

THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 124

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APRIL, 1957

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—THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST—

Vol. 11 No. 124

Price 1s. 6d.

APRIL, 1957

Editor: HERBERT LECKENBY,
12 Herbert Street,
Hull Road, York

or

c/o YORK DUPLICATING SERVICES,
12A The Shambles, York.

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

FROM REYKJAVIK TO YORK. On February 26th I had the pleasure of meeting Brian Holt, British Vice-Consul, Reykjavik, Iceland. He was in charge of a party of Icelandic officials making a tour of this country. Brian is a keen Hamilton and Nelson Lee enthusiast and we had a very enjoyable evening together; the only pity was circumstances prevented the other York members joining in. Anyway, that's one more added to the long line of members I have met in the flesh, and another interesting feature is that the tour was arranged at this end by Nicholas Throckmorton of the Central Office of Information, who is also a member of our circle. Rather remarkable isn't it, seeing our numbers are comparatively small?

* * * *

THEY DID MEET! To continue on the matter of meetings, I said last month that Bill Hubbard and Charles Van Renen hoped to meet at Port Elizabeth, South Africa. Well, they did as Charles' related in an air letter. Said he:

"Well Herbert, he's been and gone. The very first time I have had the privilege of meeting a real live collector. Believe me, we had a jolly good old pow-wow. As soon as I had word that his boat was due to dock on Friday afternoon, I rushed up home, gathered up my family and in under 45 minutes we were conducting him from his boat to the car. An hour later we were comfortably ensconced in

our lounge surrounded by stacks of papers. So absorbed were we that it was not until 3 a.m. that we decided it was time Bill was getting back to his boat."

As I've said before, I do enjoy recounting events like that, and soon I hope to meet Bill myself.

* * * *

ON MERSEYSIDE. In the early hours of March 22nd, I set out for Liverpool with one of my brothers who was returning to Canada, from a holiday at home after an absence of 29 years. When I had bid him good-bye, did I start on my return journey. Not very likely! For needless to say, I've quite a lot of friends by the Mersey. That good sport, Frank Case had met us at the station to give us a hand with the luggage. My brother away, we went off to meet John Bartlett. When Frank had left us John took me off for lunch and then for a run through the famous Mersey Tunnel. Then Don Webster came along and escorted me to Norman Pragnell's for tea. Norman saw me off at Lime Street.

As I settled down I thought over the good time the brother had had with the family and the good time I had had with another band of brothers. Pleasant thoughts for a long journey.

* * * *

COMING NEXT MONTH. Bill Lofts, our member who is on intimate terms with editors and authors past and present, is busy on a new series of articles under the intriguing title "From Information Received." Here's a bit from the first instalment: "George William Wakefield was big, thickset and in his early days was a notable amateur, heavy weight boxer." Well that would seem to settle once and for all the story that G. W. W. was a woman, wouldn't it? Look out for the first instalment next month.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT LECKENBY

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Blakiana...

conducted by JOSEPHINE PACKMAN

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

I am pleased to find Tinker playing a slightly more prominent part in the S.B.L. issues for March; but why do they always have so many foreign names and characters in the stories? Practically every issue is the same formula - in regard to foreign names - and I am beginning to think that someone at Fleetway House has an obsession in this direction! It may suit some readers, but all with whom I have discussed the matter are in entire agreement with me that it would be a real treat to read an S.B.L. without these Grimwalds, Wazirs, Granzis, Vranmars, Kirasovs, Chens, Koestlers, Hoffmans, Ortegas, etc. etc., - if only for a change!

I am looking forward to Dr. Huxton Rymer's reappearance in April ("Flashpoint for Treason"). I only hope I shall not be disappointed.

At the time of preparing the manuscript for this issue of Blakiana the March C.D. has only just been released, so that your lists of 12 favourite U.J. stories have not yet started to come in. I do ask you to let me have them, all of you, for I am sure they will prove very interesting and enlightening as to the popularity of certain characters and stories.

JOSIE PACKMAN.

* * * *

THANK YOU, SEXTON BLAKE.

By Margaret Cooke.

I first met Sexton Blake in the Spring of 1919, just after my twelfth birthday, at a time when my parents, alarmed by my eagerness to read any and every book on which I could lay hands however unsuitable it might be for a child of my years, had decided to limit my reading to school books, two library books and one small book published for young people each week.

While I was examining such books at the newsagents, I noticed four small books called the Sexton Blake Library. I bought them, liked them and have gone on buying them for nearly thirty-eight years.

As a child I loved the exciting adventures of Blake and Tinker but it was always the stories themselves which held my affection, not the characters which appeared in them. As a student I found the S.B.L's so far removed from my studies that they never failed to bring relaxation when my mind went blank from overwork, or a problem proved difficult. After an hour in Blake's company I returned to the fray with renewed zest.

When I became a teacher Blake's attitude to Tinker and his common sense handling of that young man helped me to understand and control teen-agers in a mixed school. During the second world war I taught in a boy's Grammar School where the Headmaster discovered that I had a flair for dealing with really naughty boys and turning them into good scholars. As a result, boys who had neither interest nor aptitude for my subject appeared in my classes at short notice, while headmaster and parents sat back to watch the reformation.

My task was not made any easier by the fact that already rebellious victims considered the change from an A to a B class unjust. The sight of a familiar cover peeping from a trousers pocket and our common interest in Tinker often helped me to break down a boy's hostility and gain his confidence so that the cause of his rebellion could be discussed and the boy returned to his proper studies.

In 1943 I developed a form of paralysis and it was then that I had the greatest cause to bless the creators of Blake and Tinker. Their adventures helped me to forget pain for hours on end. Like Mr. Copeman's friend, I read the books one after the other until I sank into a trance-like state in which pain was bearable. I would be interested to know whether he remembered the details of the individual tales. I couldn't remember a single word of any of them.

When frustration threatened to swamp me with bitterness, the warm affection and loyalty which existed between Blake and Tinker, the qualities embodied in their characters, and their fight against evil and injustice helped me to retain a belief in the goodness of man, and therefore, of God.

Sometimes a book or character would remind me of people I had met or of incidents in my own life, some gay, some sad and some just plain mad. Books dealing with Black Magic, for instance, remind me of a time when I was unfortunate enough to come into direct contact with someone who practiced the art.

