

The Collector's Digest

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 110.

PRICE 1s.6d.

FEBRUARY 1956



"Moxon suddenly dug his spurs into his horse and darted away."



REPRODUCTION of a C.H. CHAPMAN drawing for 'Moxon the Mystic' BIG BUDGET, July 8th, 1905, and a sketch of Mr. Chapman as he then was.

• C. H. CHAPMAN. •

BILL MARTIN

93 HILLSIDE LONDON, N.W.10.

WORLD FAMOUS

FOR OLD BOYS' BOOKS

'Phone: ELGar 3230.

Cables: SUPERB USED, LONDON

FEBRUARY 1956 OFFERS

LOT o' FUN 1907-1914 24/- Dozen
COMIC LIFE 1900-1927 18/- "
BIG COMIC 1914-1915 18/- "
PUCK COMIC 1908-1920 24/- "
12 Mixed Comics Pre 1920 18/- "
Complete Set Holiday Annuals
P.O.R.

Nelson Lees 1917-1922 24/- Doz.
Sexton Blakes 1st Series 24/- "
Boys Champion Journal 118 Nos.
£6.

Boys Friends by Gwen Conquest
2/6 each.
Magnets 1560/1683 any number
1/6 each.
Gems 1560/1663, any number
1/6 each.

Charles Peace The Burglar 1st
Edition Bound 60/-.

Union Jacks Runs of 26 copies
£2. 0. 0.

Sexton Blakes 3rd Series, 7d.
& 8d. Editions 9/- dozen.

Saturday Magazine Bound in Hand-
some Leather 1833/4/5/6/7/8
£1.1.0 each - must have cost
this for Binding, each volume
as Good as New; yet over 120
years old.

Bunter & Tom Merry Books 2/6 ea.
Marvels 1918-1921 18/- per doz.

Young Ladies Journals 4 vols.
1868/9/70/71 £10. 0. 0.

All Buy G.W.M. Reynolds 5/- ea.

"Young Duchess" or "Memoirs of
a Lady of Quality"? The Pixy -
Unbaptised Child. "Robert
Macaire". "Bronze Statue" - or
"Virgins Kiss", "The Steam
Packet". "The Soldiers Wife".
"The Seamstress" or "White Slave
of England" "Coral Island" "A
Youths Career of Crime" "Pope
Joan" or "The Female Pontiff".
These are just a few. More
titles next month.

All Editions Published by
Hogarth House in Stock. State
Requirements. Items such as
"The Blue Dwarf" "Black Eyed
Susan" "Brigands of the Sea"
"Outlaws of Sherwood Forest"
etc., etc., etc.

Also In Stock Penny Dreadfuls
and Fiecco Boys Journals, Period
1836-1900 From the Collections
of The Late Barry Ono, James
Modercraft, J.J. Wilson, F. Jay,
all in Penny Numbers & Bound
Complete in Handsome Leather
and Super Tooling by Competent
Craftsmen.

CASH WITH ORDER

POSTAGE and INSURANCE EXTRA

The Collectors' Digest

Vol. 10 No. 110

Price 1s. 6d.

FEBRUARY, 1956

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

From the Editor's Chair

AFTER THE ANNUAL: When I called for my mail after the holidays, I found no less than 60 letters and cards awaiting me. What a feast of reading for a winter's afternoon, particularly those letters which referred to the Annual. There were just one or two which expressed a little disappointment; they came from St. Frank's fans. Well, I had rather expected that for although we had an excellent Nelson Lee feature it was of the days before St. Franks was born. Still, you devotees of E.S.B., each of you seemed to be relying on someone else; if we don't get the articles we can't publish them.

However, I am hopeful that there will be no cause for complaint in the Tenth Annual for already I have had a letter from Bernard Thorne saying he and Bill Hubbard propose to go into partnership on an article on the "Sports Mad at St. Frank" series. Seeing Bernard lives in Canada and Bill in Kenya, this should be a bit of a novelty. They won't be able to plot it across a table, but being real enthusiasts they'll bridge thousands of miles of sea. What's more you will be hearing from Bernard long before then, for Jack Wood has another of his inimitable biographies in hand.

Whilst on the subject of overseas members, I was gratified to hear that the Annuals sent by air mail to two eager ones in Sydney arrived well before Christmas. Nice work.

Now may I whisper something not quite so nice. At the moment over 30 this side have not yet sent their subs. along. In fact there are still three who haven't paid for the previous year's.

However no more about that this month. Perhaps next month it won't be necessary to say anything except "Thanks. All in."

CORRECTION: In Bill Martin's advert. last month the offer of Magnets should have read 1560/1683 (a straight run) not 1560 and

1683 (two copies) Sorry Bill.

MY MEMORY SERVED ME: Some time ago a letter appeared in the Sunday Express and held my attention. It referred to Sir Henry Irving, that great actor of old, but what particularly interested me was the signature. It was Dick Milton. "Dick Milton?" said I to myself, "why someone of that name once had a letter in the "Union Jack". It was a long time ago, of course, but somehow I remembered it clearly. The writer was recalling the very first Blake stories and I had thought at the time that he certainly knew what he was talking about. Anyway I thought that it was a pretty safe bet that the writer of the letter in the "Sunday Express" was the same individual even though he was writing about a different subject. I decided to write to him and promptly got a reply. I'll quote from his letter.

Dear Mr. Leckenby, Thanks for yours of the 17th inst. Your surmise is correct. I am the identical Dick Milton whose reminiscent letter was published together with my portrait in the old "Union Jack" in 1932. I am truly amazed that you should have recalled my name after 23 years. It may interest you to hear that I still possess the old paper. The Blake yarn is by Donald Stuart, a fine example of his work."

Well, that set us off on a correspondence for from other things he told me it was evident that Mr. Milton knew quite a lot about the old papers, quite apart from the "Union Jack". Mr. Milton kindly offered to write some of his recollections for us. His first article appears on another page and another on Sexton Blake will follow, probably in April.

One other interesting thing about Mr. Milton is his splendid handwriting, the real copper-plate kind one seldom sees nowadays, really remarkable for a man of 76. If possible I'll reproduce a specimen just to show you. I'll bet a lot of you wish I could write like it.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT LECKENBY.

W A N T E D Champion Library. Also for Exchange. Boys Friend Libraries welcomed. PRICE, Grocer, 22 NORTEDOWN ROAD, MARGATE, KENT.

THE "ANNUAL" BALLOT

PRESENT STATE OF POLL

1. Streets of Memories	108	5. Whartons of Winford	66
2. S. Walkey	79	6. Those Remarkable Serials	64
3. Those Blue & White Magnets	77	7. Man From Baker Street	56
4. White Cover Days	70	8. Restoring Order at Rookwood	52
		9. I Must Have Been Tough	51
All others well supported.			

