILTONIANA

Compiled by HERBERT LECKENBY

THE PASSING OF MARTIN CLIFFORD: Lest that startles you you had better read the letter signed 'Frank Richards' on another page first. From that you will see that there is really no need to be alarmed for those Tom Merry stories will be just as good when "Frank" takes over from "Martin" who was slightly the elder. All the same I fancy that faithful Gemites, being sentimentalists too, will sigh just a little wistfully if the old familiar name is to appear no more.

\* \* \* \* \*

SHOULD THEY HAVE GROWN UP? Gerry Allison's intriguing article created quite a lot of comment and as anticipated the "Noes" have it. Here are some of the views I received, and no doubt Gerry had many more.

Gerry Allison's article was grand, and opened a fine vista of what-might-have-been. However, Gerry's suggestions of those tremendous might-have-been series might not have occurred to the mind of Frank Richards! The ever-changing scene and personnel might have flitted by too quickly for the boyish mind, and gone into the limbo of forgotten things.

It is not easy to make life-long friends with ships or boys (or masters) that pass in the night, and the Magnet might not now have had a large circle of somewhat middle-aged, if not always paunchy and scant-haired, admirers.

Among those proverbs which Inky always quoted incorrectly, was one beginning "A bird in the hand"; let us be truly thankful for those lovely and delightful series which DID occur to Frank Richards, perhaps because he WAS dealing with a static and eternal youth. To have got rid of Bunter in the course of time, and the introduction of a new, similar character, might not have been successful; an example of such a failure can be seen in the Trimble character. Can one ever imagine the Gem having the sub-title Baggy Trimble's Own Paper?

Apropos the arrival at Greyfriars of the Son of Harry Wharton; the sons of Great Men, history teaches us, are so often such disappointing failures!

\* \* \*

MAURICE KUTNER.

Gerry's fine article raises a most interesting topic affecting not only Hamiltonians. I, like many others once attempted to

compile a Sexton Blake Saga only to come up against the problem that this year would be in all probability Sexton Blake's Centenary with Tinker a youthful eighty! The idea of a centenarian detective whilst perhaps novel would not I think commend itself to the A.P. So it is accepted that Blake remains a permanent 39 just as Wharton is 15.

I do not think it was ever the intention of any editors that the age of characters should remain fixed. In fact we do have a span of time with the early Sexton Blake which ceased when he became a regular fixture. It was one of those things which just happen. Later, much later the Thomson editors decided to avoid that possible criticism and instructed that the school characters should grow up and in the main they are now forgotten although I have heard it rumoured that they have a few followers.

It is difficult to say what makes a story popular - it's not necessarily good writing. There are many examples of badly written popular stories. Charles Hamilton has written many stories not concerning the famous three schools some of them very fine stories indeed but none of them can usurp the place of the favourites.

As to whether it is right to say that Hitler's subs. succeeded where the Kaiser's failed well it has been said by one who could know that the Magnet and Gem were doomed anyway - circulations had fallen and Hitler only hastened a decision that had already been made. Be that as it may the charm of Greyfriars etc. is that the best stories can be read time and time again and one's enjoyment never lessen. That's the essence of great writing - the plots are only incidental and whatever Hamilton wrote or is yet to write he can never surpass his greatest triumphs. To pick one of them up is to be transported back to the days of one's youth amongst the scenes and characters that have come to be almost personal friends. But if one picked one up and discovered characters who were new and the absence of say Wharton and Bunter would it be the same. I doubt it. The constant repetition of "Hallo hallo hallo" "I say you fellows" and the countless idioms and idiosyncracies all in time create an atmosphere of familiarity. To hear the Brothers Whiter cross-talk whole passages of Greyfriars lore is a side-splitting experience that must be heard to be appreciated.

No leave them as they are and always have been. Let our fancies roam with 'if' and 'maybes' if you like but do not spoil the illusion. In his own field Hamilton is King - extend it and I feel he would become as so many others merely the writer of very

good stories but not the creator of characters that will live for ever.

FRANK VERNON LAY.

\* \* \*

17, Osborne Road, Hornchurch, Essex.

Dear Herbert,

8.8.55.

Sorry I'm late placing the order for the Annual, but here it is at last, together with cheque.

The few hints you have given us with regards to the contents have begun to make my mouth water already.

I thought Rex Hardinge's letter in the August C.D. was extremely interesting and so was Len Packman's article on the St. Jim's Sports Competition series.