Early in 1937 I went to an east-coast town to teach craftwork and took a room in a hostel for girls while I looked round for private lodgings. The place was cosy, the food good, and the other residents friendly. The rule in such places is that lights must be out by 10.30 and after that time the house was still and quiet. On the second night of my life there I woke from a deep, dreamless sleep to experience an ever increasing terror of some approaching evil against which I had no defence because I could not move. My body would not obey my will. At the moment when this evil presence was so close to me that I expected to be touched by it, heavy-soled shoes clattered on bare boards and a silver-toned bell spoke once - then three times, to be followed by the quavering sound of old voices chanting prayers. The evil fled suddenly, the atmosphere lost its intense coldness, and I could move freely.

The same thing happened several times during the next fortnight, always at the same time and the bell sounded deliverance each time. Then I received two letters by the same post. One came from a medium in Manchester who said that she had been holding a trumpet seance when the trumpet had given my name and east-coast address and asked her to warn me of danger. She did not seem to know what the danger was or to have any real interest in the matter.

The other was an air-mail letter from S. America, from a man who said definitely: "Leave that house - the girl in the next room is dabbling in Black Magic." He described the house, the position of my room and hers, gave a detailed description of the girl and said that the bell was an altar bell in the chapel of the house next door which had been a Catholic Orphanage but was now a home for elderly nuns.

My bedroom wall was also the altar wall of the chapel. He gave me some practical advice which I nearly ignored because I did not believe in the existence of Black Magic, but which proved helpful on the few remaining nights of my stay. I couldn't leave that house quickly enough!!

During the last fourteen years whenever my fight for health has seemed hopeless, when my life appeared to be a succession of beginnings which would never achieve any useful end, odd words of advice given by Blake to other characters have encouraged me to make one more effort.

Mr. W. Howard Baker helped me to conquer my worst period of depression, by writing "Man is never lost, as long as he fights - as long as he strains and struggles - as long as he beats upwards to the light - then, in the end, he'll win." (S.B.L. No. 350 "The Man Who

Knew Too much.") At a later date he introduced me to the Sexton Blake Circle and to new friends within its ranks. Friendship means much to those who, like myself, are more or less house bound.

For thirty-eight years of entertainment, help and encouragement, I say "Thank you, Sexton Blake. Long may you live."

* * * * *

ANOTHER MYSTERY SOLVED

By. W.O.G. Lofts

One of the most mysterious of Blake writers, until now enshrouded in darkness, is Warwick Jardine.

Warwick Jardine wrote his first Blake story, entitled "The Great Jumping Mystery" (S.B.L. 2nd Series, No. 325) in March 1932, and has now written 32 stories in all; 23 in the second series (to include one reprint) and 9 in the third series, the last being No. 332 "The Riddle of the Green Cylinder" in March, 1955.

Now, although I have been able to meet many Blake authors, and also editors of the past and have asked them about Warwick Jardine, none of them have had any idea as to his real identity. A short while ago, however, it was my pleasure to meet a former editor of the "Detective Weekly", Mr. J. Hunt, and in conversation he revealed to me that Warwick Jardine was, in fact, a pen-name used by FRANCIS WARWICK, son of the late Sydney Warwick, a famous writer of the 'twenties who died at the ripe old age of 83 in 1953 at Torquay.

In the years 1922-23 Francis, in collaboration with his father, wrote stories for "Pluck"; they also wrote for the "Penny Popular", and during the year 1924 a serial in the "Magnet" entitled "Sherwood Gold" was also written by them. So good was their work that some of the stories were later reprinted in the "Boys Friend Library."

Francis Warwick is the creator of Cliff Gordon, who he featured in a number of stories; he has also written extensively for the women's papers.

One of our own contributors, Eric Copeman, says this of Warwick Jardine: "I find his work particularly good reading, and his Blake is very true to character. His subsidiary characters are very cleverly drawn and he has a fascinating way of implanting each on your memory by some slight peculiarity." Many readers will, I am sure, concur with Eric.

Shortly after leaving Mr. Hunt (from whom I obtained a lot of

information which I hope to reveal at a later date) I met Mr. W. Howard Baker. In general conversation he mentioned that Francis Warwick had recently been to see him in regard to writing a new Blake yarn, and without any prompting from me he confirmed the fact that Jardine was Warwick.

How strange that a man shrouded in mystery for over twenty-five years should have his real name revealed and confirmed all in the space of twenty-five minutes!

* * * * *

HOW'S YOUR MEMORY? (No. 4) by E. V. COPEMAN

The scene described in this article appealed vividly to me when I first read it. I like to know that Blake is in a "tough spot" himself because then I can sit back and enjoy it as he skilfully extricates himself.

The problem is simple enough. What you have to do is identify both the story and the author and, if possible, the date of publication. It's all for your own amusement, but it can be interesting. The correct answer will be printed next month. Ready? Then here goes:

TEASER NO. 4

It was a mid-way halt for the poor disillusioned White on his downward journey from an underpaid job in the office of a Portuguese merchant to a bug-infested crazy shack upon the beach, and a hopeless anticipation of the tomorrow which never came. The street had more than its share of men like these - vagrants and drifters and alcoholics and their comings and goings occasioned no remark. So on this day no one looked twice at the white man who stumbled along.

He was just another broken-down piece of humanity; just another lump of human litter upon the surface of an African sea. His head swung at the end of his brow dirt-grimed neck, and his eyes were vacant and staring. As he scuffled along the street, his broken shoes made a flapping sound and puffed up the dust, and the sole of one of them doubled back upon itself and threatened to make him fall headlong.

He cursed and he lashed out with the offending shoe, and he teetered unsteadily - then he plunged on again. As he lurched along, his teeth showed like yellowed gravestones in the great vacant O of his mouth. He looked very drunk.

He was big - tall and broad - and there had been a time when his skin had seemed to be stretched to the limit to contain the hard-

packed flesh and the firm knit sinew of his body. In that time, he had walked erect, and his obvious strength and superior intelligence had marked him down as a man to be reckoned with. There had been a time -- but that was in the dead past.

Now the flesh seemed to hang upon the framework of his bones. He staggered, lurched and shambled, and his skin was like a cut-price suit -- lumpy and mis-shapen. Once his skin had been clean and clear. Now it was blotched with grey, and touched with the faint bloom of purple.

He looked like a man who was trembling on the brink of alcoholic poisoning

And yet his name had once rung round the capitals of Europe, he had been listed with the great once, and he would be again.

His name was Sexton Blake.