The Dear old days of the "Dreadfuls"
By Dick Milton,
 A Veteran Reader

These are glances back along the vista of nearly seventy years to the London, as I remember it, in the mid and late 'eighties, gay colourful 'nineties and early nineteen hundreds. It was a London of horse-busses and horse-trams, hansom cabs, penny-farthing bicycles, long skirted, bustle-wearing women, and billy-cock, tight-trouserred men. And, above all, it was a London of theatres and music-halls where melodrama, hot and strong, was to be behold at the former and good, rollicking, melodious songs heard at the latter. And besides these diversions, the boys of those days were treated to long succession of cheap publications, dramatic tales, served up weekly with sanguinary sauce - narratives dealing with pirates, highwaymen, intrepid soldiers and sailors, Indians, stories of the gold fields, and other exciting yarns. Then there were school tales, detective stories and those of scientific interest - all of these select and tasty dishes were included in the menus of such caterers as "Edwin J. Brett", "Chas. Fox", "The Aldine" Co., and later, the Amalgamated Press, and the "Hogarth House" publications.

In the late 'eighties re-issues of Brett's complete tales were published, which I devoured voraciously: "Harkaways Schooldays", and "after" and a long series of his adventures at home and abroad. All the popular characters were retained in these exciting narratives; Harvey, Emily, Hunston, the bully, and the rest. And

"Ned Nimble" also delighted me, besides "Tom Floremall's Schooldays", and "Tom in search of his Father". Then we had "The Spies of the School", "Follow-my-Leader", "King of the School", "Rival Schools", "Tom Daring", "Jack Rushton, or alone in the pirates' lair" (a thriller de luxe), and Giles Evergreen. The historical stories were quite equal to the others in both literary style, interest and vivid adventures in old castles, where men were incarcerated in foul dungeons infested with rats and other vermin. How fascinating were these weird yarns. There was as I remember an air of verisimilitude about them which, as I perused them in bed by surreptitious candlelight, held my attention, until, as the candle slowly guttered out (I had no further supply), I experienced a feeling of awe and, drawing the clothes over my curly head, I lay quaking until gradually I fell asleep and dreamed of my heroes, sometimes culminating in nightmares. I recall many favourite books: "The Two Apprentices", "Rupert Dreadnought", "By the Queen's Command", "Night Guard", "Jack o' the Cudgel", "Strongbow, the Boy Chief" and others of sterling merit.

In 1894 Brett brought out "The Surprise" ($\frac{1}{2}$ d.) which became very popular. The famous publisher had already given us "The Boys of England", "Young Men of Gt. Britain", "Boys Comic Journal", and a woman's weekly entitled "Wedding Bells". I also read this exciting publication which was dramatic and intense, the stories being written by well-known authors. A great fellow, Edwin J. Brett, who, I believe, amassed a fortune out of his enterprise, and purchased a large estate in or near Broadstairs. He was, indeed, a friend of all boys who loved good, sound, virile and stirring tales of adventure. I raise my hat to salute a king of publishers, catering for youths of the last three decades of the nineteenth century - EDWIN J. BRETT.

I must not omit mention of the "Aldine's" - "O'er Land and Sea" Library, "Garfield Library", "Tip Top Tales", "Deadwood Dick", "Buffalo Bill", "Boys First Rate Library", "Half Holiday", "Cheerful" and the "Frank Read" series. In 1893 they published for the first time Harcourt Burrage's "Lamb of Littlecote", in penny numbers. In my opinion this was, and still remains, one of the finest school tales ever written. It is, I opine, superior to that prolific author's other books: "Tom Tartar", "Ching Ching", "Boys of Bircham School", "Handsome Harry", "On and off the stage", etc. "The Lambs" was followed by another original story, "The

Island School", a clever tale, but which nevertheless did not in popularity equal the former. There was a rivalry between Emmett and Burrage, but both writers, it is admitted, shone conspicuously in their respective styles of narration. "Tom Wildrake's School-days" enjoyed an immense vogue, and a large circulation amongst our dads and, also, their sons. But of the two writers my vote was and is for Burrage.

And how about Fox's publications? Those fierce tales of old London: "Sweeney Todd" (originally brought by Lloyd in the 'forties of last century). And "Black Bess", "The Black Highwayman", "Spring Heeled Jack", "Cartouche", and the "rest of the bloods"?

Years later, during my young manhood, the "Aldine" published a further series of Highwaymen tales: "Dick Turpin", "Claude Duval", and "Blackbeard, the Pirate". The names appended, as authors, were Charlton Lea and Stephen Agnew. I was informed by several enthusiasts that the former was Harcourt Burrage, using a nom-de-plume, but on this point I am uncertain.

I knew and had dealings with many collectors, most of them now, alas! "passed on". To enumerate only a few: Henry Steele, Patrick Mulhall, Wilson of Liverpool, Simpson of Leicester, and, above all, the King of "Dreadfuls" - Barry Ono. The latter was, like myself, in the "Profession" - a clever variety artiste. His unique collection was handed over to the librarians of the British Museum. A great - a fascinating - a wonderful hobby was the gathering of these old tales. In after years, although we read the works of the best writers, none of them could engender the joy, the excitement, the thrills which we felt and experienced when we held in our hands those dear old papers, dished up weekly by the firms aforementioned. Great days, my masters!

Dick Milton

 FOR SALE: ALDINE, J. SHEPPARD'S, SPRING HEELED JACKS,
 and TURPINS, and a few other odd items. S.A.E.

W.H. CLOUGH,
 3 FONTHILL GROVE, SALE, CHESHIRE.

BLAKIANA

Conducted by JOSEPHINE PACKMAN

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

The current S.B.L's seem to be going from bad to worse - Blake's absence would scarcely have been missed in the January issues. To make things worse the A. Press are getting very careless in reporting forthcoming numbers. Both the January issues give a different author for one of the stories to be published in February. Not a very good omen for the New Year.

As the Blake Circle will shortly be meeting to discuss and prepare a programme for their feature in this year's C.D. Annual, I do ask all my readers to let me know which they prefer - statistics or articles. Please do this for me - a postcard is all that is necessary. Thank you!

In regard to forthcoming issues of our section of the C. Digest, I am pleased to say I now have several fine articles in hand. I do, however, again earnestly ask you to support Blakiana (and me) with your contributions. I particularly appeal to some of the contributors who did articles for my predecessor, but who have, for some unknown reason never written anything for me. How about it, my chums?