I was keenly interested in Gerry Allison's article "Should They Have Grown Up". I must agree with much of what he says but there is one point he has overlooked. If the original Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rookwood characters had moved up the school and eventually left, making way for new characters, I don't think that there would be now that great demand for ALL copies of the "Magnet" and "Gem" which exists under present circumstances.

Gerry says that the "Magnet" containing the story of Wingate's farewell would be priceless. To some readers perhaps it would be, but in such circumstances, later readers, say those between 1930 and 1940, would never have heard of Wingate and couldn't care less when he left Greyfriars.

As it is, we all like to get hold of the old numbers, to see just how long it took Levison to "reform", to read how Wharton and Cherry first met, or to find out how any character arrived at the school to which his creator allocated him.

Nevertheless, Gerry's article was intriguing.

RON. CROLLIE

\* \* \*

Gerry Allison's article was very interesting: reminded me of your article on the same subject in the S.P.C. about 10 years ago. The idea of their growing up has many attractions, but I prefer them as they are!

ANTHONY BAKER.

\* \* \*

DO YOU REMEMBER?

By ROGER M. JENKINS

No. 12 - Schoolboys' Own Libraries Nos. 308 & 317.

Cardew of St. Jim's and Mornington of Rookwood are a fascinating pair of characters for comparison. Cardew is the more delight-

ful to read about, more insouciant and urbane. Moreover, his character remained the same since he was first introduced into the stories. Mornington, on the other hand, changed as frequently as Vernon-Smith, sometimes blackguard, sometimes scoundrel, sometimes hero. Cardew was wealthy and well-connected, but Mornington was deprived of his fortune when his cousin Herbert turned up. He did not begrudge the one-time waif the money that had once been his, but he certainly missed it, and this deprivation undoubtedly embittered him. As he said to Erroll on one occasion, "You don't care what clothes you wear so long as you're decent! I care no end. I hate wearin' a collar twice and a necktie three times. I hate havin' my boots soled and heeled. I hate lookin' at a quid twice before I spend it. In fact," said Mornington, with a bitter grin - "in fact, I've all the tastes of a gentleman's gentleman, and that's what I ought to be, I suppose. I belong to the vulgar rich, and I can't get out of it. And you don't understand it a little bit." Charles Hamilton must have been thinking of that line from Tennyson about sorrow's crown of sorrow being the remembrance of happier things.

Like Cardew, Mornington also aspired to be junior captain, and like Cardew he succeeded. But there the resemblance ends. Mornington's rivalry was mainly a friendly one, whereas Cardew's was most unfriendly, though he maintained his urbanity as long as possible. Mornington, on the other hand, was rather reckless in the bribes he offered voters (Smythe, Tracy, and Howard were promised places in the team) whereas Cardew's promises were as vague and bland as a politician's.

The Rookwood series was the earlier of the two, appearing in the Boys' Friend in 1919, and running straight through from July to October without a break for the holidays. It was reprinted in Nos. 308 and 317 of the Schoolboys' Own Library. Many themes were first tried out at Rookwood, to be developed more fully in the Magnet and Gem at a later date, though in this case the prototype suffered from no lack of development itself.

Mornington's opportunity arose when Smythe offered the junior eleven the use of a large car to take them over to Greyfriars. Mornington bore in mind the tag from Vergil "Timeo Danaos et dona ferentis" (I fear the Greeks and the gifts they bring), but Jimmy Silver unsuspectingly accepted the offer. As a result, the junior eleven was taken for a ride into Devon, while Smythe presented his own team at Greyfriars. The dissatisfaction this incident caused,

and the fact that Jimmy Silver had refused to heed Mornington's warning, were used as a lever by Mornington to demand a new election, which he won. Like Cardew, he had his initial successes and, again like Cardew, he later tired of the whole business. The St. Jim's and Rookwood series may be read one after another without any loss of enjoyment, so differently are they constructed and so well do they illustrate the characters who had perhaps more dramatic potentialities than any other at their respective schools.

- - - - -

BUNTER, THE HYPNOTIST

By ERIC FAYNE

The B.B.C. work in a mysterious way their wonders to perform. Very black marks to the individual who had the strange idea of presenting the latest spasms of Bunter on Television between 3 and 4 in the afternoon.

"BUNTER, THE HYPNOTIST", presented on Saturday, 23rd July, was a jolly romp, and seemed to have been better rehearsed than one or two of the previous offerings.