Well, how did Blake get into such a situation? If you read the story you'll know. If you read the story, too, you won't have forgotten it. Remember?

CLUE: At the time of writing this article, the author is contributing Blake stories under two names and has introduced characters which have raised considerable comment and controversy.

ANSWER TO BE PUBLISHED NEXT MONTH.

* * * * *

Answer to Teaser No. 3 (March, 1957 C.D.)

The writer of the story was GWYN EVANS, and the title of the yarn was THE CASE OF THE CRIMSON CONJUROR and it appeared first in S.B.L. No. 171 in 1928 and was reprinted in No. 723 in 1940.

He was the creator of Splash Page, Ruff Hanson, King Karl, Miss Death, The Shadow Club, etc.

Recent articles in the C.D. concerning Gwyn Evans were written by Bill Lofts (C.D.90) and Herbert Leckenby (C.D. 94)

The "special type of Blake Story" was the always-enjoyed Gwyn Evans Christmas yarn.

NOTE: Part two of Eric Copeman's article "On our Selection" is unavoidably held over until next month. J.P.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Please note DON. B. WEBSTER'S address is now 11, NEVILLE ROAD, WATERLOO, LIVERPOOL, 22.

FACT AND FANTASYby F. Vernon Lay

Precisely at 5 p.m. on November 5th, 1871 a giant rocket soared into the air above the College from the main quadrangle. It was the start of a great rebellion and within seconds squibs and crackers were exploding all over the College, in form-rooms, studies, common rooms, playing fields and dormitories. Even the masters' studies were not immune from jumping crackers thrown in through open windows. The school's champion boxer entered the gate-sergeant's lodge, forcibly ejected the sergeant, made him put his fists up and gave him a sound thrashing. The racquet court was set ablaze and desks, forms and flogging blocks added to the flames. This was the Great Rebellion at Marlborough College and its immediate cause was the unpopularity of the gate-sergeant who had a down on the boys and like nothing better than to report them for swearing, breaking bounds and any offence that he could testify genuine or otherwise. Only a few days before the entire school had descended on his lodge, practically demolished it and given him a severe going over in the process. In consequence the school had been gated and for the following four days no work was done, the boys broke bounds at every opportunity and pelted and catcalled the masters. Order was restored when the gating order was annulled but it was a false calm which only lasted until Guy Fawkes Day when the rocket was the signal for open revolt. When order was finally restored the ranks of the College were sorely depleted by wholesale expulsion of the ringleaders.

A charge sometimes levelled at our hobby is that the stories are often far-fetched and unrealistic, the plots ridiculous and impossible. Whoever heard of a school in the backwoods, schoolboys don't have barring-outs etc. Edwy Searles Brooks is probably accused of this more than most other boys' writers and whilst it must be admitted that he has written many a series which can only be labelled as fantastic, it must, at the same time, be acknowledged that his stories were less fantastic than the original stories for adults from which the ideas were derived. In no single instance can his stories be described as original. His originality lay in his writing the zest he succeeded in imparting to the bizarre happenings and the marvellous way he created the appropriate atmosphere. His fantasies may be roughly divided into two types, the supernatural and the lost race. Most of his famous characters were borrowed - William Napoleon Browne

and Lord Pippington from Wodehouse's immortal Smith and Bertie Wooster and Umlosi from Rider Haggard's Umooopa and adapted and enlarged upon in his own inimitable manner. And the same with his plots. In the eighteen hundreds and early nineteen hundreds the lost race theme was at its height and a perusal of the early Boys' Realms, Friends, Heralds, True Blues etc., will disclose countless examples mainly deriving from Haggard, Verne, le Queux and other masters of this theme in adult fiction. In particular the theory of an opening in the North Pole leading to an inner world inhabited by a lost race, suggested by some to be the descendants of mythical Atlantis, was seriously believed, quite a number of works being published with many plausible arguments. One writer, Capt. John Symmes, published a circular stating the earth is composed of five hollow spheres, with spaces between each and habitable upon both convex and concave surfaces. In 1823 he petitioned Congress for an expedition to test his theory and got 25 votes. He supposed openings at both poles. Inside the openings the climate was mild and even hot. A monument was erected to his memory in Hamilton, Ohio. Then we have the more plausible accounts of attempts to bore through the earth. Jules Verne's story A Journey to the Centre of the Earth, was probably the inspiration of our own Charles Hamilton's story the Heart of the World, a story of an expedition to the centre of the earth, published in the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. Union Jack in 1898. The supernatural theme had even more predecessors. Indeed, in early Victorian Days, the heyday of the Gothic novel, it was unusual for stories not to contain secret passages, clanking chains and ghostly visitations ad nauseum. Jules Verne's Castle of the Carpathians, published in 1900, is very apt with its chapel bells ringing without human aid, flames springing up in most unlikely places, metal plates becoming electrified with dire results to the unwary and huge spectral monsters appearing in the sky. In the last chapters all was explained by disclosing the villains busily connecting electric batteries to metal plates in floors, walls and doors and projecting the monsters on to the clouds by means of a huge reflector magic lantern.

It has often been said that real-life schoolboys couldn't and wouldn't carry on like some of our favourites have done from time to time, but my opening paragraph shows the contrary. And to-day I think many of them would be glad to get the chance. However, lets turn back the calendar to Easter 1793, and we have the boys of Winchester rebelling over a stoppage of leave. They laid in huge stocks of food and barricaded themselves in, armed with muskets and threatened they would burn down the school rather than surrender. Soldiers were called

out by the local townspeople, rallied to the boys and things looked ugly. However, a truce was agreed and the barring-out ended. The peace was short-lived and fortyeight hours later the rebellion broke out afresh, but this time the authorities were prepared and it was soon broken. In consequence practically the whole school was expelled or had resigned. A repeat took place in 1818 and again the soldiers were called out and the Riot Act was read to the rebels. After two days bickering the boys accepted terms of 14days holidays and fares paid home, but no sooner had they given up than they were seized by the soldiers and there were wholesale floggings and expulsions and the school did not recover its position for many years. Some of the boys who were expelled on this occasion became famous and included one Field Marshall and a Lord Chancellor. A third Winchester uprising occurred in 1848 and like the Marlborough one began with a huge display of fireworks. The boys barricaded themselves in but forgot the elementary precaution of laying in stocks of food. Missing breakfast was not too bad, dinner was more difficult, but the Bunters of that generation could not face the further prospect of no tea either and the revolt was over.