JOSIE PACKMAN.

THE BABBLINGS OF BARDELL

by Victor Colby

Sexton Blake surprised his assistant and his housekeeper in close conflagration just inside the dining room door.

"Anything wrong?" he asked.

"Apparently we have a Teddy Boy on the doorstep", Tinker grinned "at least so Mrs. Bardoll says."

"An' Ie is an' all Mr. Blake" confirmed the good lady herself. "O'n'y 'e (asn't got 'is teddies on if you know what I mean."

At that hour of the morning Mrs. Bardoll herself was no mean figure of sartorial splendour, being in what she called her "brekfast dishabilitics" - which same consisted of a voluminous red flannel dressing gown, carpet slippers, and anything up to a couple of dozen hair-curlers by way of head decorations.

"Got a nasty eye 'e 'as, and looks pretty desprit", she added "an' 'e says 'e wants to consult you more hurgent than hurgently".

"She says he's a Dane", put in Tinker.

"Dane?" echoed Blake.

"Yes, that's right", beamed Mrs. Bardell, "that's what 'e said. 'I'm Richard the Dano', 'e sez - that's 'ow I knew 'e was one o' them there Teddy Boys.

It transpired that the client's name was Richard Dane, and he was a very worried man, but he bore no resemblance whatever to Mrs. Bardoll's Teddy Boy.

(S.B.L. 3rd series No. 326 "The Man from Maybrick Road")

THE BEST - AND THE WORST

by W.H. Goodhead

PART TWO

First, there was the theft of Mrs. Van Kramer's necklace, an ingenious combination of confidence trickery and stage illusion, in which Blake not only recovered the necklace but discovered the identity of the Ace.

Next, there was the equally intriguing affair of the Dietatype or talking type-writer. Ostensibly a mechanism for the direct transference of speech into typescript without human aid, it was in reality an attempt to swindle a number of legitimate type-writer companies on a grand scale. Not only did Blake see through and expose the scheme, but he actually managed to capture and hand over to the law both Lemoir and Gold Brick Dann, a sequence of events which caused Karl to announce to his depleted ranks "Sexton Blake must be removed at once. He is a distinct menace".

The whole story of the Double Four is a most complex one, and it would be impossible to describe in detail the ramifications, plots and counter-plots which go to make it up. Much must be left out, but it would be impossible to deny myself the pleasure of telling the story of Karl's real reason for placing the dead body on the scaffold of Handforth Gaol.

Two or three years previously, it seems, in a castle on the outskirts of the capital of Serbovia, there lived Princess Sonia Petrova, a refugee from a nearby Republican State. Although one of the most beautiful women in Europe, and the reigning toast of the Balkans, she had remained fancy free until she happened to

meet Philip Carew, the Naval attache at Krakov, the capital of Serbovia.

It was always understood in my youth that no beautiful Balkan Princess would ever dream of falling in love with anyone else whilst an Englishman was in the offering, so it came as no surprise at all when, in spite of the fact that King Karl was paying court to her in no half-hearted manner, she confessed her love for this almost penniless Naval Officer.

Karl, however, was a dangerous rival to have around, and retaliated in a comparatively mild way by having Carew accused of cheating at cards and recalled to England. Absence, apparently, made the heart of the fair Sonia grow even fonder, and although Carew seems to have been a pretty poor sort of fish, entirely lacking in the Rudolph Rassendyll spirit, she gave no sign of responding to Karl's full-blooded wooing. "Sonia, Sonia, why are you so cold - so passionless? I have offered you a crown, a kingdom over which to rule, a heart that overflows with love for you! Kiss me, Sonia. Kiss me". Had it not been for Karl's criminal tendencies, methinks Sonia could have done far worse than given him a break.

However, refuse him she did - possibly she got rather tired of her cheeks being continually fanned by his hot breath.

Consequently, reverting to his normal villainous self, he took the further step of framing Carew very convincingly for the murder of a very nasty type of blackmailer by the name of Channing. This part of the proceedings is a little difficult to sort out, but Karl was left with his rival in the condemned cell awaiting execution, and the supposedly murdered man tucked away in some remote hide-out.

Making the most of the situation, this Machiavellian aristocrat struck a bargain with the disdainful object of his affections - he would save Carew from the gallows if she would consent to a State marriage with him. (Karl's intentions, it seemed, were political as well as personal.)

Having, by planting the dead body of Channing on the scaffold of Handforth Gaol (still warm, mark you), pulled off this most diabolically ingenious plan, Karl improved upon it in a most spectacular manner. Nexton Blake, whilst on his way to interview the exhausted Carew (incidentally, the Home Secretary eventually gave up trying to make sense of the whole business and gave him a free pardon for a crime he had not committed), was jostled by a

blind beggar (the infamous Scarlatti in one of his many disguises) and punctured by a hypodermic syringe concealed in the rubber ferrule of the blind man's stick. Whatever the drug was in the syringe, by delayed action it caused Blake's heart to stop beating, and soon the news agencies of the world were ringing with the news of Sexton Blake's death.

The official news of the unfortunate demise of the greatest enemy of crime was no doubt received with joy and relief in all the crime centres of Europe, but nowhere could it have been celebrated with more enthusiasm and satisfaction than at the latest meeting of the Double Four in the Rue Gorbi, Krakov.

King Karl, having officially endorsed the initiation of the latest recruit to his thinning ranks (a remarkably accomplished gun-man from America, by the way) threw back his handsome head and gave the following toast: "Here's to the Double Four. Long may we flourish! Our arch-enemy is dead. We move on to greater triumphs. The Double Four is invulnerable, and between us we will conquer the world".

From Karl's point of view, no doubt all this confidence in the future was fully justified. His position as the ruler of his country was about to be immeasurably strengthened by his forthcoming marriage with the beautiful and popular representative of one of the most eligible (if defunct) royal families in Europe, his criminal organisation had been augmented by the admission of an extremely promising small arms expert from the U.S.A., and above all, the civilised countries of Europe (at least, the law-abiding sections of the population) had been plunged into the depths of despair by the announcement of the death of his arch-enemy Mr. Sexton Blake.

Had Karl but known, however, this prosperity was purely illusory, and there were actually few grounds for complacency. His erstwhile loyal subjects, however much the pageantry of the forthcoming royal wedding might appeal to their simple Slavonic souls, had had just about enough of their blue-blooded bandit king, and not only was the army simmering with revolt somewhere in the Serbovian hinterland, but the local branch committee of the Revolutionary Movement had at a recent meeting decided to express their official disapproval of the political situation in Serbovia by the time honoured method of heaving a bomb at the Royal Wedding Procession. A counter-proposal to utilise the more up-to-date and

less wasteful method of assassination by bullet had been rejected by the conservative and tradition respecting majority of the party.