Gerald Campion, as usual, was superb as the great Billy. I can think of nobody who could be more convincing in the part. The supporting players did not seem to be so happily cast. Some of the 'boys' were too mature for the parts of Removites, and while maturity need be no drawback, as Gerald Campion proves so definitely, these players, with the possible exception of Skinner, who did his part well, appeared to lack the experience to make themselves really convincing. In contrast, the lad who played Lord Mauleverer, with an unbroken voice, seemed rather too youthful, at any rate beside the others.

Mr. Quelch did his best, but was something of a caricature of the master with the gimlet eyes.

Still, it was a very jolly half-hour, and, after all, in these delightful playlets of Frank Richards, it is Billy Bunter who counts. Cheers for Billy, and for Frank Richards.

\* \* \* \* \*

Now here's something for the neglected Rookwood fans. - H.L.

LOVELL'S LAMENTABLE LAPSE

By W.F. Champion

There are three junior schoolboys of popular fiction who are as alike, fundamentally, as the proverbial peas in a pod. All of heavy stature, they are inclined to snort rather than give vent to

normal speech; they are heavy-handed; it has oft been said that one "bellows like a bull", and the other two are undeniably gruff in approach. Furthermore, on more than one occasion they have displayed a perverseness that has well-nigh caused an irreparable breach in their respective studies. In other words, Greyfriars has its Johnny Bull, St. Jims its George Herries, and Rookwood its Arthur Edward Lovell; but swop any two of them—or all three for that matter—and life at the three famous schools would go on without any appreciable change in the normal trend.

I would like to mention here, too, that while we all have our idiosyncrasies and our bad points, we do not all, alas, possess the redeeming features of Messrs. Bull, Herries and Lovell.

My mind goes back through the years to a certain time when Lovell was even a little more perverse than usual; in fact, he kicked over the traces in no uncertain manner, and it all started in such a simple way—delightfully simple!

A new boy, a "blessed Modern" named Loring, is due at Rookwood, and taking into consideration the fact that Loring is a relation of Tommy Dodd and it is a half-holiday, what could be better, to quote Lovell, than to meet the new boy at the station and jape him?"

However, there is opposition: Uncle James is for cycling; Newcome is for the pictures; and Raby keeps observing that "The river is rippling." After several minutes rather heated debate, Lovell rises to his feet 'with an expression of dogged determination on his face', there follows another few minutes altercation, then Arthur Edward tramps to the door.

"Hold on, Lovell—"

"Well?" grunted Arthur Edward, turning his head.

"It's really rather rough on a new kid, old chap," urged Jimmy Silver. "Of course, it's a good idea—really ripping—but if it was played on us when we were new kids, we should have thought it was—was—rather—rather"

"Rather what?" asked Lovell, with a gleam in his eyes.

"Well, rather inconsiderate, don't you think?"

"No, I don't."

"Ahem!"

"So I'm inconsiderate, am I?" demanded Lovell.

"Well, you see—"

"Oh, say what you think!" growled Lovell. "I do. For instance, I think you're a cheeky ass, Jimmy Silver, and I don't make any bones about telling you so!"



"Well, then, I do think that it's inconsiderate," exclaimed Jimmy, rather warmly. "I think it's unfeeling, if you want the exact truth."

"So I'm unfeeling?" growled Lovell.

"In this instance——"

"That's enough!"

Lovell strode to the door and dragged it open.

"Lovell, old chap——" began Jimmy.

Slam!

Arthur Edward Lovell was gone.

It was as simple as that.

We don't think any the worse of Lovell for the "tiff". It it had been Newcome, or Raby, who stormed out of the study like that, we would have been puzzled——a little worried. But it was the kind of thing that old Lovell, or Bull, or Herries, would do——and get away with——without our feeling of affection for them being in any way impaired.

On this occasion it went from bad to worse. The wrathful classical junior tries to enlist the aid of other Fourth-formers for his proposed jape, but, in the end, has to be content with the doubtful Tubby Muffin. He hires a trap from the Coombe Arms, meets Loring, and attempts to ditch him at Bagshot School. The Modern boy, however, is very keen, and Muffin's frequent chortlings on the journey make him suspicious——the outcome being that Lovell and Muffin themselves are "ditched", whilst Loring drives off cheerfully in the trap. To further add to Lovell's misfortunes, that humorous Bagshot trio, Pankley, Poole and Putter, proceed to frogs-march him down the dusty lane, and he eventually arrives back at Rookwood very much the worse for wear, breathing fire and murder, and unwisely allowing the sun to go down on his wrath.

This was a good yarn, very human, and one I am confident that was seldom bettered by Charles Hamilton. Lovell speaks and acts as we know he will speak and act; we are there with him—— and the more perverse he becomes, the more we feel sorry for him.