All our famous schools have their traditions of at least one great mutiny and Harrow is no exception. In 1771 an Etonian was appointed Headmaster and this was the signal for a general uprising. The Masters' carriage was seized and burnt on Harrow Common, and there was much fighting. Eventually the masters aided by the police and military prevailed and some 40% of the College was either expelled or had left of their own accord, including the Marquis of Wellesley, now better remembered as the Duke of Wellington.

Possibly the most famous rebellion was that which occurred at Eton in 1768. It started with a dispute between the sixth-formers, who were monitors, and the assistant masters. The sixth formers used to send any lower form boys they found out of precincts, back to College and considered themselves immune from being sent back. The assistant masters thought otherwise, and matters came to a head when a sixth-former was flogged before the entire school. The sixth came out on strike and the fifth and fourth forms came out in sympathy. Finally 160 boys broke bounds and marched in a body to the Marsh Inn at Maidenhead, throwing their schoolbooks into the Thames on the way. At Maidenhead, they had a bang up dinner and the bill, which is still preserved, list dinner for 160 at 5/- each - £40. Beer £2 1s., Wines and Punch £12 13s. 3d., fires £1 and cards 4/-, and in those days that total of £55 18s. 3d. represents an awful amount of grub. By the next morning most of them were regretting their impulsive action and the

majority marched back to the playing fields and sent a deputation to the Head. He insisted on unconditional surrender and some of the weaker spirits gave in, leading to general breakdown of the rising. Many took their floggings without a murmur, but several ran away home, among them William Grenville, afterwards Prime Minister of England. He was sent back to the school to take his flogging and then removed from Eton.

Again have you heard of the Evans School for Boys, sounds quite prosaic, but in fact the school is located at El Rancho Bonito near Mesa City in Arizona. It was founded in 1902 by Mr. H. D. Evans, N.A., of Cambridge University, and the first term he had three pupils, the second five and from the third onwards a limited number of about twelve was fixed. The school is a typical Western Ranch. The scholars live and dress like cowboys and are taught shooting, horse-riding, lassoing, camping, broncho-busting and steer-tying and branding contests with periodical hunting trips and camping expeditions, to the mountains. A graduate from this school is no tenderfoot. He can ride like a cowboy, throw a lasso and shoot with anyone and yet he is a gentleman, retaining his Yale or Harvard background.

So it will be seen that our authors had plenty of material upon which to draw, and that the charge of being far-fetched is not a true one.

 SALE OR EXCHANGE: HOLIDAY ANNUALS 1933, 39, 26. MAGNETS between 1560 - 1683. BOUND VOLS. STRAND 3-9, 10, 16 (Sherlock Holmes.) 10 Rookwood E.F. Green 'uns. 1 Dixon Hawke, 1 Boys' Pocket Lib. 16 S.O.L. Pocket Lib.
 L.F. ASHLEY, 23 MOUNTJOY, BRIDPORT, DORSET.

SALE: 1/2d. GEMS 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 36, 44, 47: 5/- each.
 1d. PLUCK 246, EMPIRE (1st Series) 22: 3/- each.
 CHUMS 818-823, 1047-1068: 7/- lot. No. 1's: Offers wanted for No. 1 of BOYS' BEST (1910); SCOUTS' STANDARD (1910) only one issue; CHAMPION BOYS' PAPER (1913); WORK AND PLAY (1914); CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER (1919); ROVERING (1924)
WANTED: MAGNET 1267, BOP vols 43, 63.

ANTHONY BAKER, CHRIST CHURCH VICARAGE, BARNET, HERTS.

HAMILTONIANA

compiled by Herbert Leckenby.

I have in hand now two very interesting articles, one from a Toronto paper and the other a lengthy one from a Sydney one, which contains a most amusing story concerning a "stand-in" Gem and Magnet author. They will be used soon, but this month the section is confined to some jolly good contributions from members of our own circle. First, versatile Eric Fayne starting a new and provocative series.

* * * *

"LET'S BE CONTROVERSIAL!" No. 1

(In this new series, Eric Fayne touches on certain matters of interest to students of the Hamilton papers. He gives his own view superficially. If you will write to him, expressing your own opinion on the topics he discusses, he will summarise readers' views in future issues of the C.D.)

NO. 1. REGINALD TALBOT, the Toff.

Reginald Talbot Wilmot, was his correct name, though that fact seems to have been lost in the mists of time. There can be little doubt that the first stories of "The Toff" caused something of a sensation in their day. It is possible that Talbot suffered from his popularity? The first two series about him were absolutely first-class, and, seeking to cash in on the demand for Talbot yarns, could it be that the Editor lost his sense of proportion?

For a year or two there was a glut of tales of the schoolboy cracksman, and, even if they became monotonous to some, those by the genuine Martin Clifford were excellent. Unfortunately, as time passed, the substitute writers took a hand, and a succession of hackneyed stories, often oozing sentiment, was the result. It was hard on Talbot, who had many admirers, and who, quite apart from the "Toff" business, was part of the backbone of St. Jim's.

It is interesting to muse on the wisdom of editorial policy, - and incidentally, that of the author - over Talbot. That he was a great favourite is certain, but, if it is possible to glean a few fragments of truth from the amazing "Editor's Chats" of the period, it is equally certain that there was a large anti-Talbot group of readers.

By 1916, the Gem was losing ground to the Magnet, - is it possible that the defection of an anti-Talbot group may have played its part?

Probably, fifteen years later, Talbot would have starred for a time and then dropped out, in the way that Dick Lankester, another schoolboy crackman, did in the Magnet. There was a natural finish to the Talbot story in "The Housemaster's Homecoming", but Talbot remained to have his murky past re-hashed time and time again.

Personally, I am very fond of Talbot. I regard him as a skilfully-etched character, rather old beyond his years - a fine loyal friend to Tom Merry. I feel that St. Jim's would have been a poorer without him, and I remember with pleasure the early series in which he featured. But I also feel, with the often-recurring stories based on the same old plot, we have an example of a theme being overplayed.

It's just my view. What's yours?

* * * *

MEMORABLE ROCKWOOD SINGLES

By Roger M. Jenkins

The Rockwood stories in the Boys' Friend seldom exceeded 8 chapters and were often much shorter than that. Consequently single stories were the exception rather than the rule, the emphasis being on series, and there is no doubt that a sequence of these shorter Rockwood stories formed the sound basis of many a taut and immensely readable series. Nevertheless, there were quite a number of Rockwood stories complete in themselves, and most of them lived up to the high standard which Owen Conquest set himself.