Furthermore, it would have come as a very nasty surprise to Karl had he known that the recently acquired recruit to his ranks who had so cheerfully signed - as a guarantee of his good faith and a testimonial to his own character - a written confession to at least two cold-blooded murders in the Bowery area of New York, was none other than Ruff Hanson, the original Tough Guy from Toughville, America, a Secret Service Agent and staunch friend and ally of Sexton Blake.

But the piece of information which was destined to be most disturbing to Karl's piece of mind, and was as yet withheld from him, was that Sexton Blake was not only alive but 'very much kicking'. When the prison doctor at Handforth Gaol had pronounced the fatal words "Mr. Blake has gone. His heart has ceased to beat!" it did indeed look as though the great detective's career had come to an untimely end. Urged, however, by the distracted Tinker, as a last resource the doctor had injected a strong solution of adrenalin directly into Blake's heart, which had, after a brief but agonisingly tense period of waiting, begun to beat once more. It says much for his powers of recuperation, both physical and mental, that immediately on recovering consciousness, he issued the report of his own demise and embarked upon what was to prove to be the decisive phase of his struggle with the Double Four.

It had become painfully obvious to the authorities that in their efforts to combat the Double Four, they were handicapped in a unique manner, in that the Ace, as a reigning monarch, could not be imprisoned or brought to justice. Apparently an impasse had been reached, but Blake, spurred on no doubt by the recent attempt upon his life, propounded a daring yet simple solution: if, as a reigning monarch Karl was immune from arrest, he must therefore cease to be a reigning monarch. This proposition received unofficial approval, if not official sanction, and pausing only at Paris to assume, by special arrangement with the Surete, the identity of Monsieur Jules Bontemps, a recently incarcerated French agitator, he made his way by air to Serbovia. The local Revolutionary Movement, it seems, had enthusiasm in plenty but was sadly lacking in direction. Blake intended to give it that direction.

Almost the first person he met on landing was his old comrade

in arms, Ruff Hanson. The tentacles of the Double Four had begun to extend even across the Atlantic, and the F.B.I., already fully occupied in coping with its own particular home-grown brand of kidnapping, bootlegging and what-have-you, took a rather dim view of this encroachment on the Monroe Doctrine. Consequently, Ruff found himself in Serbovia, charged with the patriotic duty of discouraging this particular form of exportation.

He had begun his stay in Serbovia in a typically spectacular manner by saving none other than King Karl himself from assassination at a fancy dress ball, plugging one of the courageous but rather inefficient members of the Revolutionary Movement in the process. Karl's expressions of gratitude, we may safely assume, were for once genuine, and after a careful appraisal of the rugged and enterprising newcomer, had offered him one of the vacancies in the ranks of the Double Four caused by the incarceration of Gaston Lemoir and Gold Brick Dann. Although being rather understandingly chary of committing himself to such a step, on the advice of Sexton Blake he decided to avail himself of the offer. No doubt he kept his fingers crossed whilst presenting his credentials, in this case a signed confession to double murder.

Blake received a further reinforcement in the shape of the Bloodhound of Fleet Street, Splash Page. Although primarily a crime and war reporter, Splash had persuaded his editor to send him over to cover the Royal Wedding. As things were to turn out, Society Gossip was the last thing Splash was to be called upon to furnish.

Wanted always for Cash. Chums 1906/7, 1907/8, 1909/10 and offers of other years. 2d. and 1d. Plucks, Marvels, Union Jacks, Vanguard, Dreadnoughts, also Nelson Lees, Chuckles, early Realms, Boys Friends and early Hamiltonia, Maxwell Scott and Penny Dreadfuls, Victorian publications and novels.

For sale or exchange several hundred Nelson Lees, all series. Want lists invited. FRANK V. LAY, 167 WATFORD ROAD, HARROW, MIDDLESEX.

.....
 WANTED: Odd copies of most books to form specimen collection. Also Ranger, Bullseye and Surprise (1931-2). JOHN GEAL, 277 KINGS ROAD, KINGSTON ON THAMES, SURREY.

HAMILTONIANA

Compiled by Herbert Leckenby

IN 'PUNCH' AGAIN: Bernard Hollowood Punch's radio critic in the issue of January 4th said this:

"In this family, Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School is warmly appreciated. The old Frank Richards yarns translate most effectively, and the drawings that used to embellish the pages of the Magnet become wonderfully animated in the padded person of Gerald Campion, in Raf de la Torre (old Quelch), Brian Roper, John Charlesworth et al. The re-production is faithful even down to the detail of Bunter's check trousers. A period piece that goes well with the current revival of the Charleston."

And on our cover you will have seen an example of the work the artist who made Bunter's check trousers famous was doing fifty years ago. May he go on drawing Bunter for a long time yet. Whats become of his autobiography by the way?

* * * * *

HE'S DONE IT AGAIN: As you will see from the latter part of the following article, our sleuth Bill Lofts has solved another mystery "Who Was Prosper Howard?" I don't mind admitting it surprised me for I had no idea that H.A. Hinton wrote stories. But as you will see, Bill got the information from Mr. H.J. Garrish who probably knows more of the inside story of Fleetway House and its predecessors than anyone now living.

Any more problems for Bill? You know the address of his consulting room.

MORE ABOUT THOSE GREYFRIARS STORIES IN CHUCKLES

by W.O.G. Lofts

In my article "The Greyfriars Stories in Chuckles" (see January 1956 C. Digest) I said that it was hoped to publish a full list of titles of the Greyfriars and Claremont stories when space was available.

It is agreed that the Claremont titles are of secondary consideration, but I think that those of Greyfriars are rather important, for three reasons: Firstly because they have never been

published in any magazine devoted to the Collecting Hobby; Secondly because there is no denying the fact that stories of Greyfriars are always much sought after; Thirdly because it is useful information for those who keep complete records of titles.

Herbert Leckenby has therefore kindly agreed to publish these details, the accuracy of which I can vouchsafe for. Here, then, are the titles.