His next move, despite his friend's advice, is to challenge Loring to a fight. With great forbearance, the new boy refuses, whereupon Lovell pulls his nose and calls him a funk. Naturally, this action does result in a fight, a real organised affair in the gym, where, after a terrific tussle, Lovell meets his Waterloo.

He refuses to take Loring's proffered hand of friendship——an act that makes Jimmy feel really ashamed of his chum——and things

get "worsed and worsed". It really is a rough patch for the Fistical Four, for Uncle James, Newcome and Raby become as miserable as their defeated friend. As Shakespeare put it: "When sorrows come, they come not in single spies, but in battalions." ---for in the form-room, Mr. Bootles admonishes Lovell for looking surly, in fact, lectures the junior to some length on the subject of surliness---at the end of which time the seething Lovell looks even surlier! In Lovell's lonely bitterness, the unfortunate Loring takes on the guise of a Kaiser and a Hitler rolled into one---the arch enemy of all organised life at Rockwood! So he once more challenges the new boy to a fight, which challenge Loring most sensibly ignores, remarking that he has been sent to Rockwood to work, not to fight. To Lovell's taunts of cowardice, the Modern turns a deaf ear.

There is no knowing to what limits Lovell's intense, brooding bitterness would have driven him had not the famous old school been visited on the next half-holiday by a bevy of beauty in the shape of Jimmy's cousin Phyllis, and her friends from Cliff House, Marjorie Hazeldene and Clara Trevlyn. Of course, as everyone knows, Lovell is extremely susceptible to the undoubted charms of Cousin Phyllis. Moreover, he has promised to take her for a sail on the river in his canoe, and, as she daintily embarks, Arthur Edward is mentally congratulating himself that his fair companion has not notice the somewhat bulbous appearance of his nose---relic of his recent fight with Loring!

Then comes drama---swift and alarmingly!

Smythe, of the Shell, is also on the river, with his friends, Howard and Tracy, and, in an attempt to show-off before the girls, the immaculate Adolphus somehow contrives to ram the frail canoe. In a twinkling, Cousin Phyllis and Lovell are precipitated into the water, and while Lovell struggles desperately to extricate himself from the enveloping folds of the sail, the girl finds herself out of depth and in difficulties in a dangerous reach of the river.

But her cry for help has been heard.

'A junior runs swiftly from under the trees, dropping his book and tearing off his jacket as he races towards the bank. It is Loring!'

The new boy dives in cleanly, grasps Phyllis, and, swimming strongly and steadily, brings her safely to Smythe's boat, where they are both ped on board. Shortly afterwards the soaked girl

is rushed off to the school, Marjorie and Clara and most of the juniors following.

The end is rather touchingly sweet, and truly Hamiltonian of a bygone age.

'Lovell was wading out now. He looked at Loring

"You!" he muttered. "It—it was you——"

"How lucky I happened to be reading my book under the trees here," said Loring.

"I—I couldn't help. I—I was tangled in that rotten sail!" muttered Lovell. "I—I thought—oh, I thought——" his voice trembled, and there was a rush of tears in his eyes.

Loring looked at him curiously.

"If—if you hadn't——" stammered Lovell.

He did not speak again for a minute; he could not. He came nearer to the Modern junior, suddenly, and held out a wet hand.

"I—I'm a silly fool, Loring," he said. "I—I'm sorry! I—you offered to shake hands with me the other day, and I wouldn't! Now——"

"Now you will," said Loring with a smile. "All serene—there's my fist. I don't quite see what you've been down on me so much for, Lovell. I'm not really a bad chap when you know me."

"Oh, I was a silly fool—an obstinate, silly ass!" said Lovell, repentantly. "I—I called you a funk, and now—now you—I'm sorry, Loring. I—I—I'd like to be friend, if you'd care to be friends with such a silly, waxy ass——"

"Nothing I'd like better, old scout. It's a go."

"Let's get in," said Lovell, abruptly.

Two drenched and dripping juniors ran for the school.'

Oh! how we feel that we could simply hug old Lovell, at that moment—and Loring, too, for that matter.

Later on, when Lovell insists that his late enemy be invited to tea with the visitors in the end study, the weight is lifted as much off our shoulders as it is off the shoulders of Jimmy Silver, Raby and Newcome. And, after tea, when the girls are seated in the trap that is to take them the station, Lovell even offers his seat to Loring—but is quite relieved when his heroic sacrifice is not accepted.