The single stories tended to be of a humorous nature, since 7 or 8 chapters hardly allowed full scope for a complete drama. No. 1206 entitled "All Lovell's Fault" was a typical offering: Lovell accused Tubby Muffin of stealing £1 from the cricket club funds, and it was not until Mr. Dalton was called in that it was realised that Lovell had made a simple error in arithmetic, and no money was missing at all. Clarence Cuffy was another favourite star character for a short story: in No. 1223 Tommy Dodd had foolishly boasted that the Moderns could beat the Classics even with Cuffy in goal, and he was infuriated when his cousin remarked: "It would be false modesty on my part, my dear fellow, to deny that I am very expert indeed at naughts and crosses... but projecting a ball across a field by the impact of a foot does not appear to me to be a form of activity adequate to my mental gifts." Jimmy Silver was a sportsman, however, and he played Gunner

in goal, and the result was a mutually satisfactory draw, the score being 8 all.

Gunner was also a character around whom a single story was often written, but unfortunately stories about Gunner usually failed to show Owen Conquest at his best, for some reason or other: for example, in No. 1241 Gunner thought out the brilliant idea of typing his lines instead of writing them out by hand, but Mr. Dalton refused to play ball. A fortnight later Gunner was celebrating the first of April by inviting the whole form to the tuckshop for a feed, and then reminding them of the date when they got there. Instead of the expected roars of laughter there was only an ominous silence, broken by a faint exclamation from Tubby Muffin "No spread?" Gunner may well have been a popular character with younger readers, but most collectors usually find him a tiresome bore with no redeeming features and no sophisticated hangers-on like Potter and Greene without whom Colker would have been a bore himself, instead of one of the most successful of Charles Hamilton's creations. In fairness to Gunner it must be stated that there was a very amusing series written around him when he mistakenly thought that Mr. Dalton's brother was a tramp.

Lovell had many bright ideas during the course of his career, but none won such universal acclaim as his idea for a crib in No. 1138. It was a circular piece of cardboard attached to the inside of the sleeve by elastic: when shaken down it could be concealed in the palm of the hand, and when the master was suspicious it could be allowed to spring back. Unfortunately Tubby Muffin's card got stuck up his sleeve, and Mr. Dalton became suspicious as Tubby stood up in class violently shaking his arm instead of construing. The form-master remarked: "A very ingenious device Muffin, quite an improvement on a device known to me twenty years ago. I used only a bootlace." Despite this commendation, however, Mr. Dalton felt regretfully obliged to cane everyone concerned. Much more successful was "Lovell's Revonge" in No. 1244. Having fallen foul of Mr. Greely who was much given to lecturing juniors on deportment, Lovell planned for two instructors to give lessons to Mr. Greely. In a delightful scene the second instructor told the flabbergasted fifth-form master: "It is never too late to mend. I have had one pupil, Sir, of a more advanced age than your own - a war profiteer, Sir, whose manners were, I regret to say, unspeakable, infinitely inferior to your own, my dear Sir, but in a single term at my establishment the change was amazing. I made him, Sir, into a gentleman. I have not the slightest doubt I shall be able to do as much for you, Mr. Greely!" There was no doubt, that on this

occasion at least, Lovell had succeeded in scoring.

Tubby Muffin was another popular subject for single story plots. In No. 1245 he raffled a handsome new cricket bat and spent the proceeds at Sergeant Kettle's. Lovell was congratulating himself upon being the lucky winner when the man from the shop arrived to reclaim it on the sordid grounds that it had not been paid for. Muffin plumbed the lowest depths of dishonesty, however, when he picked up a cheque for £10 made payable to the bearer, and was arrested when trying to cash it at the bank at Rockham. Dr. Chisholm had quite an exciting afternoon in No. 1066 going to the police station to bail him out. Nevertheless, despite all his misdeeds, Tubby Muffin at his worst never became too detestable as his counterpart at St. Jim's, Baggy Trimble. It is also pleasant to be able to record that it was Tubby Muffin who had the honour of featuring in the last two Rookwood stories to be written for the Boys' Friend Nos. 1297 and 1298. In the first one, entitled "Money Talks", he was the lucky recipient of a cheque for £50, on the strength of which he incurred several debts. It was only when Peole and Co., were piecing together his IOUs that they discovered that they were written on the back of an interesting letter which ran as follows: "Dear Reginald, - I have no objection to helping you to keep your end up, as you term it, among the wealthier boys at your school. I enclose a cheque for £50. You will be extremely careful not to let it pass out of your hands, as, of course, it could not be met at the bank if presented there. As soon as it is known that you have such a cheque, your headmaster will, of course, take it from you and return it to me. No harm will be done, and you will be able to make the impression you desire. Your affectionate uncle, M. Muffin." In the last story of all, "Tubby the Protector", he was instrumental in saving Jimmy Silver from a plot by Peole and Gower, and so the Rookwood stories were brought to a satisfactory conclusion in a manner which left the reader with not wholly unfavourable memories of Tubby Muffin.

If most Rookwood single stories were of a humorous nature, there were nevertheless, a few which managed to present drama in the space of a few short chapters. No. 1234 was one such story, relating how Carthew in a more than usually spiteful mood burnt Bulkeley's Greek Prize Paper. An agreeable study of Dr. Chisholm was presented in No. 1229 entitled "A Christmas Chase." The Head had been hit by one of Lovell's snowballs intended for Carthew, and as a punishment the culprit was sentenced to spend the Christmas holidays at the school. Lovell soon tired of his solitary confinement, and decamped - a

flagrant breach of discipline which caused Dr. Chisholm to pursue him, but in the end the Head proved to be not such a tyrant as he was sometimes thought to be. Probably the most famous single Rookwood story and certainly the longest one to appear in the Boys' Friend - was No. 810, the Christmas Double Number for 1916, which bore the imposing title "Jimmy Silver's Christmas Party" by Owen Conquest in collaboration with those world famous authors Frank Richards and Martin Clifford. As may be inferred from the title, contingents from Greyfriars and St. Jin's were present, together with Cousin Phyllis and Cousin Ethel. Large representative gatherings were all the vogue in those days, but usually there were far too many popular characters present and consequently the story was never able to get going. These objections did not apply to Jimmy Silver's Christmas Party. The story consisted of thirteen concise chapters, and the descriptions of the arrivals of the various guests were not just ornamentation, but contributed a great deal to the progress of the plot, which dealt with the desertion of Jimmy Silver's uncle from the army after he had been accused of theft, and the mystery of the moving panel in Mr. Silver's study, the mystery being its refusal to move. It was really no mystery to the reader that the secret passage contained Private Silver, and the proof of his innocence rounded off the story in an agreeable fashion.