(Number 1 dated 10 January 1914), 1. The Founder of the Feast: 2. Japing Aunt Jemima: 3. The New Boy: 4. Asking For It: 5. The Raided Raiders: 6. The Courtfield Challenge: 7. Running the Gauntlet: 8. In Armour Clad: 9. The Cliff House Football Match (Cliff House): 10. Caught on the Wire: 11. Condemned on Suspicion (Cliff House): 12. Spoofing the Scouts: 13. The Silly Six: 14. The Hot Cross Bun Raiders: 15. Bunter's Day Out: 16. Good Old Trumper: 17. Bunter's Revenge: 18. The Greyfriars Ventriloquist: 19. Trumper's Trophy: 20. The Enemy's Camp: 21. Fairly Done: 22. Tit for Tat: 23. Trumper's Trap: 24. The Spoofer: 25. Out Manoeuvred: 26. To The Rescue: 27. A Shocking Affair: 28. Paid Out: 29. Retribution: 30. Shunting Bunter: 31. Soft Sawder: 32. Bunter The Scout: 33. The Ventriloquist's Trick: 34. The Maid of Athens: 35. The Yankee's Race: 36. Mauly's Mistake: 37. Slightly Mixed.

(Nearly all the stories featured the boys of Courtfield Council School in addition to Greyfriars).

SPECIAL NOTE: Since writing these details, positive information has come to hand revealing the identity of "Prosper Howard". This was none other than the late H.A. HINTON! In reply to a letter to Mr. H.J. Gerrish who is now a director of the A. Press (he has been with them for over 50 years, and has also written hundreds of stories under various pen-names such as: John Edmund Fordwych, Harold Gerrish, etc.), he says that Mr. H.A. Hinton wrote all the "Prosper Howard" stories in "Chuckles". Mr. Hinton left the A. Press not long after. He was killed as the result of an accident when alighting from a train in the dark.

Thus at long last another mystery has been solved. There has been much speculation for many years as to the identity of "Prosper Howard", and it is pleasing to know that this information (with permission) is being released through the medium of our grand little magazine, the Collector's Digest.

As I said last month Bill Jardine's article "The All Star XI" created a lot of interest. Here in the form of an open letter written in real racy style Bill Champion expresses some forthright views. Seeing he brings St. Franks well to the fore I think its a good idea to put the two sections together this month.

Dear Mr. Jardine,

It was with great interest that I read your article in the December C.D., and I must admit that you appear to have put in quite an amount of research work in your endeavour to select a perfect team from the four big schools. From what I remember, the four representative elevens you have listed are probably the Pick of the Bunch, and I think your final selection is a pretty useful side ---one, in fact, that would take some holding, let alone defeating. However, from the thirty-three players left, I believe, I could build a team that would prove worthy challengers to your own.

To commence with, your deliberations on Squiff and Rawson are extremely sound, but, unlike you, I have never found Handy to be so consistent in sports (perhaps more where cricket is concerned than football) that he should have a prior claim to Fatty Wynn for the position of custodian: by the same token, I doubt very much whether the tubby New House junior would over-eat before an important match to an extent likely to impair his game. Therefore, I unhesitatingly place Wynn between the "sticks".

Next we come to full-backs, for which position I have always been in favour of brawn, and even more brawn. In my search, therefore, for two first-class stoppers, I don't think I can do better than put down the names of Bull and Burton.

Again, with that all-important position of centre-half, I once more want brawn, but, this time, coupled with absolute fearlessness garnished with a cool, calculating brain --- and who better than the one and only John Busterfield Boots, the King of Hustlers? In my team he will be most ably supported on either flank by Redfern and Lowther. I am quite confident that Redfern cannot be improved upon at right-half, but I must confess that it was more or less a toss-up between Lowther and Brown on the left, with De Valerie only a fraction behind.

And now this forward line:

In my opinion, three of the centre-forwards are head-and-shoulders above the fourth, and of these three you have already

chosen Wharton. But, even had Wharton been available for this position, I should have pounced on the inimitable Nipper. Yes, like you, I say "Sorry, Tom", for, of all the schoolboys in fiction, Tom Merry has always been and always will be my supreme favourite - but my immediate task is to pick a team to beat yours, and although the universally popular Tom has always held the reins with a firm grip at St. Jims, there is no possible doubt that Hamilton has that indefinable quality of leadership which demands his place in the middle of the front line. He will also be skipper, and he is bound to pay dividends!

My word! just fancy you making me a gift of Reggie Pitt: Pitt, whose glorious runs down the touchline have for so long delighted the crowd round the ropes, and the readers of the Nelson-Lee. Oh yes, definitely Reggie on the right wing. And now a "sop to Cerberus": I am putting Tom in at inside-right, where I think he will fit in very nicely, thank you. Call it a gamble if you like, but my bet is it will come off.

Inside-left? Yes, we'll give Rookwood a look in: the leader of the Three Tommys has just about got the measure of Blake ---and I don't think Ogilvy is a real contender.

Now we come to Fullwood or Hurree Singh on the left wing. To be perfectly honest, I am completely undecided: the genial Nabob has certainly proved his worth consistently in the past --- no one better, and yet---

Remember Fullwood in 1925, when he played the game of his life against the River House School when practically hors-de-combat with 'flu? My word, what a game! The amazing Ralph Leslie not only scored a couple of goals himself, but he so inspired the rest of the team that the Saints ran out worthy winners by five goals to four, after being three goals down just after half-time.

Well, then, here is my team:

GOAL:	WYNN	(St. Jims)
RIGHT BACK:	BULL	(Greyfriars)
LEFT BACK:	BURTON	(St. Franks)
RIGHT HALF:	REDFERN	(St. Jims)
CENTRE HALF:	BOOTS	(St. Franks)
LEFT HALF:	LOWTHER	(St. Jims)
OUTSIDE RIGHT:	PITT	(St. Franks)
INSIDE RIGHT:	MERRY	(St. Jims)
CENTRE FORWARD:	HAMILTON	(St. Franks)
INSIDE LEFT:	DODD	(Rookwood)
OUTSIDE LEFT:	FULLWOOD	(St. Franks)

And now we've progressed so far, why not go a little further? I mean to say, here we are with two well-balanced football-teams fairly straining at the leash, yours in white shirts, mine in red (in honour of my hair!), the day is crisp and clear, the Blue Crusaders famous football-pitch, generously loaned for the occasion, is looking at its best, the stands are simply packed with school-boys whose many-coloured caps are making a brave show, and George Wingate is at the ready, complete with whistle.....