\* \* \* \* \*

MAGNET TITLES (Cont'd).. 1489. The Hero of the Circus; 1490. The Boy Who Knew Too Much; 1491. Johnny Bill on the Run; 1492. The Schemers of Study Seven; 1493. His Convict Cousin.

## Letter Box

NEWS ABOUT THE NEW TOM MERRY BOOKS

Rose Lawn, Kingsgate, Broadstairs, Kent.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

August 17th, 1955.

About the new Tom Merry books, I expect them to appear before very long, but dates as usual are uncertain. The first three titles are Tom Merry and Co. Caravanners: Tom Merry's Triumph: and Cardew's Catch: and just at the moment I am writing "Trouble for Tom" in which BB. pays a visit to St. Jim's with disastrous results. By the way, "Martin Clifford" is likely to disappear from the Tom Merry title-pages, "Frank Richards" taking its place: the publisher thinks it a good idea, and no doubt it is time to give up keeping an open secret.

With kindest regards,

Always yours sincerely, FRANK RICHARDS.

\* \* \*

'ESME' is Found - in Two Places

706, Lordship Lane, Wood Green,

London, N.22. 4.8.55.

Dear Herbert,

Many thanks for the August issue of the "C.D."

Dear me!!!! Herbert you are slipping. Did you not keep your "Expressions"??? The magazine that Wheeler Dryden issued after the change in name from "Collecting Juvenile Literature. In the issue dated November 1922. Vol. 1 number 2, on page 8 you will find an excellent article on the "Crusoe Magazine" which eventually after number 24 changed its name to the "Golden Magazine". Actually the article is by your old esteemed friend who recently passed over Henry Stables.

Yours sincerely, BEN WHITER.

\* \* \*

100 Broomfield Road, Glasgow, N. 7.8.55.

Dear Mr. Leckenby

I expect you will have been glugged by letters giving you this information already, but Esme stories appeared in Modern Boy Nos. 102-115 featuring him at a girls' school. They read like a reprint from earlier days.

Yours sincerely, ROB. WILSON.

\* \* \*

Dear Herbert, 38, Victoria Avenue, Wickford, Essex. 9.8.55.

With regard to the story "Poor Dear Esme" I don't remember this particular story but I did read "The Escapades of Esme" also by A.M. Burrage in the Modern Boy in early 1930. (In fact I have one copy in front of me now). Yours sincerely, JIM SUTCLIFFE.



By JACK WOOD, NOSTAW, 328, STOCKTON LANE, YORK.

This month I commend to you with little preamble a timely reminder by Norman Pragnell, from whom we have not heard for some time. How right he is, of course, in what he has to say, and two Willy Handforth yarns which always remain in my memory are those in which he and the chums of the Third took over and managed a small menagerie during the illness of the owner, and the story in which Willy captured an escaped tiger to save the life of Amos Whittle and the Half Mile Meadow for St. Frank's.

But, let Norman tell in his own words,.....

"AND JUSTICE WAS DONE"

Despite the great differences in their styles of writing and their contrasting types of schools, there was at least one thing that Charles Hamilton and Edwy Searles Brooks had in common, and that was their attitude to animals, especially to those who were the pets of our schoolboy heroes. Man's inhumanity to those animals who cannot fend for themselves is a terrible blot on our civilisation

and it is good that both Hamilton and Brooks shewed no mercy to those who ill-treated them. No mere bumping, but a severe thrashing or a flogging was the inevitable penalty for one who was caught perpetuating such a crime.

Some very forthright views on this subject were expressed by Edward Oswald Handforth on the occasion when the St. Frank's boys discovered Isirium, the lost land in the Sahara. Referring to an orgy that was to appear in the arena he said "What do you take me for - a rotter who likes beastly spectacles. I love to see sport, but there's nothing sporting in torturing helpless animals". And again "One's as bad as the other, and anybody who goes fox-hunting or rabbit coursing ought to be classed as a brute". Handforth would not even defend his own father who apparently practised hunting. "And nothing's said - Just because they are rich with big country houses they can practise these things. But I think they ought to be barred". Although quite a number of the St. Frank's juniors owned pets of one type or another it was Willy Handforth who possessed what was probably the most remarkable collection of animals ever to be owned by a junior schoolboy. The welfare of his pets was his prime concern at all times, and if one of them was sick then neither the welfare of the school nor even life itself mattered one iota to him. In number 412 Old Series we find Lumpy Bill with two of his cronies amusing themselves by kicking a mongrel dog, whose legs they have carefully tied up with string. Willy becomes furious and attempts to rescue the dog, but with all his courage is hardly big enough to tackle the three toughs, who push him back and then throw the bound dog in the river. Fortunately Alf Huggins comes along, and at the sight of young Willy being tackled by the three louts he wades in, and Lumpy Bill and his two cronies are given the severest hiding they have ever suffered in their lives. The description of the rescue of the mongrel and the thrashing of Lumpy Bill can only be described as brilliant.