The variety and dexterity which were displayed in these short Rookwood stories are quite remarkable. There was no room for padding in the Boys' Friend nor for little digressions which had no real bearing on the plot. All inessentials were ruthlessly discarded, and yet, paradoxically enough, the stories still read as well as, if not better than, those in contemporary Magnets and Gems. Perhaps the shortness of the Rookwood stories is the very reason why they always leave the reader like Oliver Twist, asking for more.

* * * *

FIRST THOUGHTS ON THE "SCHOOL-FRIEND"

by Eric V. Copeman

(The only object of this patchy article is to make someone determined to do it properly.)

During the first 10 years of its existence, the Collectors Digest has provided only three articles on the SCHOOL FRIEND, that I know of. In the 1948 Annual, Gordon Kirby contributed an article and in 1950 Eric Fayne reviewed the post war book "Bessie Bunter of Cliff House", with interesting information on the original Charles Hamilton

characters included. Then in June 1956, Leonard Packman also contributed an article which further added to the small store of data on Cliff House. However, the fully fledged article by someone in the know is still badly needed. There are sufficient reasons for it simply because Charles Hamilton wrote the earliest yarns which launched the paper and because of the inevitable connections with the Greyfriars characters in the Magnet yarns prior to No. 1 School Friend and after. Being very keen on practically everything Charles Hamilton wrote I've always had in mind to solve the mystery of just how many School Friend yarns he wrote and, of course, if possible possess them. Up to now one writer thought the "first dozen or so" were genuine; the only other to state a number put it at "definitely" six. It was only in the last few months I was able to handle my first School Friend.

I obtained 27 copies of the years 1919-1921 and a long run of the smaller paged 1927-28 issues, thus discovering the fact of the two series. The earlier papers included Nos. 1, 4, 5, 6, 10 and after reading them I bring the number of genuine C.H.'s down to four. In my opinion No. 4 was the last School-Friend written by C.H. Nos. 1 and 4 are definitely his work, Nos. 5 and 6 definitely not, and I presume Nos. 2 and 3 are also genuine. I checked the remaining twenty-three stories and found them not Hamilton as expected. The contrast between the stories of No. 4 and No. 5 must have been detected, consciously or unconsciously, by many readers, for there was nothing subtle about the switchover. Apart from a cursory perusal of the 1927-28 issues I did not read any further, quite a space of spare time being needed to do it properly.

I formed opinions, but not having a solid background of reading, it wouldn't be correct to presume too much. The two Hamiltons I have are first-rate - the following show a quick fall off but I should imagine that reading week by week for the first few years would have been entertaining, for some interesting and controversial characters put in their appearance at different times. The paper must have been very popular. In a few weeks the editor was giving nearly a page (in some cases a page and a half) for answers to correspondents. These are revealing and amusing. For instance, quite a few asked questions about Greyfriars and St. Jim's Schools and the answer in every case did not mention the school.

(Is Eric in error by saying that Nos. 5 and 6 were not by Charles Hamilton? As Hamilton himself has said, he wrote the first six the work then being handed over to another author as it was

considered he had quite enough on his hands. Perhaps the explanation is that his stories were not used consecutively. HL.

* * *

SOLUTION OF C.D. CROSSWORD No. 4

ACROSS: 1, Miss Primrose. 10, Tire. 11, Rose. 12, Routed. 14, Solo. 15, Vide. 16, Wimford. 20, Lateen. 23, Moses. 24, Being 25, B.P. 26, Pongo. 27, Also. 29 (with 19 across) The Limit. 30, War. 32, Venture. 35, Ones. 36, Scap. 38, Era. 39, Curlew Patrol
DOWN: 1, Marvel. 2, Study Ten. 3, Site. 4, Pro. 5, Rodring. 6, Mrs. Nimble. 7, Roof-tops. 8, Oslo. 9, Seer. 13, OI. 17, 'In. 18, Dispersal. 19, Leno. 21, Abode. 22, Eight. 27, A heap. 28, Owner. 29, Trow. 31, Aero. 32, Vic. 33, Nor. 34, Use. 37, Pa.

The first correct solution came from STANLEY SMITH, 13, PERCY STREET, YORK to whom a postal-order for 5/- has been sent.

* * *

"BILLY BUNTER'S BOLT" by Frank Richards. Cassell & Co. 8/6d.
by GERRY ALLISON

How does he do it? Here we are, once again, back at dear old Greyfriars, with yet another grand tale introducing our favourite schoolboy characters. Every time we say, 'this is the best one yet', and then comes one better still!

This is a delightful story, with plenty of Form-room scenes; plenty of fun; plenty of everything. Billy Bunter has run away from school before, but surely never with so good a reason. Have we ever met his mother before? Anyway, here is Mrs. Bunter, who really loves her 'dear William'. And Billy actually forgets to be selfish when with her, and has to be told to go and get his tea!

You will be glad to hear that Smithy has a 'fat' part, and that Mr. Quelch is as true to life as ever. What a fine person he is. Yes, I enjoyed every word of this book, and so will you. Once again I ask, 'How does he do it?'

Thank you so much Frank Richards, may your Remington click on for ever.

And here's Jack Wood's opinion:

One has got so accustomed to welcoming the "mixture as before," because we like it that way, that it comes as almost a shock to find that in Billy Bunter's Bolt, the 20th in the Bunter series, Frank

Richards has included a chapter which is very much NOT the mixture as before - and I found it a wholly delightful intrusion. The chapter is that in which Bunter, with a complete disregard for his own personal feelings, arrived home to see his sick mother. This chapter, and the writing of the surrounding details, are really superb, and while the incidents are unexpected in their relation to Bunter, they are, because of the author's fine characterisation, acceptable and answer those who have recently been asking for such a fatuous character as Bunter could have got into Greyfriars in the first place. Take the latest evidence latest depths, and couple them with the earlier glimpses of an Owl with a desire to help a father down on his luck (Backing up Billy Bunter), and there is obviously emerging a Bunter who can justifiably be a leading character. Why, in the latest novel, he nearly gets a Latin translation right!