There comes a deep-throated roar from the crowd as, having lost the toss, Nipper sets the ball in motion —and the game is on:

In the best circles, the first quarter-of-an-hour of a game is usually a ding-dong affair, with everyone finding his feet, as it were and getting the measure of his opponent. Today's game is no exception, with practically every man proving his right of inclusion in his team, and generally providing good football that was a real pleasure to witness. Just over fifteen minutes have passed with no goals scored, when the excitement suddenly mounts — Travers has cleverly trapped a fast, low ball from Todd, and is away, with the Bounder keeping pace. Boots is there, however, and knowing Travers, tackles accordingly. Unfortunately for the former, Travers has also got Boots fairly well sized-up, and Vernon-Smith has already collected the ball, and is manoeuvring with Burton whilst the rest of his line moves up. With a noteworthy side-step, the Removite is round his opponent and centres, the ball is deflected goalwards off Traver's head, Boots and Wharton leap together but just miss contact — and Christine pounces. His shot, a hard, swerving one, strikes the cross-bar to the left and rebounds into play, with Wynn well beaten. Bull and Christine both go for the ball, and it bounces out and lands almost at Gussy's feet. His shot disappears in the tangle of legs before the goal-mouth, behind which Fatty Wynn is prancing about with that surprising agility with which we are all so familiar. Again the ball swings out of immediate danger and Boots attempts to clear, but his shot is somewhat luckily beaten down by Silver, who has come up to help his forwards, and the next instant the Rookwood junior has passed to Wharton who whirls and kicks simultaneously. The ball flashes unerringly to the right-hand top corner of the goal-mouth, and the crowd is practically shouting "goal!" when Wynn brings off one of those superhuman saves for which both he and Handy are famous. He lands with some force on top of the ball,

and is immediately surrounded by a host of attackers and defenders, when Wingate runs up, blowing his whistle.

"That was close!" confides Nipper to Tom, as they trot back towards the centre—and then there is a real roar as Pitt collects the goal-kick, and is away. His run is, as usual, dazzling, and he eludes Lovell, Silver and Todd in turn, before trying a snapshot which almost catches Handy — but not quite.

So it goes on, warming up, until five minutes from half-time, when, with the score still 0-0, Wharton, Christine and Travers, moving like well-piled machinery, cut their way through the Red's defence with a series of short, accurate ground passes that are a delight to witness. Within ten yards from goal, Wharton swerves to the left, and then, liked greased lightning, to the right, and his low, hard shot really gives Fatty Wynn no chance.

A terrific roar goes up as Wingate points to the centre.

"Goal!"

"Oh, well done!"

"Bravo, Wharton!"

"Let's have some more!"

But no more goals are forthcoming before the whistle signifies half-time.

The interval soon passes, and the players reassemble on the pitch to the accompaniment of sundry shouts of encouragement and advice, advice that is not likely to be heeded.

Wingate blows his whistle, and a high ball just eluding Lowther, goes into touch. He throws it in, and the Bounder just beats Fullwood to it and carries it some yards before passing to Travers. Travers passes to Smith again who tries a long shot, the ball diving down swiftly and deceptively just below the cross-bar. Wynn leaps and punches desperately and the ball sails out — almost on to Traver's head. Next instant it is reclining at the back of the net, and a very crestfallen Fatty is bending down for it.

Nipper looks grim as the two teams line up once more.

"Two down!" he exclaims. "This won't do! It's about time we showed these bounders one or two of our samples."

In less than five minutes, after a really praiseworthy effort by Nipper and Dodd, the ball went out to Fullwood, who tries a first-time shot. Handy dives and saves, but the ball goes round the post. Corners are always dangerous, and the crowd waits, tense while Fullwood carefully places the ball.

It was a good one, and Handy is just unable to gather it into

safety. Instead, he is lucky enough to get his big fist to it, and beat it down and away from the crowd round the goalmouth.

But Tom Merry is there. He steadies himself and shoots hard and true — and Handy is at last beaten.

"Oh, good man!" pants Nipper, grabbing Tom's hand. "That was great!"

"Rats!" chuckles Tom. "That was your goal — and Dodds and Fullwoods."

Feeling considerably heartened, the Reds line up again: but although thrills come a'plenty, with chances taken and missed on both sides the score stays 2-1 until within ten minutes from the end of the game. And then a wave of excitement sweeps the on-lookers, as Pitt, having beaten man after man, centres with superb accuracy.

Todd and Silver are just too far away, but Nipper is on the spot. He is onside, too, despite one or two shouts that go up from the stands — and he doesn't waste a moment. He runs on with the ball, is tackled by Figgins who has raced across, and then, at the crucial moment, back-heels to Tom — and those dividends are paid in full! Tom is there, and ready. He side-steps swiftly and is through, with only Handy to beat. Handy rushes out, trying to narrow the angle, but again Tom side-steps, swerves round Handy — who makes a Herculean effort and twists round madly, and runs on with the ball at his feet, over the line.

"Goal!"

"Tom! Tom! Good old Tom!"

"Come on — just one more!"

"Let's hear from you, Wharton!"

My word, with a mere five minutes to go, the tension is simply terrific, with both sides going all out for the winning goal. In fact, so well have the representative teams played, it seems a draw will be the only fair result. With two minutes to go, a draw seems certain — but, then history repeats itself. Fullwood is away.

From midfield he streaks for goal; it is one of the most spectacular runs ever seen — even on that famous pitch. With what seems like supreme ease, he gets the better of Cherry and Lovell, and continues on his way without a pause. Todd is practically on him, and everybody expects to see his dash brought to an end.

"Go it, Fully!"

"Oh, good man!"

The excitement is at fever pitch, and sweeps round the ground like a storm. Todd is tricked coolly and cunningly; but even now there is danger, for Figgins is rushing up to clear. Fullwood pauses, side-kicks, and is away nimbly after the leather, before George Figgins knows what is happening.

"Shoot! Shoot!"

Fullwood needs no urging. In fact, he hears nothing. He sees the goal in front of him, and the dancing Handy — and he knows he's going to score. He can't help himself. He kicks, and such is the force of the shot, he goes spinning over.

But the ball hisses into the net with such speed that half the onlookers didn't see it. But the yell from the nearest spectators tells its own story. And then the whistle blows for full-time.

"Goal..."

"Goal!"

"Oh, well done, Fully!" gasps Nipper, running up and grabbing Fulwood's hand.

"Splendid!" pants Tom Merry, and the rest come crowding round.

"Here, out of the way, there!" bellows Edward Oswald Handforth, as he comes charging up. "Give us your fist, Fully, you bouncer! I never saw that blessed ball after it left your foot!"

And that's that!

I'm frightfully sorry, old man, but it was a good game—— anybody's game, in fact — and the luck was on my side. Anyway, we shall have to have a replay sometime, either on the Brighton Ground, or here on Elm-Park, at Reading, when, who knows, it may be the turn of the Reds to bite the dust.

Well, I mustn't waste any more of your time. I'll close by wishing you all the very best — and long life to the good old C.D.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

W.F. CHAMPION.