In the "Flood Series" which appeared in 1927 we saw the full extent to which Willy Handforth put the welfare of his pets above anything else. St. Franks was in a state of chaos through the floods and the waters were five feet deep in the studies and the common room, and still rising with heavy rain continuously lashing down.

Willy's one and only concern was to rescue all his pets which were trapped in a section of the building which comprised the cycle

shed. Let us read how Brooks describes Handforth minor's views. "All my pets are out there in the shed! Nobody's had time to lift a finger yet, but I mean to make an effort."

"Your pets" stormed Edward Oswald Handforth. "I thought you meant human lives!"

"Well I didn't - I meant something more important!"

"More important! You young fathead" -

"Yes" roared Willy, flaring up "Human beings can save themselves if they've got an ounce of gumption, but what chance have these poor creatures - They're helpless in cages and unless I do something they'll all be drowned like rats in a trap."

Needless to say the attempt is made and by means of converting a table into a raft Willy with his two chums sets sail across the Triangle. The cycle shed is found to be nearly under water but Willy with complete disregard for his own safety forces an entry into the shed, and to his joy finds all the animals still alive - but only just. All the pets including Nipper's Boz are rescued and the return trip - not without further perils - is made to the Ancient House.

An amusing episode is described by Brooks at the end of this series in which Rupert the Rat is nearly exterminated by Handforth senior. The St. Frank's juniors are sailing in a converted barge and Willy is having some trouble collecting his pets together. Rupert was unwise to venture into a cabin belonging to Irene Manners, and her scream on encountering Rupert was enough to bring Edward Oswald tearing down to her. Seeing what he believed to be an ordinary rat he seized a poker and was just in the act of ending Rupert's life when Willy, also hearing the scream rushed down as well and in the nick of time prevented a terrible murder. After explaining what a harmless rat Rupert was, Willy even persuaded Irene to pick him up and stroke him. A fascinating little story this and one we have enjoyed reading over and over again.

It was towards the end of 1928 that there appeared the "Castleton" series and it was in the last number that Arthur Castleton, mistaken for his brother is regarded as true blue solely on account of the attitude that Marmaduke took towards him. Here is Brook's account of this.

"Marmaduke was having a close look at the newcomer. It was possible that Marmaduke knew a lot more than Willy himself. At any rate he immediately recognized Arthur as a friend."

And later "Well, my pets know a sportsman when they see one" nodded

Willy cooly. "A friend of theirs Castleton is a friend of mine." It may be well argued that Willy's attitude, and indeed the attitude of most of our schoolboy characters was exaggerated, but we must remember that as lads most of us were inclined to see only two shades, black and white and were apt to miss the grey varieties. If our schoolboys were true blue then they were liked by animals. If they were of the Bernard Forrest type, then the opposite was the case.

In Number 82 of the First New Series began - at least to the writer of this article - the most enjoyable of the St. Frank's barring-out stories. We all remember this series, but how many of us remember the small incident that started it all - nothing more than the ill-treatment of a small kitten. Merrell and Marriott had taken hold of a kitten that had been injured by a motor-car. To amuse themselves they had tied a can to its injured tail and then had started to throw stones at it. But alas for them, they were discovered by the famous Edward Oswald. Let Brooks tell us a little of what happened.

"Crash". The full weight of Handforth's shoulder was behind that punch and David Merrell went over with a thud.

"I'm going to punish you chaps properly" roared Handforth, his eyes blazing with indignation. "You contemptible rotters! You cruel crawling hounds! Take that Merrell. Yes by George, and you can take this Marriott." This bright pair had without any doubt taken the worst thrashing of their lives. The rest of the story followed logically from the kitten incident. Handforth was caught administering the thrashing, and sentenced to a public flogging. He refused to sneak and give a true explanation, and with Church and McClure barred himself out in study D.

It was in October of 1928 that Willy enters our story again. He had rescued an injured greyhound that had been thrown out of a car by a couple of rascally greyhound track bookies. The story of Willy's attempt to nurse "Lightning" - as he was later called - back to health is one of the finest episodes we have ever read in the Nelson Lee Library. Let us read a few lines of Brooks' description of young Handforth tendering the sick dog.