In short, here we have one of the most readable Bunter yarns for years, and a perfect example of how the author makes every single detail hang together to form a balanced pattern. Verily, truth is great and shall prevail a bit! Chapman's illustrations add the final lustre to a magnetic gem of a popular story.

* * * * *

KNIGHT TITLES (continued from 123)

1626. Billy Bunter's Easter Trip; 1627. The Mystery of Blackrock Island; 1628. The Kidnapped Millionaire; 1629. The Secret of the Sea-Cave; 1630. Fool's Luck; 1631. The Mystery of Vernon-Smith; 1632. The Bounder's Double; 1633. The Perfect Alibi; 1634. The Kidnapped Cricketer; 1635. Rough on His Rival; 1636. The Rebel of the Remove; 1637. The Prisoner of the Turret; 1638. A Double in Trouble; 1639. The Greyfriars Imposter; 1640. The House of Dark Secrets; 1641. The Plotter; 1642. The Plot that Failed; 1643. The Greyfriars Stowaway; 1644. Ructions on the River; 1645. Six Boys in a Boat; 1646. Greyfriars to the Rescue; 1647. Coker Takes Command; 1648. Mystery on the Thames; 1649. Bunter on the Spot; 1650. The Secret of the "Water Lily";

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OLD BOYS BOOK CLUB

LONDON SECTION

For about one hour "Cherry Place, Wood Green, became 221 b Baker Street at the March meeting, held on Sunday 17th. Reason for this was that Chairman, Frank Vernon-Lay loaned us the long playing record of Sherlock Holmes, Douglas Whiter loaned us the record-player and Bob Whiter operated the latter. One side was the Charles Augustus Milverton adventure and on the reverse side was "The Final Problem". This performance was greatly enjoyed by those present and thanks to those concerned in its presentation. Afterwards Roger Jenkins gave us one of his "Figures and Letters Puzzles and Bob Whiter was the winner with the following three members in second place, Frank Vernon-Lay, Len Packman and Frank Rutherford. The latter had made the journey from Bristol bringing up with him his sister Norah. An example of superb binding of "Collector's Digest" was shown by Norah, jolly good work indeed. Next came a reading by Len Packman of the George Orwell essay on old boys' books and our worthy presidents reply. Following this I gave them an examination on how many of the 39 Remove Form at Greyfriars juniors they could name. Len Packman named the most, 36, Bob Whiter and Roger Jenkins got 35, Miss Millicent Lyle had 34 and Frank from Bristol 31. By the way, the 39 names appeared in "Magnet" No. 1658. Then came one of the most enjoyable items, the entries in our chairman's song competition. There were very good and I think that two of the entries could easily find a place in the columns of the "C.D." As there may be more entries from overseas, we had one from Les Rowley in Japan, the result is still in aboyance.

Finally a good reading about Sexton Blake by Charlie Wright, greatly enjoyed by all. Next Meeting fixed for Sunday, April 28th at East Dulwich.

UNCLE BENJAMIN

* * *

NORTHERN SECTION MEETING - MARCH 9th, 1957

Practically all the regulars were present to extend a hearty welcome to Roger Jenkins on the occasion of his annual visit.

Business was quickly disposed of as Roger had two talks to give us. First came "Memorable Rookwood Singles". That it was full of interest you will be able to see for yourselves for it appears in this

number.

He followed it with a shrewd study of Jack Drake, that not all together perfect character from the pen of the inimitable Charles Hamilton. Followed an animated discussion and at the finish a hope expressed that Roger will be with us again a year hence.

Gerry Allison had something for us of course, this time a crossword. Some of the clues received a few good-humoured comments, but no cross words. Ron Hodgson came out the winner; Stan Smith completed it first but he had two errors.

Next Meeting, April 13th. It's the Annual General Meeting so it is important if you want to sack any of the officials you'll have to attend to do it!

HERBERT LECKENBY

Northern Section Correspondent.

* * *

MIDLAND CLUB. - Meeting held 25th February, 1957. Room 5, Chamber of Commerce, New Street, Birmingham.
Report from Harry Broster, Secretary.

This meeting was auspicious for numerous reasons. First we welcomed two new members. Mr. T.G. Smith and Mr. R. Greenwood, both subscribers to C.D. and both keen Hamilton fans. Then Ron Dickens presented the librarian with a whole pile of Sexton Blake libraries. Was Beryl pleased. Then for the first time we were issued with nicely printed membership cards. Where they came from and how, is a mystery known only to the Secretary, but they, like the aforementioned S.B.L., cost the club exactly nothing. Business attended to, we sat down to listen to Tom Porter give one of his famous reading-talks and this was a St. Jim's classic "The arrival of Ernest Levison to St. Jim's." Most Hamilton fans have read of this so called "death" of Lumley-Lumley, how Levison with his usual cunning or cleverness brought him back from the dead. Quite a change from Frank Richards usual light hearted theme, but there are one or two funny chapters. Needless to say we all enjoyed it immensely and applauded the reader accordingly. The next item was a "Leslie Welch" quiz, with the writer as the "victim" and well did the members get their own back on me for "torturing" them in the past. Some of the things hurled at me were stingers and I was glad I had to make a hurried departure to catch my bus. Norman Gregory kept the interest alive by reading an article from S.P.C. dealing with that much criticised man "Pentelow". The discussion

which naturally followed helped to make up another interesting nights programme. Next month Norman takes us riding the range with Buffalo Bill.

* * *

MERSEYSIDE BRANCH O.B.B.C.

SUNDAY, 10th MARCH.

A large gathering turned up with great enthusiasm for the first meeting at our new address at 11, Neville Road. We were pleased to hear that Frank Umwin would be with us once again next month, when, we understand, he will present us with a new edition of "Down you go".

The monthly quiz was presented by George Riley. This was his first attempt and the writer was flattered that some of his own ideas on the subject were adopted. Some novel questions were asked on Old Boys' books, and some of the answers proved that we still have much to learn about such books as The Modern Boy, Chums etc., This Quiz was won by Jim Walsh, with Jack Morgan and the writer coming second and third. After tea, an informal discussion, led by the Secretary, took place on the authorship of the St. Frank's stories. Many interesting points were raised on this subject and it was generally felt by all present that Jack Wood had dealt with this matter very ably in the March Digest. Library business ended the meeting, and we all look forward to our next gathering at 11, Neville Road. Date - April 14th, 7 P.M. Sharp.