MAGNET TITLES (Cont'd): 1533 The Bad Hat of the Remove: 1534 Bob Cherry's Burden: 1535 Barring Bob Cherry: 1536 Spoofing the School: 1537 The Boy who came back: 1538 The Invisible Schoolboy: 1539 The Boy Behind the Scenes: 1540 Wibloy Wins Through: 1541 The Sinister Dr. Sin: 1542 The House of Poril.

Nelson Lee

Column



by JACK WOOD
 NOSTAL, 328 Stockton Lane,
 YORK.



EZRA QUIRKE

By James V. Cook
 (cont. from last month)

We also learn Singleton's previous school was called Baggley. Lord Pippington, the fabulously wealthy but slow witted schoolboy (who was to play a minor part in the downfall of Ezra Quirke) also came from there. Another gem of information is that Tubb's uniform is green and that there's also a page boy called Williams. If I did know that then I had forgotten it. William Napoleon Browne, who plays no small part in these stories, was at Uxton prior to St. Franks.

And there is wealth of information about omens of bad luck - I didn't know there were so many.

Although Quirke causes a big sensation by his magical powers, his superstitious belief in signs and portents are all ridiculed and held in open contempt by a certain section of the boys. But it is noticed that whenever Quirke's warnings are disregarded his scoffers invariably suffer some misfortune afterwards.

The section who regard him with distrust and open hostility form themselves into a society which they call the 13 Club. Composed of thirteen boys, the 13 Club sets out to violate all the popular omens known to superstition before the horrified Quirke who prognosticates ill luck to follow in their wake.

Another junior mentioned is Enoch Snipe - a description of

this boy is an illusion. It defies explanation.

Old timers like Marriot, Merrell, Canham, Simmonds, Clifton, Armstrong, Ellmore, Hubbard, Skelton, are all there.

These lesser lights of St. Franks come to the fore in these yarns and it is a welcome change meeting them again.

They are among the set who believe in Quirke. They accept his esoteric doctrine. Seemingly, being lesser lights, they readily accept his gibberish about the Occult. But the influence of the new boy and his dabbling in Black Magic soon beings to draw supporters from the more level-headed juniors and the 13 Club is weakened.

Obviously, Brooks, in dealing with such an unusual idea for these series had of necessity to "soft-pedal" on many of the scenes of devil-worship, which Quirke presented for his audience. Though at times the tempo of the narrative refuses to bow down and such is the strength of the theme it would come as no surprise if a Witch's Sabbat was reported taking place behind the Gym.

Anybody with the capacity of five seconds of consecutive thought will appreciate that the NELSON LEE LIBRARY ventured into a very tricky field of literature in presenting such a totally foreign subject for a boys' journal and I am very surprised at the small voices of acclaim from the Old Timers in the C.D.

How they could not know about the Ezra Quirke stories....how they could not be aware of them, Allah alone knows. This remarkable and enthralling achievement should not pass into oblivion. The story is never dated and fits very snugly into present day events.

If all the superlatives about the quality of the Ezra Quirke saga were used they would stretch from the Fleetway House to Fleet Street. With the dissolution of the 13 Cup, Nipper, Pitt, Napoleon Browne and a few others, form themselves into a Compact of Ten with the avowed object of exposing Quirke as an imposter and a trickster.

In Browne, Quirke has a serious rival as a magician, only Browne admits that he obtains his illusions by material means.

One of the highlights at this juncture in the series is where Nipper obtains an impression of Quirke's key which enables Nipper to investigate the cellar of secrets where Quirke holds his meetings with his Occult Society.

Traps are laid, and pots and pans and cotton are fixed so that any disturbance will be evident. As to the result of this

elaborate scheme I cannot do better than to quote Church who remarks at the end "I believe he's in league with the spirits after all."

For the amazing denouement of this grand series, the final story is entitled "The Broken Spell" which accurately sums up the fascination that has gripped you from the commencement.

All this time Nelson Lee has been working in the background and he lifts the curtain to reveal a most extraordinary attempt to make Singleton the victim of a huge confidence trick.

Explanations follow and the bouts of ill-luck that had descended on the school and the strange accidents and incidents that occurred to Quirke's unbelievers are accounted for.

There is not one dull moment in these stupendous tales.

You are indeed lucky if you are able to say "I have read the Ezra Quirke series".

Don't be misled by the years that have passed since Ezra Quirke began. After all, what is time? Somebody has remarked that "Time is like a snail crawling through tar."

I am indebted to Mr. F. Vernon Lay who loaned me this series, and for the unsolicited permission of the Amalgamated Press to quote extracts. But most of all I am thankful to Edwy Searles Brooks.

(Note: In a later letter to me, Jim Cook tantalisingly tells me that Ezra Quirke had a real life counterpart whose name was Eric and who married the grand-daughter of the Paris Post's General! In spite of having permission to quote the full story of the real life Ezra, Jim Cook feels that the whole business bristles with too many difficulties. So there, so near and yet so far, the real story must end. What a pity! Jim also encloses a Sunday Dispatch story of December 11th, 1955 "do-bunking" the Magic Box theory, but offering no concrete explanation. J.W.)

'ANNUAL' CORRECTIONS

Page 124: Gerald Allison's address should read: 7 SUMMERFIELD GARDENS, BRAMLEY, LEEDS, 13.

Page 125: Ernest Alexander Hubbard's address should read: 58 SOUTH VILW CRESCENT, SHEFFIELD, 7.

Page 23, line 20, should read 'for several years' not weeks.

OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB

LONDON SECTION

Among those present at the first meeting of 1956 held in the office of Mr. Chips, Wood Green, were Weary Willie and Tired Tim, Portland Bill, Dreamy Daniel and a host of others from the wonderful collection of Arthur Harris, the fortunate owner of perhaps the largest collection of comics in the country. Together with his good lady, Mrs. Harris, he was the guest of honour. He gave a very good talk on the old comics and stated that his collection dated between the years 1890-1914. After the latter date he thought that all the comics were shadows of their former selves. Specimens of "Lot o' Fun", "Comic Cuts", "The Wonder", "The Jester", "Chips" and "Chuckles" were some that were shown round an enthusiastic gathering. Great was the applause at the conclusion of Arthur's talk. Then followed a lively discussion on the comics and Arthur's collection of amateur printed papers and his own effort "Interesting Items". "Thank you Arthur for a very fine evening's entertainment."