"There was a happy note in Willy's voice. He was on his knees, and he was gently and tenderly continuing his ministrations. Before him, on the blankets, lay the injured greyhound. There was a great change in the dog now. His eyes were open and there was intelligence in their depths. He looked at Willy with a steady trusting



gaze. There was something extraordinary eloquent of understanding in those eyes."

Willy's love for the dog is rewarded, when after an all night vigil he realized that Lightning is passed the crisis and is on the road to full recovery.

In February of 1930 there appeared a very fine detective-adventure yarn dealing with Nelson Lee's tussle with "Dacca" the devil dwarf, and once again Willy's power over animals is richly portrayed.

Nelson Lee and all of his cub detective had been captured by Dacca and were imprisoned in an underground cell, not knowing what their fate was to be. They did not have long to wait however for Dacca soon informed them of their intended demise. Thousands of hungry rats were released into the cell, giving Lee his stickiest problem to solve for many a year. Yet neither Lee nor Nipper were able to deal with this grave situation for it was left to Willy Handforth and Stanley Waldo to get them all out of trouble. Waldo, through his amazing strength managed to bend the iron bars of their cage and so release them all into the outer cell - the rest was up to Willy. Here we can read how it was done.

"And now he made those strange noises with his mouth - queer little coaxing sounds. The rats came round him and as if by magic, many of them leapt from Nelson Lees' shoulders onto Willy's. Slowly Willy backed away over towards one of the walls. The rats followed him - swarms and droves of them. They were attracted in that same remarkable way. They were squealing and twittering, understanding, perhaps in their own way that Willy was their master. They obeyed his summons. They smothered him from head to foot and those who could not get near, swarmed round, actually fighting among themselves to get closer."

Rather a far-fetched story! Yes - perhaps. We will not defend it against this charge. But what a first class story. Possibly the best that Brooks wrote in the Second New Series.

Our final story appeared in July 1933, and in the main dealt with Willy Handforth's attempt to save his brother from expulsion. In this article however we are only concerned in what happened to Bernard Forrest as a result of ill-treating Marmaduke the Monkey. Marmaduke was enjoying a little exercise in Little Side and was prepared to convey his good wishes to all and sundry. More's the pity that he chose to pick Bernard Forrest. The monkey's friendly overtures were treated with a heavy application of Forrest's boot

which made Marmaduke squeal with pain. The way of a transgressor is hard, and Forrest was to find himself no exception. Mr. Crowell had spotted the incident and gave Forrest five hundred lines to be done at once, thus resulting in a lost half day. This punishment to Willy Handforth was only a mere trifle - something more drastic would be needed to fit this case. Listen to Willy talking to Forrest.

"You need more drastic treatment - and you'll get it. The fellow who kicks one of my pets doesn't get away with five hundred lines."

Willy put his fingers to his mouth and let out three devastating blasts. Forrest knew what that meant and could not escape. Within second he was buried beneath a sea of fags who were none too gentle of their treatment. A mere battered wretch of a schoolboy was finally carried and pitched head-long into a large bed of stinging nettles, this being one of the most unpleasant experiences that can fall the lot of any human being. The writer of this article knows how painful this can be for he has been dealt with in the same way. Many years ago whilst on a school outing he was foolish enough to throw another boy's spoon into a bed of nettles. The writer was unceremoniously thrown in to fetch it out again. The lesson, painful though it was, was soon learnt.

These are just a few of the stories concerning animals that appeared in the Nelson Library, and we might ask ourselves if there is anything that can be learnt from them. We would crave our Editor's indulgence for just a few lines if we depart from what normally appears as subject matter in the Collectors' Digest. A man was recently find ten pounds for putting a dog into a sack and beating it to death with a stick. Can one imagine what would have happened if that dog had belonged to Willy Handforth, Bob Cherry, Jimmy Silver or Tom Merry. The mind boggles at the imagination of the punishment that would have been dealt out to the culprit. Ill-treatment of animals is a filthy thing and should be punished with the utmost severity. Brooks and Hamilton set a very strict code of conduct on such matters and it is one that we would all do well to follow.

---

WANTED: Chums, bound volumes, monthly or weekly parts for the years 1919, 1920, 1921, and 1923. H.G. MATTHEWS, 38 VICTORIA ST., ALDERNEY, CHANNEL ISLES.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Walter Fleming wishes to advise all hobby friends that his address is now 58 BOARDMAN AVENUE, CHINGFORD LONDON, E.4.