NORMAN PRAGNELL

Secretary, Merseyside Branch, O.B.B.C.

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Can you please help? Highest prices given.

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* * * * *

NELSON LEE COLUMN

by JACK WOOD
NOSTAN, 328, Stockton Lane, York.
Phone: 25795

* * * * *

This month Jim Cook has forwarded me some interesting sentiments expressed by a friend with great sincerity. I think they might well prove of interest to other ardent Leeites, so here they are:-

MY VISIT TO ST. FRANK'S COLLEGE

Driving down through Bellton on a glorious summer's day
I heard the shouts and laughter of many boys at play,
I stopped a gentleman I saw, saying - "Pardon me,
Have I the honour of addressing Nelson Lee?"
He smiled and answered "I am" and introduction done
I parked my car and strolled with him in the lovely evening sun.
Saw a stately building with a tower grey and cool
Came into sight: "Is this St. Frank's, the famous public school"
I asked; Lee nodded, "Come and meet the boys."
So in we went and further words were lost amid the noise
Assembled in the Triangle were boys of various age,
While one, in special uniform I learned was Tubbs, the Page
Came up to Lee respectfully with a message from the Head.
So Lee excused himself to me - and bid me "go ahead."
A most polite young man appeared - the others called him Nipper
(I found upon enquiry he was the Remove skipper).
He introduced me to his chums - Pitt, Tregellis-West,
Watson, Glenthorne, Gresham, Brent, Grey and all the rest.
Then we met some others - "rotters" I was told -
Fullwood, Gulliver, Gore-Pearce, Forrest, bad but bold -
A grubby youngster then appeared with a cage of mice
His name was Willy Handforth - cheekiness his vice
Leader of the Third, with Heath and Lemon, he
Keeps the "fags" in order with punches hard and free.
We now advanced inside the school, the Common Room and Hall
The Ancient and the Modern House - I cannot mention all,
Along the "Ancient" corridors we walked and pulled up just in time
From Study D a foam emerged, encased in dust and grime

Another one soon followed with a thud that shook the floor,
 While a third stood in the doorway asking if he wanted more;
 I felt alarmed, but Nipper merely grinned, "let me explain
 "That's Church and Mac upon the floor, the chap who's caused their pains
 "Is Handforth, he's their biggest cunn; in Study D he reigns.
 Let anyone just go for Church of Mac, and he
 (Old Handy) knocks 'em out and question after, see?"
 Do Valerie and Somerton and Fatty Little too,
 We saw as we were walking round, and others, quite a few,
 Some fifth and sixth form chaps appeared, a master in his gown
 Was listening patiently to one named William N. Browne.
 Horace Stevens, Biggleswade and other seniors cool
 Were introduced and then came up the Captain of the school,
 His name was Edgar Fenton, a youth whose charming smile
 Keen, but friendly eyes and frank and easy style
 Attracted me immediately; we chatted for a while
 The Lee came back, and presently he asked me with a smile
 If I would come and meet the Head and have a cup of tea
 I murmured I'd be honoured, so Lee escorted me
 To Dr. Stafford's study, where I spent a pleasant hour
 And as I rose to go I heard from Ancient Tower
 A mellow bell proclaim that it was time for calling over
 But as I reached the old Lodge gates (where I had left my Rover)
 Fenton, Nipper, Glenthorne, Handforth and a dozen other boys
 Were waiting for me there - oh boy! What a surprise
 They gave me as a souvenir some pictures of St. Frank's
 And as I shook each by the hand and tried to voice my thanks
 To them, and for the very pleasant evening I had spent
 They shouted "come again, sir!" and well I knew 'twas meant
 I glanced up to the gate, and the motto caught my eye
 "Consilio et Animis" - Gadzooks! how right said I
 "By Counsel and (by) courage" - St. Frank's has both of these
 And bidding Porter Cuttle "'Night" I drove on 'neath the trees
 Till Bellton-faded out of sight, but out of mind - ah me!

It never will, not ever will the GOOD OLD "NELSON LEE"

R.E.M.

Poetic licence excuses lapses of memory in so obviously sincere a
 tribute to the old school. To forestall the over-critical, Fullwood
 had ceased to be a rotter by the time Gresham arrived, not did the

latter arrive until after the school's expansion to five houses when, of course, the clock tower was moved from the Ancient to the School House. Thank you R.E.M. for an interesting "visit".

* * *

Those who like to keep in touch with Edwy Searles Brook's latest work will welcome the appearance of his new novel, *The Golden Monkey*. Written under his pseudonym of Victor Gunn, this addition to the Inspector Cromwell series has "Old Ironsides" in great form in a fast-moving yarn with a music hall circus background.

Interesting dedication "To John Redman Murtagh of Hastings, New Zealand, who, a glutton for punishment, has read my stories for more years than either of us care to remember. Thanks, Jack."

Signature? "B.G." otherwise, of course, Berkeley Gray, Brook's other pseudonym under which he chronicles the adventures of Norman Conquest. Even Homer nods! Jack Murtagh, readers of the C.D. do not need to be reminded, is a staunch member of our clan, and especially a Leelite.

Talking of writer's pseudonyms, here are some of one of my own favourite author's, John Creasy - J. J. Maric (*Gideon of the Yard*) Gordon Ashe, Michael Halliday and Anthony (*The Baron*) Marton. Add to the output by these "authors", his own stories of *The Toff*, *Inspector West*, *Mr. Palfrey* and *Department Z*, and it will be seen that Mr. Creasy is a very busy man, indeed.

 CAN ANYONE OBLIGE WITH MAGNETS: 397, 400, 401, 407, 409, 412, 419, 420, 437, 439, 446, 447, 510, 537, 553, 915, 1045, 1046, 1047, 1089, 1122, 1117, 1127, 1132, 1134, 1136, 1162, 1194, 1244, 1245, 1245, 1332, 1335? Your price paid. CHARLES VAN RENEN, BOX 50, UITENHAGE, SOUTH AFRICA.

WANTED: "MAGNETS" (Pre. 1935) "S.O.Ls." SALE OFFERS 9 "MAGNETS"; PICTURE SHOW ANNUALS 1937 & 1939. 22/- TWO. LAWRENSON, 44, BLEAK HILL ROAD, ST. HELENS, LANCs.

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Owing to pressure on space, S.B.L. reviews have had to be held over. Sorry. (H. L.)