As it was the Annual General Meeting, the election of officers took place. Len Fackman was elected Chairman for the year with Roger Jenkins as his Vice-Chairman. All the rest of the retiring offices were elected en bloc. Only other change was Frank Vernon-Lay taking over the position of Nelson Lee Librarian. A very happy evening was enjoyed by all and now for Len's abode in East Dulwich for the February meeting on the 19th.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

NORTHERN SECTION MEETING, JANUARY 14th, 1956

For once the weather was unkind to us for it poured with rain until late in the afternoon. Illness, too, prevented one or two stalwarts from attending. It was all rather unfortunate for we had the Midland Club's Quiz to tackle. However, we won't make excuses and after business had been disposed of we gathered in a half circle round a cosy fire and got down to it. Secretary Ted Davey had told us that Harry Broster was responsible for most of the questions. When we had had a look at them I fancy I heard someone say good humouredly, of course, "He's a beast, but a just beast." Possibly by this time someone at Midland will have said

something similar about those responsible at Northern. Anyway the result of the battle of brains will appear shortly. After refreshments we had a humorous reading by J. Breeze Bentley from a Magnet in which Peter Todd played a prominent part, followed by a sentence building game.

An enjoyable evening despite the weather.

Next meeting, February 11th. It is my turn to give a talk; subject "The C.D. and Myself". Well, there's plenty of material; whether or no I can make the most of it remains to be seen. I'll do my best.

H. LECKENBY,

Northern Section Correspondent.

MIDLAND SECTION MEETING, DECEMBER 19th

There was an excellent attendance for this Eve-of-Christmas meeting which opened with the usual formal matters except that there were, happily, no apologies. Reference was made by the writer to recent contacts with Len Packman, whom we were pleased to hear is making good progress back to health.

There was quite a bumper programme. A quiz by Harry Broster, who seems to have quite a genius for this kind of thing, was won by our Headmaster (Mr. Ingram). A reading by Mr. Handley Junior of that now famous leader in the "Birmingham Post", dealing amusingly with the impact of Bunter Books on the rising generation in the U.S.S.R. Other items on our programme included another reading by Tom Porter, from a "Holiday Annual", with very realistic sound effects. The iron gauntlet dropping startled us almost into the middle of next week (which would have been a pity as then we should have missed Christmas!)

But the main item on the programme was a novel one in the form of a musical tour of Greyfriars rendered on a tape recorder by our Chairman. Very well done too, in quite B.B.C. Commentator style. Mr. Corbett quoted various passages of music which reminded him of the School and its environs. Thus "Nimrod", (to quote one example) reminds Mr. Corbett of the stately old Head standing benign and silver haired against a background of the School. An interesting idea, although naturally everyone would have different mental pictures.

During the evening real Magnet Christmas weather with snow developed, and we broke up in good time thus rather curtailing our

enjoyments. Last but not least our grateful thanks are due to Miss Russell who catered so splendidly for us. Those special refreshments were prime! Also Mr. Handley, Senior, very kindly provided wine for our seasonable toasts. So we said good bye to 1955.

EDWARD DAVEY.

MERSEYSIDE SECTION

As is the usual custom, the January meeting took the form of a New Year Party. After an excellent spread, ably prepared by Mrs. Webster, some 20 members and friends, disposing of Hamiltonian, etc. for one evening, "let their hair down" and were soon engaged in fun and frolics. Amongst the guests was a youngster of 12 who had submitted a poem to the local Press about Billy Bunter. When she was presented with a Magnet, well ---- The Party didn't seem quite the same without the two Franks (Frank Case and Frank Unwin), and we certainly missed our usual "Down You Go".

As a result of recent correspondence in "The Liverpool Echo" re our hobby, we gained a new member in Mr. Harington, who distinguished himself at the Party, and should prove an acquisition, and the Club also received a quantity of Magnets, unfortunately in a state needing repair. They had been lying in a drawer for 15 years!

Next Meeting - Sunday, February 12th, 7.0 p.m. prompt.

D.B.W.

EXCHANGE: 120 Gems 1932-38 for S.O.L's, Greyfriars and Rookwood. Will give three Gems for one S.O.L. Also Magnets 1/2d. and 1d. red covers for other early copies one for one. J. SHEPHERD, 43 STATION ROAD, KILLMARSH, SHEFFIELD.

Wanted Urgently the following "Ravenscar" stories in 'Pluck' (1d.) Nos. 173, 176 and 184. J.A. JEYES, 108 ADMITT ROAD, NORTHAMPTON.
FOR EXCHANGE ONLY: 50 "GEMS" between 1934/39, 4 POPULARS (2nd Series). LIST ON APPLICATION TO:- B. MORLEY, 4, DANETHORPE VALE, SHERWOOD, NOTTINGHAM.

Look out for two amusing and mysterious

Greyfriars letters next month.

WANTED: B.O.P. Vols. 43 (1920-21) and 63 (1940-41), to complete set; and loose copies September 1924, and August and September 1935. Also "BROTHERS" by Horace Vachell; "GODFREY MARTEN, SCHOOLBOY" by Charles Turley; "THE BENDING OF THE TWIG" by Desmond Coke.

ANTHONY BAKER, CHURCH CHURCH VICARAGE, BARNET, HERTS.

FOR SALE: The Mint Condition copies C. Digest Nos. 35 - 109 (No. 41 missing) 9d. each. Also C.D. Annual's 1950, 52, 53, 54, - 5/- each. Anyone taking the lot, a 1923 Holiday Annual Thrown in free. £4. 0. 0 post paid. F.C. BEARDSELL, "PLYMSTOCK", ROSS AVENUE, DAVENPORT, STOCKPORT. 'phone Stepping Hill 2139.

Wanted to complete collections; 'Triumphs' Nos. 1-190; 'Champions', 1-350. R.J. McCARTHY, WETLANDS, AUGATHIELLA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA.

LETTER BOX

NOT HARRY CLIFTON

January 14th, 1956.

Rose Lawn, Kingsgate-on-Sea,
Broadstairs, Kent.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Thank you for the C.D. Some very interesting articles. Mr. Loft's on "Chuckles" revived some very old memories. The answer to the question in the article is in the negative: "Harry Clifton" whoever he may have been, certainly was not F.R.

Many thanks to Jack Wood for his kind reviews. I have a special liking for "Jack", and am very glad to see him out at last. As the other Jack says, five years is a long time. But I hope that the further volumes will appear in a matter of months.

Roger's article on Rookwood also stirs up a lot of reminiscences. It may interest Roger to know that his surmise is correct: actually the idea at the time was to transfer the Rookwood series to Canada. But other counsels prevailed later, and home they came again.

With kind regards,

Very sincerely,

FRANK RICHARDS.

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN YOUR SUB. FOR THE ANNUAL?

YORK DUPLICATING SERVICES, 7, The Shambles, YORK. Tel: 25148.