---

---

# OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB

---

## LONDON SECTION

The September meeting of the club will be held on Sunday, 18th September, 4 p.m. sharp at 52, Kipling Avenue, Woodingdean, Brighton, Sussex. Hosts Bill and Gladys Jardine. Vice-president Herbert Leckenby hopes to attend. Frequent trains from Victoria Station, tickets can be booked from most London Underground stations at cheap rates. Main party generally catch the 10 a.m. train, meeting at the station about 9.30 a.m. Bus to Woodingdean numbers 2 and 2A from stop near clock tower in road leading from the Brighton station to the front. Frequent fast trains back home. It is hoped that the opportunity to have a couple of hours by the sea and an enjoyable meeting will be taken by a good attendance.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

\* \* \* \* \*

(Note: Owing to pressure on space I have been compelled to cut down the reports this month. My apologies to the Clubs and the secretaries concerned. - H.L.)

NORTHERN'S meeting was held August 13th. A hearty welcome was given to a new member, Edgar Creek and his two daughters. It was a pleasure, too, to have Cliff Beardsell again.

Gerry Allison told of the remarkable response to the Magnet advert. He then went on to give the fourth of his cricket story readings - Remove versus Shell from 'Quits' Magnet No. 231. Followed a name building game and 'Ask Me Another' quiz. Team: Gerry Allison, Bill Williamson, Jack Wood. Question Master H.L. Jack 15 marks, Gerry 13½, Bill 8. Altogether a lively evening. Next meeting Sept. 10th.

\* \* \* \* \*

MIDLAND meeting, July 25th. A welcome visitor, Bill Lofts who gave an interesting chat.

Jack Ingram gave a talk on Greyfriars and quoted from E.S. Turner's best seller 'Boys Will be Boys'. An animated discussion followed leading up to 'Is Frank Richards a greater writer than the more orthodox writers like Reed, Hadath and Wodehouse'.

Mrs. W. Brown also conducted an excellent Greyfriars Quiz which tested the knowledge of all the Hamiltonians present.

\* \* \* \* \*

---

MERSEYSIDE: For the meeting on August 14th, the Annual Birthday Party was brought forward a month in order to suitably bid farewell to one of its most stalwart members, Frank Unwin, whose scholastic duties has taken him to the south of England. The piece de resistance of a great feed was a huge cake in the form of a book, suitably inscribed. Sir Frederick Bowman made one of his delightful little speeches, and in a happy response Frank said he would continue to be a member, and attend whenever possible. The members then sang 'For he's a jolly good fellow'.

Frank then conducted another session of 'Down You Go'.

Next meeting Sept. 11th, when the proposed trip to Birmingham on the 21st will be discussed.

Magnets, Gems, Populars, S.O.Ls. Sexton Blakes, Boys Friends, Boys Realms, Boys Cinemas, Boys Magazines, Nelson Lees, Holiday Annuals, Buffalo Bills, Dick Turpins, Robin Hoods, Bullseyes, Monster Libraries, Marvels, Union Jacks, Young Britains, Plucks, Pilots, Thrillers, Detective Weeklys. Copies of most periods available. Also Comics and Old Bloods (1870-1900) Bound...Loose

S.A.E. Please. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Exchange suggestions welcomed. T. LAMBERT, 347 GERTRUDE RD., NORWICH.

AVAILABLE: Magnets, Gems, Holiday Annuals, Populars, Marvels, Union Jacks, Sexton Blake Libs., Detective Weeklies, Comics, Boys Magazines, Nelson Lees, 1st 2nd and 3rd series, Robin Hoods Libs, Buffalo Bills, Adventures, Wizards, Rovers, Triumphs, Claude Duvals, Travel and Inventions, Chums, Scout, B.O.Ps., Boys Cinemas, Illustrated Police Budgets, (rare) Schoolgirls Own Annuals, School Friend Annuals, Film Annuals, etc. etc. S.A.E. Please. WANTED: S.B.Ls. 1915-35. N.L. Lib. 1913-18, C. Digests 1-30, Penny Dreadfuls, etc. RONALD ROUSE, 3 St. LEONARDS TERRACE, GAS-HILL, NORWICH.

OFFERED: £1 for The Prize 1909; £1 for Chums 1910; 10/- for Gem No. 744; 5/- each for Populars Nos. 163-4, 166, 168. F. MACHIN, 38 ST. THOMAS'S ROAD, PRESTON.

HAVE YOU ORDERED YOUR 1955 ANNUAL?

ADVERTISE IN THE C.D. \* \* \* 1d PER WORD.

ORK DUPLICATING SERVICES, 7, The Shambles, York. Tel: York 5148.